PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
WAR OF THE REBELLION,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
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PERSONAL NARRATIVES.

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PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
WAR OF THE REBELLION.

FIRST CRUISE OF THE MONTAUK.
BY
SAMUEL T. BROWNE.
AUTHOR'S NOTE.

The following paper was read before Rodman Post, No. 13, Department of Rhode Island, Grand Army of the Republic, at the request of whose officers it was written, in February, 1870. Especially was it suggested by Gen. James Shaw, Jr., whose efforts, made first in Rhode Island, to obtain and preserve records of personal experience during the war of the Rebellion, resulted, at his suggestion, in the issuing of a general order by the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Army of the Republic of the United States, requesting the officers of every Post in all the States, to secure from the members the writing and reading, and then to preserve, the records of personal experience during the war; the chief result of which custom would be to obtain a large and valuable amount of historical data, which must otherwise have remained unwritten.

Willing and wishing to comply with the spirit of this idea, the following paper was written. Subsequently, at the request of the Soldiers and Sailors Historical Society of Rhode Island, it was read before that Society and deposited in its archives. Any interest which may attach to it, must arise from the
fact that the vessel of which this paper speaks, was the first iron-clad that steamed so far away as the coast of Georgia, and braved the rough Atlantic in mid-winter; the first that had any contest with fortification or earth-work; and the first under which—and with serious injury to herself—a torpedo was exploded. She was thus the forerunner of all that great fleet of iron-clad men-of-war, now of such various design, of which nearly every navy of the world owns a part; and hence, the record of her earliest days and first service may be worth preservation. It is intended to be a simple and unadorned story, the character of the vessel, her service, and the time, justifying the detail of the relation,—and the fact of its being a narrative of personal experience, making unnecessary any apology for the seeming prominence of the writer.

S. T. B.

Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.,
August 31, 1878.
FIRST CRUISE
OF
THE MONTAUK.

BY SAMUEL T. BROWNE,
PAYMASTER UNITED STATES NAVY.

PROVIDENCE:
THE N. BANGS WILLIAMS CO.
1880.
FIRST CRUISE OF THE MONTAUK.

Read before the Society, Dec. 26, 1877.

The echoes of the first guns that threatened destruction to the union of the American States, and sealed the harbor of Charleston into the hands of a prospective Confederate South, had scarcely died away when men's minds began to conceive and their hands to form new engines for offense and defense to be used upon the sea. Fragments of reports reached us, now and then, from the feverish and excited South, concerning the work of preparation going on there,—that armed and mailed craft were building that would sweep the seas; that vessels-of-war—late the nation's guard—were stripped of rigging and spars, braced and strengthened, clad with an armor of iron rails, and thus invulnerable, were almost ready to enter a contest that should help win the South an independence.
Too little heed was given to these reports of preparation, and on one mild Monday morning in March, 1862, the North was paralyzed by a message that flew from Fortress Monroe to millions of loyal firesides, telling of a strange vessel clad in shot-proof armor, that had steamed boldly in daylight from its covert at Norfolk, and in a few hours' worked its own way of destruction and death among our vessels-of-war lying at anchor in Hampton Roads. She had sunk the Congress and Cumberland, noble vessels and manned by noble men, who stood by their guns while the water rose around them.

"No blanching—no faltering—still fearless all seem:
Each man firm to duty doth bide:
A flash! one more broadside! a shout—a careen!—
And the Cumberland sinks 'neath the tide.

"Bold hearts! mighty spirits! tried gold of our land!
A halo of glory your need.
All honored the noble-souled Cumberland band
So true in Columbia's need."

But the shot from the doomed frigates bounded like peas from the sides of the iron monster. The
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storm of shot and shell poured upon the strange craft from batteries both afloat and on shore, were unavailing to stop her terrible course, and only coming darkness saved the Minnesota and other vessels, and the immense supplies of government stores gathered at Hampton Roads. No salvation from this giant war-craft appeared. New York and Philadelphia were threatened, and in a few hours the whole nation was throbbing in an agony of suspense. But that night there was an arrival in those waters of a strange vessel-machine, that at once lifted loyal hearts out of the quicksands of despair and placed them on the firmer ground of hope, and to the stricken North it seemed like an interposition of Divine Providence. On the following day, when the mailed marine Goliath came forth, lo!—as to the astonished Philistines David appeared, so this insignificant strange apparatus that steamed out upon the bay, and which had been called in ironical drollery “a cheese-box on a raft.” Its sling was a new monster gun, and its stone an eleven-inch solid shot, and the giant vessel was smitten and driven away, and never again ventured to attack.
This experiment of Ericsson’s, called the “Monitor,” though reaching Fortress Monroe by scarcely less than a miracle, from thenceforward became a certainty, and gave name to a large and important class of the naval marine. A number of vessels on this plan, but having many improvements resulting from the experimental fight of the Monitor, were immediately contracted for by the government, and in the autumn the first two were finished, and to one of them, the Montauk, the Navy Department assigned me. To a modest gentleman whose eye-balls and face were stained with powder, blinded and wounded as he was by the last shot fired from the monster Merrimac at his little Monitor, to John L. Worden, whose gallant fight had restored a nation’s confidence, and who was now to command the Montauk, I reported for duty. I found the Montauk lying at a wharf in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and not yet quite ready for service, and in every point she was much an improvement upon the Monitor. Her flat deck, not more than twenty inches above the water, and pointed at each end, reminded me of the shingle vessels I myself had launched in earlier years and in
more peaceful times. Her deck was protected by a double layer of iron plates, each nine feet by three in surface area, and an inch thick. Her sides were armored with five thicknesses of these iron plates bolted through and through on thick oaken backing, and extending to a point about four feet below the water-line, and there the armor ended, and a sharp right angle carried that portion of the vessel known as the "overhang" to the hull of the ship which was constructed of five-eighth inch iron plates.

The distinctive feature of the vessel was amidships, and consisted of a circular iron tower nine feet in height, and made of such plates as above mentioned, placed one over another, until the tower was eleven inches thick. These plates were firmly held together by massive bolts going through and through, on the outside the bolt-heads slightly rounded, and with the thread-end and heavy nut on the inside. The roof was made of iron plates perforated and placed upon railway rails, and the rails resting upon massive square beams of iron extending across the top of the tower. This tower, or "turret," as it became known, revolved upon the
faces of rings of bronze-metal fitted into a circular channel in the deck, and around an immense iron spindle or shaft that supported the pilot-house standing above the centre of the turret, and a miniature of it. The pilot-house did not revolve. It was fitted with funnel-shaped eye-holes nearly five feet above the floor of the pilot-house, which converged from the larger diameter inside, to an aperture an inch in diameter on the outside.

Within the turret were two guns, an eleven-inch and a fifteen-inch,—the latter ludicrously resembling a soda bottle,—its cartridges of walnut-sized powder varying from thirty-five to sixty pounds weight, and its missiles from a three-hundred-and-twenty-five pound unfilled shell, to a four hundred pound solid shot. Beneath the turret and guns was the turret-chamber, and here were small engines for working the turret, and also to operate the ventilating blowers,—for all of the supply of fresh air was drawn through the perforations in the roof of the turret, and forced through sheet-iron connecting tubes throughout the ship.
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All the light admitted below deck, came through thick circular glass dead-lights set about ten inches below the surface of the iron deck, and at the bottom of small cavities, perhaps seven inches in diameter, called "wells." These dead-lights were open when in harbor,—and often even at sea in smooth weather,—but when engaged in a fight, the "well" was covered with a thick iron scuttle fitting snugly, secured below, and flush with the deck.

Through the snows of November and December we plodded over to the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and watched the fitting out of this strange vessel in which we were to venture to sea, and by which we hoped to strike an effective blow to preserve the integrity of the Union.

None were more interested in her movements than a small gray-haired Russian gentleman with black twinkling eyes, whose simplicity and modesty won our esteem. He was a Naval Commissioner sent by the Russian Government to examine this new class of iron-clad men-of-war, and had the permission of our government to go to sea with us in the Montauk; and with his small, faded traveling-bag, he was always
earliest at the ship, that he might not be disappointed in going. This was Captain Lissovski, Commandant of the Cronstadt Navy Yard, and who, a few years later, came over as Admiral Lissovski, commanding the Russian fleet.

In due time the Montauk was ready for trial, and we steamed up the Hudson to a point near Fort Lee, and opposite Washington Heights, where were let fly the big shot and shell into the rocky cliffs of the Palisades, and the earthy bank beneath them, to the terror of the occupants of the shanties half a mile away. The discharge of forty pounds of powder from the ponderous fifteen-inch guns, was as if there had been a short peal of thunder near by, and yet it was remarkable in how slight a degree was the shock or concussion unpleasant to those on board ship. Indeed, we afterward became so accustomed to it, as to be able to sleep during the working of the guns; and, later, when off Forts Wagner and Sumter, and during the contest with those works in 1863, I often found myself waking from sleep into which I had fallen while sitting on top of the turret, immediately over the guns.
After other trial trips off Coney Island, both ship and guns promised to work well, and we put to sea. It was mid-forenoon of December 22, 1862, as we steamed down to Sandy Hook. There had been but one other venture like this. The great interested public knew but little of these vessels; and from steamers, and from all manner of sailing-craft, and from ferry-boats, and from the shore, we were watched with an anxious curiosity that told how the national pulse was beating.

At Sandy Hook the few remaining stanchions that held the lines around the vessel's sides were taken down, and the deck was absolutely clear. From the turret to the flag-staffs, fore and aft, a stout line was rigged, called the "life-line." The turret was "un-keyed," or let down upon its bed of bronze rings, and upon the big rubber band affixed to its base, to make it water-tight. To the extreme bow a heavy iron ring was fixed, and in this was a large shackle, from which two ten-inch hawsers, each one hundred and fifty yards in length, were passed to the steamer Connecticut, our tow and convoy, one hawser passing to her port, and the other to her starboard quarter.
In an hour we were off, steaming eastward. The Connecticut seemed huge compared with our strange craft low-lying in the water, and ran up her speed to about seven knots, our own vessel steaming at the same rate, just keeping the hawsers taut.

The preceding days had been so quiet that there was no sea, but the short, "choppy" waves, as we steamed into them, would overflow our deck, and then in a thin glassy cascade run off the sides, the sky was partially obscured by fleecy clouds, the wind was light, and in the late evening we went to our rooms and "turned in," with an assurance and confidence that seems surprising as I now look upon it. And so, quietly passed away the first day and night of the Montauk at sea.

Of course totally unaccustomed to service like this, my only warlike nights having been passed upon the hills about Washington, yet the movements of the vessel were so equable and slight, that I did not awake until morning. The wind had arisen somewhat during the night, and had occasioned a medium sea, so that as we steamed ahead, and the vessel's flat sides came against the waves, the water was
dashed into a blinding spray that came over us like a shower.

As there was no reason for going, so no one ventured on deck, but the top of the turret was our "forecastle," "midship," "quarter-deck," "lookout," and all. Tall iron stanchions curving outward, were fixed into sockets round the outside of the top of the turret, and around these was a broad band of canvas called the "weather-cloth," that afforded protection from the winter winds and the piercing spray.

The motion of the ship was very slight, and exceedingly buoyant and easy, the rolling not exceeding three to four degrees, and not affecting our filled cups and glasses at the table. During the day, the vessel had been "too much by the head," or too low in the sea forward, a difficulty that affected her speed, and that increased as the vessel was lightened amidships and aft by the consumption of the coal, so we put into Delaware Bay, coming to anchor off Lewes, where we remained two days, remedying the difficulty by moving shot and shell, and making careful examination of the ship; and finding every-
thing satisfactory, we again put to sea. It was a beautiful day, followed by a magnificent moonlight night. The big Connecticut, with its lofty masts—as we saw them—and its ponderous wheels, was immediately ahead; the restless, dashing, glittering sea all around us; and to us, standing upon this little iron tower and looking down upon the deck, which now and then seemed covered with a silver sheen as the sea shimmered over it, it was more like a vision from dreamland than an episode from daily prosaic life.

The next morning found us inside of Cape Henry: the hawsers were cast loose from our bow, and we steamed finely in to anchorage at Hampton Roads. The Monitor—to which our gray-eyed commander called our attention as we came in, and told us something of its famous fight,—lay just ahead of us. The Passaic, of our own class, was astern of us. The Galena, whose thinly clad sides were afterward penetrated at Fort Darling, was on our starboard bow; and some distance farther up the Roads, was the Ironsides, afterwards with us in the storm of fire and
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shell at Fort Sumter. The beautiful Colorado was there, not far away; and English men-of-war were there, officers and men learning something of modern warfare.*

The days at Hampton Roads were beautiful; noticeably so was the first of January, 1863. An unruffled bay; a soft, balmy atmosphere; a blue, unclouded, fathomless sky;—nature never seemed lovelier in mid-winter; it seemed, indeed, as if its quiet was a type of that peaceful transition from bondage to liberty that made this day a new birth-day to four million souls.

The note of preparation here was incessant; every vessel had "steam up," and many of them could have slipped their cables and put to sea in a moment. Half-suppressed murmurs said we were bound for

*The duties and engagements of Captain Lisovski as special Naval Commissioner from the Russian Government to examine modern appliances of science to the prosecution of war, preventing his accompanying the Montauk any farther, he took his departure here, having won our esteem by his gentlemanliness, and his earnestness and zeal in studying and becoming familiar with every part and department of the Montauk, and his earnest sympathy with us in the war.
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Charleston. The nation in impatient suspense waited for a prostrating blow upon that city.*

I doubt if the authorities at Washington then had any objective point to which these iron-clads were immediately bound.

At mid-day of January second, although since morning it had looked threatening outside, we went to sea. The Monitor and Passaic had preceded us nearly two days. The Connecticut, that was to have been our convoy, was ordered to Aspinwall to bring away the treasure left by the Ariel, and the steamer James Adger was substituted. Before we reached Cape Henry we found a heavier sea than we had before seen, but the vessel behaved excellently. Before night set in we saw we were meeting a gale.

*I am confident the force of iron-clads then available would have been insufficient for that purpose, and it would have been mad folly to have sent wooden vessels into that cul-de-sac whose sides bristled with four hundred guns, and the waters of whose harbor were filled with every variety of torpedoes; and I have held the opinion, especially since the first attack upon the forts in April, 1863, that even if the iron-clads had penetrated the harbor, and escaped the network of torpedoes, that with four hundred guns the hammering them to pieces would have been only a question of hours.
Every one of the seas swept over our deck like a deluge. The wind blew steadily and severely from the east, but did not seem to increase, and when night set in, it seemed we were having the latter and lesser half of the storm. Signals were exchanged from our turret and the paddle-boxes of the James Adger. The ghastly light thrown by the signals out of the darkness upon the seething crests of the waves; the roaring of the sea as it dashed against the ship and turret and submerged the hull; the cold spray thrust by the wind like needle-points against our faces; black clouds overhead, and shrieking winds all around; and we on this little tower twenty-one feet in diameter, with not even the ship's deck, nine feet below us, in sight more than half the time, (for nearly every sea rose within a few inches of our feet,) and nearing Hatteras;—made it an experience never to be desired again: yet once passed, to be valuable beyond any computation.

The increased unsteadiness of the vessel in the heavy sea, and especially our anxiety for her conduct through the night, prevented much sleep. Daylight revealed a leaden sky, a heavy fierce wind, and a
boisterous sea. At eight o'clock we were but a few miles off Hatteras, and even from our low lookout could now and then see the sea breaking upon the sandy cape. The James Adger was the length of our hawsers (about two hundred yards) ahead of us, and yet at times so heavy was the sea that she was hidden from us, even to her mast-heads. The vessel was now steadier than we had expected her to be, rising but little to the seas, but rather diving through them, or allowing them to sweep over her.

At mid-forenoon the port hawser parted close to the James Adger's stern, and immediately drifted alongside of us, with imminent probability of its fouling our propeller unless we stopped, which, as we were towed by the steamer, we were of course unable to do. In the emergency there was no time to communicate with the James Adger. At the same time the starboard hawser hauled us around into the trough of the sea, and placed our screw in double danger. For a few exciting moments it seemed an even question whether our propeller would snap, or the sea submerge us. The big seas came under our overhang as if they would rip it from its solid union with
the hull, and with a shock that made the vessel tremble from stem to stern. At times the solid green water came within six inches of the turret-top. The quickest remedy was to cut the remaining hawser—but how!—green seas four—five—six feet deep were sweeping over the hull. Captain Worden called for a volunteer, and Acting Ensign Avery instantly offered to make the attempt, and with a stout line passed around him under his arms, and a battle-axe in hand, he dropped down from the turret on to the deck, and passing his arm around the life-line that was fore and aft, he struggled forward—three times swept from his feet in an instant by the green seas, he reached the extreme bow, clasped his arm around the flagstaff, and although a half-dozen times entirely buried in the sea, yet, after repeated blows, succeeded in cutting the hawser. Free now from the steamer, we succeeded in righting the ship into position, and after a couple hours' steaming alone, we finally reached smoother water, and again made fast our hawsers to the James Adger.

Toward the close of the day the wind became lighter, the sea smoother, and the day ended much
more pleasantly than it began. Before breakfast-time next morning we arrived off Beaufort, N. C., and by a mistake made by our pilot in passing inside the channel buoy, we ran aground, and were obliged to send in for assistance. We saw the Passaic at anchor inside, but no Monitor there. The steamboat Freeborn soon came out to our assistance, and discharging on board of her a sufficient amount of our shot and shell to lighten us, we steamed in to an anchorage inside.

We then learned more of the storm off Hatteras, the latter part of which we had seen, and out of which the Monitor never came. During the height of the gale, and when ten miles about southeast of Hatteras, the heavy seas tore the overhang from her hull, and she went down. From a note by one of the officers, I take the following passage:

"The gale at this time was raging fearfully; the water had risen to the grate-bars of the furnaces, and was extinguishing the fires; the ship was sinking; the sky was covered with masses of black clouds, and at three-quarters of an hour past midnight, on the last day of 1862, the Monitor disappeared in the sea."
Glory enough she had seen. Her beginning was in storms of shot and shell and the destructive power of man. Her ending was in the turbulent sea, with storm and tempest, as though only these powers of nature could fittingly attend the final hours of this vessel whose mission had seemed to be the salvation of the nation in its throes of agony.

We remained a number of days at our anchorage near Fort Macon. At dinner on Sunday, the eleventh of January, Captain Worden informed me that we were going to Port Royal. Here—thanks for Burnside's campaign—we received our mail via Newbern.

On Monday, the twelfth, Captain Worden showed me an order he had received from Washington,—consequent upon the loss of the Monitor,—to send the Paymaster, the funds and the accounts, on board the convoy steamer, when he again went to sea, and he asked me what I thought of the order. I told him I thought it somewhat ill-considered and unwise, so far as the person of the Paymaster was concerned; that it might be well enough to send the funds and accounts, but to send on board another vessel any officer at such a time, might occasion an uneasiness
and want of confidence in the ship that would be demoralizing to the crew, and possibly produce serious results, and that just now an establishment of complete confidence was precisely the thing desired and to be gained if possible. I said I thought it also evinced on the part of the authorities at Washington an apparent indifference to human life, that the retention of the person of the Paymaster on board would conceal, and I requested him, as a favor to me, to forego the execution of the order, so far as the officer was concerned, and permit me to remain on board, and he did so. I quietly packed up the funds and accounts, and went with them on board the James Adger, and only the Captain, the First Lieutenant and myself, knew anything of the matter.

On the afternoon of Saturday, January seventeenth, our own vessel convoyed by the James Adger, and the Passaic convoyed by the Rhode Island, steamed out to sea. At dark the Passaic and her convoy were eight miles astern of us, and we did not see her again. The wind was after us, and though there was but little sea, the prospect of a comfortable voyage was not flattering. During the night the wind increased,
the sea became turbulent, and the vessel uneasy. In the early morning I awoke and went out upon the turret, and found the sky clouded, the wind in the northeast and blowing fresh, and a heavy sea, though it was with us. All day long the wind was variable, and gave no token of settling. Many times while sitting in my room, reading or writing, and hearing the sea gurgling overhead, I have looked up and seen the rushing eddying water filling and dashing over the little well above my dead-lights, and realizing that there was two, three or four feet of water on the deck over my head, I would muse and think how strange is our human nature in its adaptability to all combinations of circumstance, and that I—that any one—could sit there in peace and quiet, and with no feeling of alarm.

Below deck it was always light enough to read or to attend to the daily routine of the ship. As none of the crew had occasion to go on deck, they remained below, reading, sleeping or smoking, or occupying their time in the many ways that a good and contented crew find to consume the day.
The ventilation of the vessel proved to be very fair. The partial vacuum caused by the rapidly revolving fans, or blowers, in the turret-chamber, drew the air through the perforations in the roof of the turret, to the fans, whence it was blown through iron tubes to the different parts of the ship, and finally passed away by the furnaces and smoke-stack.

On the evening of the seventeenth we were twenty-five miles off Charleston, and a few of the officers resolved themselves, on the impulse of the moment, into a council of war, and debated the question—whether we should not go in, open the harbor to our fleet, and take the glory to ourselves. On the evening of this day the sky partially cleared, and the wind clung to the north-of-west, but next morning found it again in the northeast, and a heavy sea running, every ponderous sweep engulfing the hull of the ship. In the forenoon we saw the tall trees on Bay Point, and soon the light-ship off Port Royal harbor came in sight. About three miles outside, we cast off the hawsers that held us to the James Adger, and steamed ahead into the harbor—the first Yankee
iron-clad that had steamed so far at sea, or so far penetrated the domain of the South.

As we steamed by the beautiful and stately flagship, the Wabash, with Admiral DuPont and his officers on the quarter-deck watching us, his crew manned the rigging and gave us three rousing cheers; and as we steamed on, it was taken up by the Vermont, the Ironsides, and other vessels-of-war as we passed them, and among which we soon came to anchor. The top of our smoke-stack came far below the rails of some of these vessels, and a little distance away our hull was scarcely discernible above the water; yet our monster guns, the beautiful and effectual mechanism of our turret machinery, the perfect command of the vessel and her apparent invulnerability, inspired a confidence there long needed. Safe and quietly at anchor, our vessel became the subject of visits on the part of army and navy officers, and of correspondents, and all who could get to see her, and the examination established the confidence her arrival had inspired.

The non-arrival of the Passaic caused some anxiety. Not until the evening of the second day after
our arrival, did she signal her appearing. By a gale that arose as we came in, she had been driven back beyond Charleston, and for thirty hours she withstood the fury of the storm, yet came in safe and sound.

Admiral DuPont had work for us to do, and we only remained at Port Royal for a few days. It had been our expectation that we were going to blockade or try the capture of the Atlanta. She had been the British steamer Fingal, and laden with arms and munitions of war, had run the blockade to Savannah, and had there been transformed into an iron-clad of the Merrimac type, the women of Georgia—it was said—having given half a million of dollars in gold to effect the transformation. Information obtained from Savannah seemed to justify the anxiety of the commanding officers at Port Royal for fear of an attack upon them by this vessel, which they had been as poorly prepared to meet as was the Union fleet at Hampton Roads when the Merrimac made the attack there. For months the Atlanta had been lying below Savannah, and now and then signals had been made from the Union garrison at Fort Pulaski
that she was moving down the river.* But the golden opportunity—to them—was permitted to pass, and when, on June seventeenth, accompanied by two steamers filled with spectators, she came to capture two of our iron-clads that were blockading her, she commenced a fight that lasted only fifteen minutes, and surrendered after being struck by five shots from the Nahant—an iron-clad of the Montauk class—and was brought a prize into Port Royal, where it had so often been a boast she was going only to burn and destroy.

Beyond Savannah, in the Big Ogeechee river, was lying the Nashville, a comparatively new and fine steamer, and sister ship of the James Adger. Seaworthy and fast, she had twice run out with cotton for Europe, and returned with material of war. It was known that she had been fitted and furnished as a privateer, and partially loaded with cotton, and under the protection of the Atlanta, was ready to

*There seems to be no reason to doubt that she might have gone to Port Royal, and destroyed all the vessels there,—a disaster that would have been second only to the first assault of the Merrimac.
run by our little fleet of gunboats that had so diligently watched and confined her. The Florida was then working destruction with American commerce, and the Oreto had been at sea only a week. Those who knew the Nashville could imagine the alarm and destruction she might occasion when once officered and at sea. To the Big Ogeechee we were sent to watch and, if possible, capture or destroy the Nashville. Again convoyed by the James Adger, though not using her as a tow, we steamed seaward. The sea was as smooth as a lake, and the day clear, mild and balmy as a southern spring. At noon we made the blockading fleet off Warsaw Sound, through which the Atlanta must pass if she ventured to sea, and tried to communicate, but the wind was too light to raise our signal flags. In the early afternoon we passed the Canandaigua, blockading Ossabaw Sound, where we were bound, and into which the Big Ogeechee flows. A heavy fog shut us in as we came to the narrow entrance to the Sound, and we were compelled to anchor; but the fog lifted after awhile, and we steamed ahead again, and finally came to anchor inside the Sound, where we remained that night, Jan-
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January twenty-fourth. The gunboats Seneca and Wissahicon, that had been blockading here some time, came to anchor near us. Our vessel was now entirely cleared for fighting trim. From stem to stern not a rope or a chain, or a bolt, in sight, nothing but the round turret and the big smoke-stack. Nothing remained to be done, in case of sudden action, but to close the battle-hatches—the work of a few seconds. An armed watch was stationed on deck, and the alarm-rattle laid in one of the turret-ports, ready for immediate use by the officer of the deck.

The bright winter moon that flecked the water with flashes of silver, never shone down upon a stranger looking craft. The officers below, in conversation, quietly speculated upon the probabilities of coming contests. The night passed quietly away. In the morning, one of the crew, Isaac Selby, was missing, and it was supposed that during his watch he must have stepped overboard, and the swift stream swept him under. At noon of the following day, January twenty-fifth, we moved up the river three miles, and again came to anchor. Here we received on board, from one of the other vessels, a pilot named
Murphy, a small, tough-looking Georgian, whose escape from southern authorities was one of singular interest, whose knowledge of those waters proved of immense value to the Union commanders, and whose whole war course established a loyalty as true as steel.

The Big Ogeechee is narrow, and very crooked, and low marshy banks border its sides. A mile or more across the marsh, and a little on the left, a spur of woodland conceals a location in the river known as Genesis Point, and here was the Genesis Point battery, better known, perhaps, as "Fort McAllister," named from Colonel McAllister, the sometime commandant, and upon whose plantation the fort was located. The river, which some distance of its course below the fort is hidden by the point of woodland, we could plainly see above the fort as it meandered through the marsh, which, with its tall, sedgy grass, extends on the right to, and beyond, the Little Ogeechee, even to the low bluff that forms the bank of the Vernon river, and on which the little hamlet of Beulah is located; near by, a battery of three guns, and not far away, a small
camp, possibly of Confederate pickets. Here and there, over this extended marshy basin, we can see columns of smoke arising, either from rice-mills or Confederate camps. Five hundred yards above our anchorage would have uncovered the fort from its concealment behind the point of woods, and bring us near a spot where is flying a white rag from the tip of a rod that sticks just above the grass,—a range-mark for the fort, and upon which their guns are bearing. It is more than a mile from the fort, and yet they had obtained such accuracy of practice, that when the gunboat Wissahicon went first to this point, she received the first shot from the fort directly in the centre of her hull.

The beautiful mid-winter day passed in making preparations for the attack on the morrow. We knew that their guns covered every rod of our approach, and were assured that there were electric and percussion torpedoes sunk in its channel; but the risks of these are the chances of war. At nine o'clock in the evening, two boats, fitted for a night reconnaissance, left the ship. Each had a crew of ten men and three officers, and every officer and
man was armed with revolver, rifle and cutlass. I accompanied the first lieutenant in the first boat. We shoved away from the ship, and with oars muffled with sheepskin, quietly pulled along in the broad shadow the grass cast upon the river. The sky was unclouded, and the moon shone clear and bright. Up and up we pulled, with no sound save the patterning of the drops as they fell from the oar-blades upon the river. We supposed the rebels had out scouts along the banks, and we watched for them, but none appeared. Up we continued, half the crew rowing, the other half with arms in their hands, until we reached a line of obstructions that diagonally crossed the river, and effectually closed it, with the channel passage through it skillfully concealed. A third of a mile beyond was the fort, its side toward us dark in the shadow, and the sentry pacing the parapet. Here we remained a while, listening and watching, but nothing broke the stillness of the night, and we returned, removing the range-stakes along the bank as we came across them, and before midnight we reached the ship.

On Tuesday morning, January twenty-seventh, we
were all up before light, and after partaking of a lunch of coffee and crackers we got up anchor, and soon after light started slowly up the river. Three of our boats were trailing astern from a spar lashed across the ship. When well underway, the rattle sounded to "quarters," and officers and men repaired to their stations for action. Captain Worden, the pilot Murphy and myself remained on the turret-top. I think it would have been quite impossible for any one to have comprehended and appreciated the occasion. I am sure we did not. A vessel of war of such type as the world had never before seen, vulnerable only in her hull below the water, steaming up a narrow, tortuous, strange river, with the assurance that in its bed were torpedoes, the slightest touch to which would explode them, and containing powder sufficient to destroy a dozen vessels like our own,—was a realization the full import of which we could not then comprehend.

When we reached the bend in the river where the fort opened to full view, it was clear day and the sun was just shining above the low tree-tops. A little less than a mile ahead was the fort, situated at
a sharp angle in the river, the bending of the river above it making of the land on our right a peninsula. Slowly we steamed against the current, and eagerly scanned through our glasses the massive proportions of the fortification, its banks covered with rich green sod, and the muzzles of the guns just visible, pointing at us from the heavily protected embrasures. Between the guns immense mounds of earth or traverses extended back into the rear, effectually covering the guns from an enfilading fire, to which by the approach they were partially exposed. Above the parapet floated the new ensign of this new dominion whose existence we had come to dispute.

It being unnecessary and imprudent to remain longer on the outside, we descended into the turret, and from thence climbed up into the pilot-house, and from the funnel-shapel eye-holes within, I watched the contest. Before eight o'clock we came to anchor about eleven hundred yards from the fort. In a few moments we let fly from the eleven-inch gun, a shell that fell a little short and disappeared in the river. Another was tried, that entered the battery and exploded with a loud report, blowing the soil in
every direction, and for a moment hiding a portion of the fort in the dust of the explosion. Then a shell was sent from the fifteen-inch gun,—the breech of which is so thick it prevents looking over it and out of the port, and hence has to be sighted by the eleven-inch,—and this imbedded itself in the parapet, and burst with a heavy deadened report, literally filling the air above the fort with earth and debris. The reports of our guns were like peals of thunder instantly let loose from confinement. Columns of fire fifteen inches in diameter, and a rod in length, flashed from the turret; immense bodies of dense smoke shot over the river; and but for its incessant rolling and unfolding looked like masses of granite. For a moment after the discharge of the guns, the turret and turret-chamber were filled with smoke, but the ventilating apparatus soon carried it away. The shock of the discharge, though forty pounds of powder were used, was not severe or at all injurious within the ship. Mr. Giraud, the officer having command within the turret, and considered one of the best shots the war produced, had found the exact range, and kept it. Instantly the rebels replied with a ten-inch shot
from their pet gun. A flash!—and then a big puff of smoke, out of which a tiny black spot appeared, that rapidly grew in size (or seemed to), describing a low arc, and then for an instant a big black ball was before my eyes, then quick as thought it disappeared, and with a heavy—thud! it struck square in the centre of the turret, making an indentation about as large as a soup-plate. It was evident from their firing the instant our guns were discharged, that they hoped to send a shot into one of our ports, but the immediate turning away of the turret to reload, prevented the working of their plan. We could watch our own shell as they emerged from the smoke and seemed rapidly to lessen in size and then bury themselves in the earth.

Again we gave them an eleven-inch shell that fell within the fort, and again a fifteen-inch that imbedded itself in the solid work an instant, and then exploded, powder, smoke, dust and earth filling the air, and leaving a rent in the work big enough to drive an ox-cart through. Occasionally a shell would scour the top of the fort, and then ricochet into the air, and fall a mile beyond in the dense wood, crush-
ing the trees in its descent. Sometimes a shell would pass through the face of the fort and burst inside. We could only see the rebels as they loaded their guns, and then at the discharge of our own they would drop as though shot, and rush to their bomb-proofs,—though we learned there was nothing that day in Fort McAllister that could truly be called bomb-proof.

We fired at intervals of six or seven minutes, alternating with our guns, for an hour, when the length of the intervals was increased to ten or twelve minutes. They answered from the fort briskly and with wonderful precision, remembering how small a mark our ship at the distance afforded. Not a shot from the fort struck farther from us than thirty or forty feet, and the shot and exploding shell threw up from the river columns of water that broke and descended upon the turret like showers of rain. To our astonishment, they would fire some of their guns out from the smoke of our exploded shell, when it seemed that the shell had struck precisely where the gun stood. We afterwards learned that these gun carriages were on rails, and the recoil sent the guns
to bomb-proofs in the rear, where they were loaded and run out again, or from which, as needed, they could be run into position and then loaded.

The rebels fired rapidly for an hour, when their firing began to slacken and become irregular, and apparently from only two guns,—and as we knew they could and had been using eight, we concluded six must be in some way disabled, and thought we could see through some of the immense rents and damaged embrasures, that a number of them were dismounted. For three hours we had thrown our big shells into their work. We had carried away their flag, blown into a shapeless mass the parapet and glacis that we had seen in the morning strong and smooth sodded. They still held out, and we began to wonder how long they could stand the explosion of fifteen-inch shell, for the number that remained in our magazine having suitable fuses was small. These were carefully used, and as we watched them, we knew that the havoc they made must be terrible. They continued to fire at us with a spitefulness and snap truly admirable. They had carried away one of our flags; riddled another; hammered
a score of indentations in our turret and pilot-house; broken off some of the bolts and driven them inside—and two of them, with the nuts attached to them, had passed within three inches of my head, that would have been crushed had they hit it; they had scoured our deck with scars two feet long, indenting and bending the iron plates; they had perforated our smoke-stack in many places, and cut its top into a ragged fringe; they had smashed our boats into splinters; still the efficiency of the vessel was not touched. In half an hour our suitable shell were gone, and solid shot and canister would not avail, and we withdrew. For some time they had not fired, but as we got underway and were moving down stream, they let fly at us four shot in rapid succession. A few of us had got out on to the deck from one of the smoke-stained ports in the turret. One of the shot fell at our right hand in the river, two fell short, and the fourth came screaming over our heads, and striking in the marsh beyond, threw up grass and mud and water, and ricocheting, flew off high into the air, as though it was going to Port Royal.
Officers and men, black and stained with powder-smoke, came from the turret and from below decks, out into the clear noonday air, to see the result of the fight, and to take a parting look at the fort, which not till now had they been able to see. We steamed down to our anchorage and made fast. A small steamer was immediately sent to Port Royal for suitable shell and fuses, and boats. In the afternoon the ship was cleared and cleaned of powder-smoke, and splinters, and fragments of shell (broken against our turret), and in early evening we went to rest, after a terrible strain upon the nerves of the watchers, and the muscles of the workers. Though the work might have been blown into worthlessness by us, or abandoned by the rebels, still with no cooperating land force, it could not not be occupied by us, while when we withdrew it could be strengthened again and renewed by the rebels.

Contrabands occasionally came to us, some of them directly from the fort, and there was no flaw or contradiction in their story. They told us the fort was commenced before the war began, and they had
FIRST CRUISE OF THE MONTAUK.

worked on it incessantly until it was exceedingly strong.

We learned from a number of refugees that our day's work had almost demolished the fort; that we had dismounted three guns; had killed two officers and a number of men; that two or three times the fort was abandoned; and that one of our fifteen-inch unexploded shell was exhibited in Savannah, exciting much wonder, and exerting an excellent moral influence.

The rebels stuck to their work splendidly, and we voted McAllister and his men a plucky company. It was impossible without exposing men to certain death, to remove the obstructions, and hence impossible for us to get up the river. The Nashville certainly could not get out. The chief end in attacking Fort McAllister was to put our men under fire, and thoroughly test the power of resistance and offense of our vessel.

In a week—on February first—we repeated this fight, going this time within six hundred yards of the fort, and close to the obstructions. We were struck fifty-six times. As often as we tore up the work in
this way, the surrounding country was levied on for workmen, and with the labor of the garrison, forty-eight hours made the work nearly as good as new.

Our object in coming here, the capture or destruction of the Nashville, had been so far without avail. Friday, February twenty-seventh, unexpectedly placed her in our power, and sealed her destiny. A little more than two weeks before, she came from her retreat near the bridge of the Savannah and Florida Railroad, and took a position under the guns of Fort McAllister, intending to take advantage of the spring tides prevailing then, and seize the first opportunity to slip to sea. But we had been waiting and watching for this very movement. One night she came down to Hardee's Cut, a short distance below the fort, hoping in that way to get into the Little Ogeechee, elude our vessels, and pass to sea; but one of the vigilant gunboats was there ready to receive her if she came through. They did not try it, and back she went up the river, and, as we learned from refugees, for some time was concealed in a bight in the river a number of miles above the fort, while the Savannah papers said she had
given the slip to our vessels, and gone to sea. As we expected, however, she came down again to the fort. For a number of days she had been trying, as it has since proved, to get up the river again, but a mile above the fort was a shoal, over which she could pass only at highest tide. She steamed up to the shoal and back again to the fort, a number of times. On Sunday afternoon, February twenty-second, she came in sight from behind the point of woods, went to the shoal, and again returned to the fort. She reminded me very much of a caged rat seeking a hole for escape, and finding none. On Friday, February twenty-seventh, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the gunboat Wissahicon signaled a movement on the part of the Nashville, lying near the fort. From the gunboat's mast-heads they could see what from our lower position was invisible. We bent our sight eagerly toward the point of woods, and soon discovered thin columns of black smoke ascending from behind the trees, as from a steamer's smoke-stack, and indicating a movement on the part of the privateer. For a while the smoke increased, and grew thicker, but finally seemed to settle down into a thin broken line, and so remained. The captain
and officers went down below to dinner. I remained on the turret, impressed that more was coming out of the matter. In twenty minutes the column of smoke began growing larger, and blacker, and thicker, and to move rapidly by the trees. Intently I watched the point, and in a moment, from behind the trees came the bow, foremast, then the smoke-stack, and main-mast, and there indeed, with the thick black smoke arising from her funnel and filling the atmosphere, and the ship steaming rapidly up the river, was the famous blockade runner, the rebel privateer Nash-ville. She steamed rapidly some distance up the river, then suddenly and instantly stopped, when her bow and the whole of the ship forward was abruptly lifted four or five feet, and there she remained.

I saw immediately that she had waited to go up the river until it was too late, and in endeavoring in the clear light of mid-afternoon,—and we had never seen her so plainly before, her coming and going having been in the duskiness of morning or evening,—had attempted to cut her way through the shoal, and had brought up aground, hard and fast. I immediately sent word below, and the captain and officers
came on deck. We went straightway to quarters, and for a while Captain Worden intended to go directly up the river. The gunboat Seneca was sent up to reconnoitre. She went up the Little Ogeechee to within a mile and a half of the Nashville, and by way of trial threw four or five shell at her, and in half an hour came back again.

In the meantime the smoke from the Nashville increased, crowding itself up into the air from out her funnel, a dense, expanding, sooty column, and rolling and curling into big black clouds that covered the sky and hurried the coming night, and telling us—how plainly—that they were making a life-struggle to get away. But it was of no use; her engines though a hundred-fold more powerful could not take her off whole. She did not move an inch. The tide, at the ebb when she ran aground, was now falling, and her condition was every moment becoming worse.

Captain Worden would have moved up to attack her if he had thought it judicious, but he saw that she could not get off until morning, with not the slightest probability of her doing so then. Night
was fast coming on, and he chose to wait. At dusk a little smoke, mingled with steam, was rising in thin clouds from her funnel. With our glasses we plainly saw men on her deck, at the mast-heads, and in her rigging, and we knew that she would be lightened during the night, if possible, and every expedient resorted to to get her afloat.

The night was mild and hazy, the moon obscured by passing clouds, yet no light was seen in the direction of the grounded steamer, nor indeed in any other direction, not even the usual rebel signal lights seen almost every night on the river above, or at the batteries on Coffee Bluff, or at Beulah; but we were confident they were working at her, and we prepared to make a demonstration in the morning, anxiously hoping that the bird we saw so nicely caught in the afternoon, might be still fast at the morrow’s dawn.

At four o’clock the next morning, February twenty-eighth, all hands were up, and at five o’clock we had had breakfast and were all ready for the work which we had been earnestly hoping the day might bring us to do. It was a mild, pleasant morning, and the surface of the river was scarcely
broken by a ripple. At five o'clock and ten minutes we got up anchor, and in ten minutes more we were steaming up the river at the rate of six knots. The morning was just breaking, and it was not light enough to discover whether the Nashville was still on the shoal where last evening's darkness found her. We entered a bend in the river, and slackened our speed somewhat, and soon it became lighter, but we were behind the point of woods that we were watching with eager eyes, while our passage up the river was opening to our view the point where we hoped to find the rebel steamer still entrapped.

A little farther—and there she is—hard and fast! We can see a number of men on her forecastle, and considerable bustle and confusion. We steam on by Hardee's Cut, by a range-mark that is fifteen hundred yards from the fort, on to a point eight hundred and fifty yards from the fort, and at seven o'clock we come to anchor, with fifteen fathoms of chain from our windlass. The ship is heading up the river. As we look at the Nashville, Fort McAllister is on our left, eight hundred and fifty yards away, at the angle in the bend of the river. We lie close in to
the marshy shore. The Nashville is much more than a mile above the fort, but less than eleven hundred yards from us, across the swampy peninsula, and is lying with her full fair broadside toward us. The gunboats Wissahicon, Seneca and Dann are lying in the Big Ogeechee, a mile and a half below us.

From the level of our deck we can see nothing of the Nashville but the paddle-box tops, the smoke-stack, and topmasts; but from the inside of the pilot-house we can see the whole steamer, even below her guards, and nearly to the water. She is newly painted, and is the same light drab color as our own vessels of war. Her masts and spars look well, her rigging is taut, and her figure-head newly gilded.

At seven minutes past seven o'clock we fire our first gun (the eleven-inch) at the Nashville, and immediately they let fly at us from the fort three guns. But something is the matter there—for they all pass without touching us, as the shot from the fort have not hitherto done. The smoke from our own gun rises slowly, and we cannot see the effect of its shell. In thirty seconds we see another flash and
puff from the fort, and another shell flies by us. In five minutes we fire our eleven-inch again, and again the smoke conceals the effect of our shot. In five minutes a shot from the fort strikes our pilot-house, a ten-inch solid shot, and breaks into halves, one half remaining on top of the turret, and the other half falling down upon the deck. We then fire our fifteen-inch, and still the rolling cloud of dense blue powder-smoke shuts from our view the result of the shot. We then fire the eleven-inch, and can plainly see it pass just over the Nashville's after rail. In six minutes we fire the fifth time, now a fifteen-inch shell, and follow it distinctly with our eyes, and it penetrates the rebel's deck near the foremast. From the fort they are firing at intervals of a minute, occasionally a shot at the gunboats below, though beyond range yet as if they must do something except the incessant harmless fire at us, and still toward us they send most of their shot. But we pay no attention to the fort, not returning any of its fire. Again we send a shell which the smoke hides from us, and again another is hidden from us. The fifth shot, that entered near the foremast, has done its work,
and we can see a column of whitish-gray smoke issuing from her fore-hatch, and in five minutes more tongues of flame leap out with the smoke, high into the air.

We cannot see her guns, and we suppose they must have been taken off during the night. As we came to anchor, we saw a number of persons get over her starboard side, the one opposite us, after which we saw no living soul on board.

We fire again, and the shell flies crashing into her hull in front of her paddle-box, and when the smoke of our gun has slowly drifted away, we see the fire breaking through the deck amidships. Another shell smashes through the paddle-box, and explodes at the base of the smoke-stack, which comes tumbling down upon the hurricane-deck. Though Mr. Giraud cannot see the Nashville, yet he is making splendid shots from our guidance.

We fire our last shot at three minutes after eight o'clock, having fired fourteen times; and as the smoke clears away from this last shot, we can see the flames bursting out around her paddle-boxes, issuing in great sheets from the fore-hatch, creeping up the foremost
First Cruise of the Montauk.

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rigging, and gaining aft. The fog which has been slowly gathering around us, now entirely shuts us in, and we cannot see thirty yards. For more than half an hour we are thus enclosed, when the fog rises enough to show us the Nashville with the fire rapidly gaining, and smoke-stack fallen partly through the port paddle-box. Fearing that under cover of the fog our ship might be boarded by overpowering numbers, the anchor was gotten up at forty minutes after eight o'clock, and we turned head down stream. From the fort they had not fired in twenty-five or thirty minutes, but as we started away, they let the shot come thick and fast. We learned afterward that the garrison had been changed since our last visit, and only the fact of new men at the guns could explain why few shots from all their firing hit us—but really it made little difference whether they hit us or not.

We steamed slowly down, and in a few moments the fog had risen, revealing the Nashville enveloped in flames. The fire came out from the opened seams in her sides, from around her smoke-stack base and her masts, from between the ribs and braces of her
iron wheels, and fore and aft; and from stem to stern she was shrouded in fire. At thirty-five minutes past nine o'clock she blew up, with a smothered rumbling report like distant thunder. The explosion was amidships, and the column of flame and smoke, like the discharge of a huge gun, shot up into the air, higher than her trucks, carrying with it the charred and broken timber and burning bales of cotton. It was a sight that once seen can never be effaced from the memory. In a few moments another explosion of less extent took place, shattering and opening the stern of the steamer. Her masts, that had stood through it all like black spectres, now toppled and came down; the flames gradually lessened; the long black column of smoke wound its way up to a cloud which had grown until it overshadowed the heavens; and nothing remained but the stem and the iron wheels.

A mass of smouldering embers was all that remained of the noted blockade-runner, the terror of our northern merchants, the destroyer of the Harvey Birch, the rebel pirate Nashville.

We continued on slowly down the river. I came
FIRST CRUISE OF THE MONTAUK.

out of the pilot-house and was standing on the turret; men and officers had just been relieved from their stations and were gathering on deck. The port quarter of the vessel was carried, probably by the action of the current, against the bank of the river, and quite near a small piece of cloth flying from a stick in the grass, which the captain had noticed as we went up the river and called the pilot Murphy's attention to it, who said,—"I think I'll give it a wide berth, sir! I am afraid it's a torpedo."

As we now touched the bank, I was conscious of a jarring motion, as though she had struck the bank quite heavily, but nothing more. So it was noticed by most upon the deck. There was not much more commotion in the water than might be made by the propeller when close in shore. It was, however, supposed in the fire-room below to be a torpedo, and before we moved half a dozen rods away from the bank, the chief engineer came up from the fire-room and said to the captain,—"That was a torpedo, sir! it has blown a hole in her hull under the boilers, and the water is within three inches of her fires." We were just passing the gunboats, whose crews were in
their ships' rigging cheering us. Captain Worden shouted to their commanding officers to send him men and buckets. The boats were dropped from their davits to the river; the men jumped into them; buckets and pumps were tumbled in; and in fifty seconds boats were alongside, and men, buckets and pumps on board. The tide was about an hour ebb. Captain Worden turned to the pilot, and said to him, "Murphy, can't you run me ashore here in some good place?" The pilot answered, "That I can, sir!" All the remaining steam was crowded on, and after moving about half a dozen lengths, we ran ashore along the river bank, where the vessel's keel bore evenly. The pressure of the ship upon the bottom filled the cavity and stopped the leak; the ebbing tide left us high and dry; pine plugs with gutta percha were driven into the chief opening and the cracks that radiated from it; the ship was bailed out; and when the rising tide came in again and lifted us, the rent seemed closed and the ship as good as ever.

The rebels had intended undoubtedly to explode the torpedo under us as we went up the river, that
side being the right and proper one to take as we moved up, and the torpedo must have been located as recently as the previous night. But the perception and prudence of our pilot saved us. Had the rebel plan succeeded, the torpedo would have sunk us in the river, the gunboats could not have gone near enough to harm the Nashville, and she would have been saved to the enemy, and possibly succeeded in getting to sea. But the Montauk was preserved; was able with her patched hull to join in a fight with Fort McAllister on the following day, with three other monitors that arrived that afternoon; was at Charleston from the beginning to the end of the assault on the forts; and came out of the war the veteran monitor, bearing more than four hundred honorable scars.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
War of the Rebellion,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
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A COUNTRY BOY'S

FIRST THREE MONTHS IN THE ARMY.

BY C. HENRY BARNEY,

[FORMERLY CORPORAL FIFTH BATTALION RHODE ISLAND VOLUNTEERS.]

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A COUNTRY BOY'S

FIRST THREE MONTHS IN THE ARMY.

DECEMBER 14, 1861—MARCH 14, 1862.

[READ BEFORE THE SOCIETY, DEC. 11, 1878.]

Seventeen years ago next Saturday morning, or between one and two o'clock A. M. on the fourteenth of December, 1861, a "solitary" pedestrian "might have been seen" trudging along homeward upon the track of the Bristol railroad, just below what is now called Silver Spring. He was but a simple country lad of seventeen, and had not been engaged in any midnight raid upon unprotected hen-roosts, nor indulging in any worse dissipation than attending a party of young people at the house of a neighbor some two miles distant. As he walked along—rumi-

nating perhaps on the bright eyes and rosy cheeks of the substantial damsels who had been his com-
panions in the games of the evening, perhaps thinking what a foolish thing it was to take an extra mile’s walk to escort home the best girl living on such a cold winter night—he discovered a figure approaching upon the track from the opposite direction to that in which he was himself moving.

Travellers on that road at that time of morning were not numerous, and as the stranger rapidly approached, I noticed (for it is time to drop the third person and to say that the country lad and the author of this sketch are identical) that he wore the "blue great-coat" and forage cap of the Union soldier, and as we were passing each other, I recognized to my surprise, a former schoolmate at the Arnold Street school in Providence.

"Halloa! Tom, is that you? what are you doing here and in that dress?" I inquired, and was informed that he was a member of the Fifth Rhode Island Battalion, then encamped on Dexter Training Ground, to which place he was returning from a visit to friends in Bristol. His pass expiring in the morning too soon for the trains, which in those days did not run so early as at present, he had decided to
walk to the city, and thus gain an additional evening in the company of his friends.

We stood talking nearly a half-hour in the moonlight, unmindful of the cold, and eagerly inquiring as to the details of his life in camp, etc., and he willingly giving me the desired information. The result of our conversation was, that when we parted to go our individual ways, there was a fixed determination in my mind that another day should not pass ere my name should be enrolled as a member of the Fifth or Burnside Battalion.

I mention this circumstance to show how the accidental meeting with my former schoolmate finally decided the time and manner of my enlistment, and changed the whole current of my life. From the first call for troops to the time of which I write, I had been anxious to enlist, had twice already inscribed my name upon the enlistment roll, but each time, for lack of the parental certificate of consent, it had been removed. I had but lately returned from a two months' sojourn in Boston, and since my arrival home had not exhibited any symptoms of my former restlessness, and although several young men
of our neighborhood and comrades in the "Barrington Guards," had enlisted in the Fifth, I had shown no desire to join them, and I presume my friends congratulated themselves that I was cured of the "war fever." But the chance meeting with my friend had brought on a relapse of the disease, and it was now raging fiercer than ever before.

But to cut short this personal narrative, I left home the next morning for Providence, without saying a word to any one of my intention to enlist, and that night I slept in a Sibley tent on the Dexter Training Ground, duly enrolled as a member of Capt. Jonathan M. Wheeler's Company "A," Fifth Battalion Rhode Island Volunteers. Recruits were harder to obtain than in the spring and summer, so by a little finesse and by assuring the recruiting officer that there would be no trouble, I induced him to waive the proper certificate of consent required in case of the enlistment of a minor, and now that I was clad from top to toe in the livery of Uncle Sam, I felt that the rubicon was indeed passed, and there could be no receding from the step which I had taken.

Judge then, of my dismay, when, about noon of the
second day in camp, I saw my father standing at the head of our company street in conversation with the lieutenant commanding our company. As I did not return home on Saturday afternoon, a search had been instituted, and my whereabouts easily discovered. What passed between my father and the lieutenant, I do not know. Suffice it to say, that perhaps thinking it best to let matters take their course now that they had gone so far, he finally gave his consent to my enlistment, and with much good advice as to the care of my health and morals, bade me God-speed.

And now to speak of the organization of which I was to form a part. Recruiting for the Fifth Rhode Island or "Burnside Battalion," as it was at first more generally called, was commenced in October, 1861, under authority received by General Burnside from the War Department, the intention being ultimately to fill it up to a full regiment. The recruiting posters announced that the "Burnside Battalion" was to be used exclusively for coast service, no long and fatiguing marches were to be endured, it was to be armed with short "English Rifles" and "French
Boarding Swords." To judge from these advertise-
ments, the battalion was to have what would now-
a-days be termed "a soft thing." To anticipate
a little, we found, however, that there were some
"outs" even in the "coast service," and as for
marches, we generally had to go about where we
were told to, and that was apt to be just as far, for
aught we could discover, as troops enlisted under
less promising auspices.

As I stated before, recruits were not as enthu-
astic in the fall, as during the earlier months of the
war, and as the State offered as yet only fifteen dol-
ars bounty, recruiting was, generally speaking,
rather slow. Yet, such were the superior induc-
ments offered by this battalion, that in seven weeks
five companies had been filled, and the men trans-
ferred from "Camp Greene (where the first companies
went under canvas), to "Camp Slocum" on the Dex-
ter Training Ground. At the time of my enlistment,
there was some snow upon the ground, and the
weather colder than we have had it so far this month,
yet in our floored Sibley tents, each of which was
provided with a sheet-iron camp stove, generally
kept at a red heat, we managed to keep exceedingly comfortable.

Drilling was practiced whenever the weather would permit, with dress parades at evening.

The armament of the battalion differed from that of any Rhode Island regiment previously sent out. We were armed with the short Enfield rifles, calibre .577, with heavy sabre bayonets, (the "French Boarding Swords" of the recruiting posters). Although they presented an imposing show when fixed, in the sunlight, these bayonets made the pieces top-heavy and more awkward to handle than the ordinary kind, not being so well balanced. After we had been in service some eight months, these arms were exchanged for the long Enfields and common triangular bayonets.

Our organization at date of muster-in, consisted of five companies, and the roster of officers was as follows:

Major—John Wright.
Quartermaster—Munro H. Gladding.
Assistant Surgeon—Albert Potter.
Chaplain—McWalter B. Noyes.
Sergeant-Major—Joseph C. Hatlinger.
Quartermaster-Sergeant—William W. Prouty.
Commissary-Sergeant—Charles E. Beers.
Hospital Steward—Charles F. Gladding.

Co. A—Captain, Jonathan M. Wheeler; First Lieutenant, Daniel S. Remington; Second Lieutenant, vacant.
Co. C—Captain, James M. Eddy; First Lieutenant, John E. Snow; Second Lieutenant, George G. Hopkins.
Co. D—Captain, George H. Grant; First Lieutenant, Henry R. Pierce; Second Lieutenant, James Moran.
Co. E—Captain, Job Arnold; First Lieutenant, vacant; Second Lieutenant, James M. Wheaton.

On the morning of Friday, December twenty-seventh, we received orders to prepare to break camp. Soon after twelve o'clock, noon, the tents were struck, and about half past two o'clock the battalion line was formed and after a review by Governor Sprague, the march was taken up for the depot. The clouds had been gathering rapidly since noon, and as we left the Training Ground, a drizzling rain set in. In spite of this, the usual crowd filled the sidewalks to cheer our departure. Occasionally some spectator, catch-
ing sight of a friend in the ranks, would step out and march a few steps by his side, while he bade him a hasty good-bye.

As we were marching down High street, near the junction of Westminster, a classmate of the High School recognized me and stepped to my side. “Do you belong to this regiment?” said he, “Don’t you hold some office?” “Yes,” I replied, “I am an acting corporal.” “Well, I thought you were something more than a private,” said he. As a matter of fact no corporals had yet been appointed in our company, which was the last one organized, although our captain happened to draw the letter A and the right of line. Eight of us had been selected to act in the capacity of corporals and were on probation, so to speak.

At about half past four o’clock our long train was off for Groton, (at that time the terminus of the Stonington line of steamers). I remember every detail as if it were but yesterday. In the seat with me sat a young Irish-American boy of about my own age, whose parents stood beside the car window to bid adieu to their only son. As the train
started he bade them a cheerful good-bye, leaned from the window and watched them standing on the platform until they were hidden by a curve in the track, then sinking back into his seat, he burst into tears. I exerted myself to comfort him, and pictured how comparatively soon he would return and how proud his parents would be of him when he should come home, perhaps an officer. "You are very kind," said he, "but I know that I have seen my father and mother for the last time on earth." Poor fellow, his words proved prophetic; for against his name on the muster-out roll of Company A appear the words, "Died at Andersonville, Georgia, September, 1864."

At Groton, we were transferred to the steamer Commonwealth, which should have started at half past nine, but being aground, did not get off until about one o'clock, and were landed directly at Jersey City at ten o'clock on Saturday morning. From there our route was by rail to Philadelphia, thence to Baltimore, and thence to Annapolis, at which latter place we arrived about seven o'clock Sunday evening. While on the road from Philadelphia to Baltimore,
our captain came through the car and laying his hand on my shoulder, said: "Corporal, I guess you had better put those stripes on now," meaning that he had decided to appoint me to the position. I thanked him, but as it was impossible to follow out his suggestion literally while on the train, I had to content myself with putting on airs instead.

Upon disembarking from the cars at Annapolis, we found ourselves at the foot of a steep embankment, up which we were marched into the grounds of the Naval Academy, the school itself having been transferred to Newport for the time being. As we saw the next morning, it was a delightful camping ground, and commanded a full view of the harbor and all the vessels assembled to take part in the Burnside Expedition. All this the daylight revealed, but at the time of our arrival it was too dark to see anything, so while a part of the men were pitching our tents as near to where they ought to be as possible, the remainder were bringing the company and regimental property up the bank, until finally all was moved and we turned in and slept soundly, for the first time upon the bare ground. A few hours work
next day straightened the lines of our company streets, and put the camp in perfect order.

On the third of January, we were gladdened by the sight of the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment, just arrived from Washington, which marched into the grounds and established camp near us. A letter by me at that time says, "We expect the Second Rhode Island here in a few days." This was camp rumor whether it was ever really contemplated by the authorities for the Second to take part in our expedition, I do not know.

The Burnside Expedition as finally organized, comprised a division of three brigades, commanded respectively by Brigadier Generals Foster, Reno and Parke. The brigade of the latter, numbered the Third, consisted of the Fourth and Fifth Rhode Island and the Eighth and Eleventh Connecticut regiments.

On the eighth day of January we struck tents at ten o'clock in the morning, and embarking on two small steamboats were speedily transferred to the ship Kitty Simpson, which formed a part of the transport fleet, and on the following morning we
started down the Chesapeake, in tow of a tug, our destination unknown. Here we were served with rations of hard-bread and raw salt pork cut in slices, and we began to feel that we were fast getting down to the stern realities of a soldier's life.

Of course you will perceive that this kind of fare was entirely unnecessary and was caused by the inexperience of the officers, who a few months later would have caused a sufficient quantity of cooked rations to have been prepared on shore and taken on board with us to last until the cooks should have got their department in working order on the Kitty Simpson.

When, however, matters in the culinary department became fully settled, we fared well enough, and as extra luxuries, were treated occasionally to a ration of "lob scouse" and to a dyspeptic concoction denominated "duff." I am not quite sure of the orthography of the latter, but think an appropriate way of spelling it would be t-o-u-g-h, d-o-u-g-h, "tuff duff" or tough dough—either pronunciation would suit the case.

Leaving Fortress Monroe, after a stormy passage
we arrived off Hatteras Inlet on the thirteenth of January. Most of our men suffered greatly from sea-sickness. As it was found that our ship drew too much water to allow her to pass over the bar into the smooth water inside, details were set at work to lighten the ship by throwing overboard the gravel which formed her ballast. Three days' work lightened us two and one-half feet, and in the tow of the propeller Virginia we attempted the passage. Owing to a heavy fog which came up suddenly, or to some unexplained cause, the pilot of the Virginia varied slightly from the proper channel, and just as we were congratulating ourselves that we were safely over and should soon be riding at anchor with the rest of the fleet which had preceded us into the inlet, a sudden grating, then a shock, told that we were not yet out of danger. A second shock, harder than the first, and the hawser from us to the propeller parted with the sudden strain, and the Virginia, shouting back the advice to let go our anchor, disappeared in the fog, and we saw her no more that day.

Our situation was now anything but pleasant, with
a probability that it might prove extremely perilous. We lay upon a sandy bottom, but the motion of the ground swell caused the ship to rise and fall every minute, keeping up a continual pounding. As we would strike solidly it seemed as if the masts would be driven through the bottom of the vessel, and all the standing rigging would slacken up and hang loosely from the masts; then as we rose again, it would resume its usual taut position. When we first struck it was a dead calm, with the exception of the ground swell, but very soon the wind commenced to rise and blew away the fog, and about a pistol-shot on our port-bow we could see the bare timbers of one of the fleet, which two days before attempted to enter the inlet with a load of horses. Her bones now lay upon a reef of rocks, and should the wind shift before our ship could be gotten off, and the wind is liable to shift half a dozen times a day at Hatteras, nothing could prevent our going to pieces on the same place. As the violence of the wind and waves increased, the thumping of our ship increased also, until loosened from their fastenings by the tremendous strain, the top-sail yards began to tumble upon
deck, causing several narrow escapes before the men could get below out of the way.

It began to look as though there were more desirable branches of service than the "Coast Division." About four o'clock we espied a steamer coming out from the inlet toward us. She proved to be the steamer Eagle, formerly a New York ferry boat. As she came alongside, Lieutenant D. A. Pell, of General Burnside's staff, stood on the hurricane deck with the captain of the steamer. As the Eagle crashed against our starboard quarter, crushing like an egg-shell the ship's boat which hung there, Lieutenant Pell shouted to our commanding officer that the orders of General Burnside were for him to embark his men on board the Eagle and leave our ship to its fate. Before he had finished his sentence the steamer was at least thirty feet away from our ship, and as the next wave swept her again to our side, two soldiers leaped from our rail toward the Eagle. One reached her hurricane deck, the other fell short, but as he went down was fortunate enough to catch hold of a fender which hung over her side, and by means of a rope was drawn on board.
In common with most of our men, I had hurried to the side of the Kitty Simpson next the steamer, to see what was going to be done. As I heard the order to transfer the men to the Eagle, and saw that boat tossed about, like an egg-shell, by the violence of the waves, I realized the impossibility of safely transferring a quarter of our men to the steamer, and felt that the attempt would be madness.

But Major Wright was equal to the emergency. Jumping upon the rail, he commanded, in a voice above the tempest and confusion, that not a man should attempt to leave our ship until orders should be given by himself. The narrow escape from death of the soldier I have mentioned, was a powerful argument in favor of obedience, and no more men jumped. Then ensued a short and sharp colloquy between our major and the captain of the ferry-boat, the former desiring that the latter should take our line and attempt to pull us off, believing that aided by the frequent lifting of our craft by the heavy sea, the attempt might be successful. "It is of no use," said the captain, "there is not power enough in my engine to pull you off; the most I can
do is to save your men, before it is too late." But
the major insisted with language too emphatic to re-
peat here, and finally the captain agreed to make
the attempt. With what eagerness we watched the
attaching of the hawser, and as the steamer started
her wheels and the line began to draw, I am sure
many prayers went up from hearts unused to prayer,
that the attempt might be successful. Tighter and
tighter grows the rope, we seem to be moving, no—
it is but imagination, for we strike again as solid as
ever, and, with a loud report, the tow-line snaps in
twain and falls into the seething waters.

But the attempt is not to be abandoned, for an
extra large hawser, which has lain coiled between
decks all the voyage, is gotten up, one end passed
to the Eagle and the other made fast to our vessel.
"That line will never part," says Mr. Fox, the first
mate, "it will pull the bitts out of the ship first."
Again the steamer starts ahead, with her engines
crowded to their utmost capacity, and this time,—
hurrah! off we slide, and before we hardly realize
it we are in deep water and in ten minutes more
with the rest of our fleet, the troops on which
have been watching us ever since the fog lifted, and now greet us with hearty cheers as we pass. It was fortunate for us that we worked off the bar as we did, for about eleven o'clock that night came the change in the wind which would have sealed our doom in a very few minutes. As the result of the strain she had undergone, the Kitty Simpson was adjudged too much damaged to be sent to sea again, and after our battalion left her she was used as a store-ship, at Hatteras, and was finally, I believe, beached and broken up there.

Now that our fleet was all inside the outer bar there remained an inner bar, called "the swash," to be crossed before the expedition could advance up the sound. Many of the vessels, our own among the number, were too deep in the water to be taken over the new obstacle, and some three weeks time was consumed in sending to New York for smaller craft, and in transferring the troops.

January thirty-first the Fifth Battalion was placed on board the iron side-wheel steamer S. R. Spaulding (formerly running between Providence and Baltimore), a much larger vessel than the Kitty
Simpson, but of less draft. The Spaulding was the headquarters of General Burnside, and could have easily furnished transportation for a command three times the size of our own. We had been on the Simpson twenty-three days and we left her without regret. When we first went on board at Annapolis we were pleased with the apparent cleanliness of our quarters, everything between decks having been freshly painted and everything looking as neat as a pin. We did not know until afterward, that previous to her charter by the government as a transport she had made one or more voyages in the coolie trade. The consequences to us it is not necessary to detail here; suffice it to say, the battalion saw more skirmishing with gray-backs while on board the Kitty Simpson, than it ever did in the same length of time after getting on shore.

February fifth, everything being at last in readiness, we weighed anchor and the fleet started slowly up the sound, the gun-boats in advance. Fog and other causes delayed us so that we did not arrive in sight of Roanoke Island till Friday, the seventh, shortly before noon. As soon as the gun-boats came
within range the main battery of the enemy, Fort Bartow, opened fire upon them, which was immediately returned. This was kept up during the whole afternoon, the only apparent result being the setting on fire of the wooden barracks inside the battery. The transports lay some distance below the scene of the conflict, our steamer being about opposite the point where the troops were afterward landed. About three o'clock a boats crew from our battalion, in charge of Lieutenant Andrew, Ninth New York Volunteers, acting aide to General Burnside, was sent in near shore to take soundings and ascertain how near our transports could run in for the purpose of landing the troops. I afterward learned from one of the men that they had accomplished their mission successfully, when the lieutenant decided to land and reconnoitre a little as there appeared to be no enemy in sight. But hardly had they set foot on shore when a dozen or more graycoats rose out of the tall grass growing on the bank, and saluted them with a shower of bullets, which fortunately hit no one. Hastily tumbling back into
their boat, they pulled out of range as quickly as possible, but not until the enemy had given them a second round, this time with more effect. Private Charles A. Viall, Company E, of the Fifth, was struck in the mouth by a ball which took its course along his lower jaw-bone, being afterward extracted under the ear. The clothing of several of the men was struck, and one bullet shattered the blade of one of the oars. This affair gave the Fifth Rhode Island a claim to "first blood" in the Burnside Expedition. Meanwhile the affair had been seen from the Spaulding, and a gun-boat being signaled, ran down and threw a few shells into the vicinity of the scrimmage, and remained there to cover the landing of the troops.

Preparations for the landing were made without waiting for the return of the rowboat. Our men were transferred to large launches which would hold nearly a company, a string of ten or twelve of these were taken in tow by a tug, and in this way the landing was made. Some of the smaller steamers ran up to the shore and the troops landed directly from their decks. The Union, a stern-wheel
steamer of very light draft, and nick-named by the boys the "wheel-barrow," rendered excellent service here, as well as afterward at Newbern, in landing the troops. Our battalion was all ashore an hour before sunset, but some of the troops were not landed until very late in the evening.

That night we bivouacked in a muddy corn field, without shelter of any kind. Soon after dark it commenced to rain, and being as yet "greenhorns," our situation was thoroughly uncomfortable. Sleep there was none. Early the next morning we were on the march for the field where occurred the battle of Roanoke Island. I shall not, of course, attempt a detailed account of the battle, for that is a matter of history, and personally I saw but little of it. I will only refer to a few of its principal features.

The battery of the rebels was upon a narrow neck which connected the upper and lower parts of the Island, and commanded a corduroy road only wide enough for four or five men to march abreast, which road was built through a morass stretching right and left from the battery to either shore of the island. This morass was believed by the enemy to be im-
passable for troops, and in order to give full effect to their artillery, the trees had been felled in front and for some distance on each flank, and left lying so as to form an effective abattis. From the nature of the ground only a small portion of our force could be engaged at a time. Our only artillery was a battery of six boat howitzers, manned by sailors. The turning point of the battle was the flanking of the enemy’s position on both the right and left by the passage of the swampy morass by our men in the face of almost insurmountable difficulties. As soon as the Union column appeared from the woods on each flank, which they did nearly simultaneously, the enemy realized their defeat, and abandoning their works, fled toward the north end of the island. Being rapidly pursued by the First Brigade under General Foster, the greater part of them as well as the garrisons of the forts on the upper end of the island, the rear approaches to which were now left entirely unprotected, fell into our hands as prisoners, about three thousand in all. Like many of the regiments of the division, the Fifth Rhode Island was not as a whole directly under the
enemy's fire during the engagement, did not fire a shot, and suffered no casualty, except the case of Private Viall before mentioned. During the greater part of the engagement it was stationed in the woods to the north and east of the landing and just to the left of the battle-field. For about half an hour the battalion was exposed to a most severe ordeal for raw troops, being placed in position by the side of a road leading off the battle-field, along which a constant procession of wounded were being borne to the rear.

After the surrender, the troops were assigned positions in different parts of the island, our own battalion remaining two or three days doing guard duty around the hospital, which was established near the landing place of the troops, and then being sent to Fort Bartow, the principal battery on the western front. In two or three days our tents and baggage came ashore from the Spaulding and we went regularly into the routine of camp duty.

Among the officers of the enemy was Captain O. Jennings Wise, son of General Henry A. Wise, formerly Governor of Virginia. Severely wounded
during the battle of the seventh, he died the next day, and was buried by the Union troops. About a fortnight after, a small side-wheel rebel steamer bearing a flag of truce, came down the sound with a request for his remains, which was granted. I happened to be detailed in charge of a squad of men which conveyed his body from the burial ground to the shore and from thence in a rowboat to the rebel steamer. The officer of the day, I cannot now remember who it was, joined us at the boat and delivered the body to the officers of the steamer. We stepped on board the rebel boat, but were allowed only on the forward deck and remained but a short time.

Our life during the few weeks we were at Roanoke was uneventful, with the exception of an expedition made by our battalion on the steamer Union, to destroy some salt-works on one of the little creeks leading into the sound above us, which were represented as turning out large quantities of salt; but which we found not to be worth the trouble of going after.

The monotony of camp-life on the island was re-
F\textit{Ir\textit{F}st Three Months in the Army.} 31

lied somewhat by the manufacture of brier-wood pipes, there being an abundance of roots suitable for the purpose. Many of the men turned out articles which were very creditable specimens of carving, and I suppose there was hardly a member of our battalion who did not make one or more of these pipes to send home when occasion should offer. A favorite amusement of my own, whenever I could obtain a pass, was to explore the island, searching for traces of, and speculating upon the fate of, that lost colony, which as you will remember, made at Roanoke the first English settlement in America, among the members of which were the parents of the little Virginia Dare, the first babe of English blood to open its eyes upon American soil.

While at Roanoke we were joined by Second Lieutenant Levi F. Goodwin and First Sergeant Robert S. Brownell of Company A, and a number of privates belonging to different companies, who from various causes had been left behind us in Rhode Island, and whom Brownell, who officiated as a sort of Provost Sergeant while we were at Camp Slocum, had been left behind to pick up. With Sergeant Brownell came his
wife, Kady, or Katy as we called her then, one of the vivandieres of Company H, First Regiment Rhode Island Detached Militia. She enjoyed the freedom of the camp in a sort of bloomers costume, more appropriate to the wilds of Roanoke than to the streets of Providence.

It soon became evident that we were not to remain long idle, and preparations having been going on for several days previous, we left our camp on Thursday, March sixth, and with all our belongings, embarked on board the steamers Eagle and Curlew, two ex-New York ferry-boats. My company (A) was in that portion of the battalion assigned to the Eagle, the same steamer to which I have previously referred as assisting us off the bar at Hatteras. These boats had already been used as transports and were quite well adapted for that purpose on inland waters. The two saloons or cabins on either side were closely filled with rough board bunks several tiers high, only narrow passages being left between each row, while the open carriage drives of former days in the centre of the boat made an excellent parade and drill
ground, and the cooks occupied one end of the boat for their operations.

Tuesday morning, the eleventh, the entire fleet, with the gun-boats in advance, started for Newbern, the route necessitating a return to Hatteras and from thence up the Neuse river to Newbern. Wednesday evening, the twelfth, we arrived at Slocum's creek, about eighteen miles below the city, and anchored for the night. I have seldom witnessed a prettier sight than the passage of the fleet up the Neuse river during that afternoon. The river for the greater part of the distance was quite broad, and calm as a mirror, the fleet of transports sailed in two parallel lines, the decks of every vessel being apparently as crowded with uniformed men as are the decks of our summer steamers with excursionists. The weather was delightful, and the constant waving of the signal flags from one vessel to another added life and brilliancy to the scene.

At tattoo an order was read, stating that we were to land in the morning in light marching order, meaning that we were to carry only rubber and woolen blankets (rolled and worn over one's shoul-
der like a sash), haversacks and canteens, and sixty rounds of cartridges, forty in the boxes and twenty distributed about our persons at convenience.

In accordance with these instructions the landing was made the next morning in very much the same style as at Roanoke, except that the shore was less bold and the boats could not approach so closely to the beach as at the island. The men of the different regiments vied with each other in being the first to land, and as fast as each launch grounded, sixty yards or so from shore, soldiers leaped into the water, some up to their knees, some above their waists, and waded ashore. The New York Herald, I think it was, gave us the credit of being the first regiment to land, but Color Sergeant Poppie, of the Fifty-first New York, was the first man on shore, and as he planted the Stars and Stripes, cheer after cheer went up from the men not yet landed. As soon as our battalion was all ashore, line was formed, arms stacked, and we sat down about two hours to wait the landing of the remainder of the troops. By that time it was noon, and the clouds which had threatened rain all the morning, now began to pour down
their contents as we took up the line of march toward Newbern. Our road lay mostly through a wooded country, interspersed by frequent clearings, some of which extended to the river, giving us an occasional glimpse of the gun-boats, which were following up our march, keeping nearly abreast of the head of our column.

After about an hour's march we came upon a deserted rebel cavalry camp, which had been abandoned in such a hurry that the dinner of the officers was found smoking on the table, and that of the men over the fires, both untouched.

The marching was heavy in the extreme. The rain had so moistened the clayey soil that it stuck to our feet like so much tar, greatly impeding the progress of the men. Accompanying our expedition was the same six howitzer battery that formed our only artillery force at Roanoke. The crews of these guns found great difficulty in getting their pieces through the mud, the small wheels becoming completely clogged with the stiff clay, and the aid of details from the infantry to pull on the drag ropes was frequently necessary.
About the middle of the afternoon we came upon an unoccupied line of breast-works, over a mile in length, situated in a clearing, having quite an extensive battery at each end of the line. No guns had been mounted and the works were incomplete, the tracks and shovel marks seeming to indicate that the work had but recently been abandoned. Had these fortifications been finished and fully manned, they undoubtedly could have offered a very stubborn resistance to our progress.

About six o'clock a halt was ordered, and the battalion turned into the woods at the right of the road and bivouacked for the night. We were now, as we afterward found, about a mile from the enemy's line, and we were wet to the skin by the drizzling rain, which had been falling all the afternoon. With the exception of the mud, instead of which here was moss and half-decayed leaves, our position was almost as disagreeable as during the night before the battle of Roanoke. We were an uncomfortable set, but the most thoroughly uncomfortable of all, seemed to be Mrs. Kady Brownell. She had started on the march with a pair of ladies' ordinary walking shoes,
but as these soon became saturated with water, one of the soldiers gave her a pair of men's calf-skin boots of a small size, which he took from a house on the line of our march. These she put on, but of course they soon became wet through also, and any one who has ever tried the experiment of marching in wet calf-skin leg boots, can readily imagine the blistered condition of her feet at night. As she sat with her back against a tree, weeping with her head on her husband's shoulder, I imagine she was sighing for the flesh pots of Camp Sprague, and thinking like the rest of us, that there must have been some mistake about the wording of those recruiting posters, which said "No Hard Marching!"

With feeble attempts to forget our wetness and fatigue the night wore away, and by seven in the morning we were moving to the front again. Before starting, we were cautioned to pick out the nipples of our rifles and fresh cap them, a wise precaution, and even with this, many of the pieces missed fire on account of the dampness.

The First Brigade had the advance, followed by our own, with Reno's Brigade on the left, and the
line of battle was subsequently formed in the same order, from right to left. The Twenty-fourth Massachusetts, Colonel Stevenson, had the extreme right and Colonel J. F. Hartranft's Fifty-first Pennsylvania the extreme left. Hardly had we proceeded half a mile, when our ears were saluted by the "crack," "crack," of the skirmishers, and soon the volleys and file firing of the regiments of the First Brigade told us that the battle had begun. Almost immediately we received the order, "Double quick, March!" and following the road perhaps a quarter of a mile further, we turned into a clearing to the left, and then obliquely to the front, and passing through a thin fringe of woods, came suddenly upon the battlefield, and formed "on the right by file into line." Almost immediately we were ordered to commence firing by file.

Our position was about in the centre of the Union line of battle. The enemy's line of breast-works and batteries were continuous from the river on their left to the railroad on their right, while beyond the railroad were a number of works, small lunettes, with a line of rifle pits connecting them.
FIRST THREE MONTHS IN THE ARMY. 39

We were firing perhaps half an hour, although it did not seem a quarter of that time, when a rumor came to us that the Twenty-first Massachusetts had made a charge and succeeded in getting inside the rebel works, but had been driven out again, the enemy rallying as soon as they found the Twenty-first unsupported. As the morning was cloudy and damp, with no wind, the smoke of the firing had long before this become so thick that we could see nothing to the right or left, not even the enemy's works in our immediate front. All at once, we received orders to cease firing, and we noticed the Fourth Rhode Island marching by the right flank to our left and rear. As soon as they had passed, we faced to the right, counter-marched and followed them.

This was the beginning of the celebrated charge which decided the fate of the day. As is now a matter of history, the movement was ordered by Colonel Rodman of the Fourth, upon his own responsibility, through information given him by Colonel Clark of the Twenty-first Massachusetts, and with the advice of Lieutenant Lydig of General Parke's staff, Colonel Rodman being unable to communicate with the
General in the confusion of the battle. It was a most fortunate decision for Colonel Rodman, and gained him his promotion to the position of Brigadier General. Who gave the orders to the Fifth I do not know, but I have an idea that Lieutenant Lydig may have assumed to give the order to Major Wright as coming from General Parke. The charge was made some distance over stumps and fallen trees and into swamp holes, till we struck the railroad track, which we followed through a gap necessarily left in the line of works, into the enemy's lines. About a year later I visited the battle-field, and traced with amazement our movements on the day of the fight. It seemed impossible that soldiers, loaded down as we were, could ever have leaped as nimbly as we did, over the formidable obstacles of the fallen trees, which I have spoken of and which in some cases lay nearly breast-high across our path. Yet in the excitement of the moment we hardly realized that there were any obstacles in our way, and I presume most of the members of this society can recall similar instances which have occurred in their own experience.
During the charge up the railroad, we were exposed to a severe fire from the works on our right and left, and the greatest loss of the day in both regiments occurred here. But once inside the lines we were in the enemy's rear, and as the head of our column entered the gap the rebels abandoned their works and fled. The Fourth immediately swept down the line of works to the right, towards the large battery on the river bank, while the Fifth moved by the left flank, until we came to the brow of a ravine overlooking the smaller batteries to the right of the railroad, which I have previously indicated. These the enemy had not yet abandoned, and his troops which had fled from the main works before us, halted here and made another stand. On the brow of this ravine we formed line of battle and commenced firing, General Reno's brigade continuing meanwhile their attack in front, which had now lasted an hour or more. We were at this time very close to the enemy. I recollect we would load under shelter of the hill, go up on the ridge to deliver our fire, and then fall back to load again.

At one time it happened that Sergeant Brownell
and myself went up on the hill together, I fired, and am not sure whether he had done so or not, when, as I turned to step back to the hollow, I saw him suddenly fall to the ground. For a moment I did not think of his being wounded, supposing he had tripped over the vines, which were somewhat thick on the ground, but he groaned and said, “They’ve hit me,” and I then saw that the blood was commencing to stain the leg of his blue trousers. Dropping my rifle, I knelt down and with my pocket knife cut open his trousers and saw that the blood was flowing freely from a wound in the fleshy part of the thigh. I knew that the thing most needed was to stop the copious flow of blood as soon as possible, so tying my handkerchief loosely around the wounded limb, I picked up a small stick of sufficient strength, and passing it under the handkerchief, proceeded to “take a twist” in it, as we used to do at home, on a larger scale, upon the binding rope of our hay wagons. Continuing to twist, I found that the bleeding was checked, so I made fast one end of the stick, and by this time two of the drum corps appeared and by them he was carried to the surgeon, who had
established himself some distance in the rear. I will only add that Brownell afterward recovered sufficiently to be discharged from the service, in time became able to walk quite well, and I believe is now living in New York with his wife. I have mentioned this incident because it was the first time I saw a man struck in action. Of course, at Roanoke, I had seen many men after they were wounded, and in the charge up the railroad we had lost several from my own company, yet I did not happen to see them fall, and did not know until afterward that any were missing.

About the time Brownell was carried to the rear we received the order to cease firing, and we noticed that General Reno’s brigade, becoming tired of standing the severe fire they were receiving, were charging the enemy’s works. Some of our officers and men, seeing our opportunity, were anxious to charge also, and from our position I think we could have reached the works before the brigade in front, but no orders were given us, and in a few moments more we saw the colors of the Fifty-first Pennsylvania in the rebel works. Previous to this the Fourth Rhode Island,
having as I stated gone to the right, had charged the flank of Fort Thompson, the large river battery, simultaneously with the Twenty-fourth Massachusetts and the remainder of the First Brigade, from the front, and the whole line of works was now in our hands.

This decided the possession of the city of Newbern and gave us forty-six heavy guns, three six-gun light batteries, three thousand small arms, a large quantity of stores, and three hundred prisoners. This small number of prisoners is accounted for by the fact that most of the six thousand Confederates engaged escaped upon the railroad trains, which were in waiting and all fired up ready for a start. Escaping across the Neuse river, they burned the long railroad bridge behind them, and continued their flight to the interior of the State. It is said that our gun-boats were in easy range of the trains which passed over the bridge, but as one of the cars displayed an American flag they supposed it to be our own victorious troops entering Newbern, otherwise they would have attempted by shelling to have disabled and stopped the train.
Company A lost five men in the battle of Newbern. The loss of the other companies of our battalion, I am unable to state. Among the killed of Company D, however, was First Lieutenant Henry R. Pierce, who was the only commissioned officer struck during the engagement. Lieutenant Pierce had been for several years principal of the Woonsocket High School, but had abandoned his profession and entered the army from a sense of duty.

It was now after eleven o'clock, the battle was over, and a short rest was given to allow the men to eat the noon meal, which you may be sure was well relished under the circumstances, as our appetite for breakfast had been very light. After an interval of about an hour, the march was resumed up the railroad track toward Newbern, now about four miles distant.

Within a mile of the city the Fifth left the road, and turning to the right toward the river bank, found quarters in a deserted rebel camp. This had been hastily abandoned, and an effort made to burn the tents, which from the hurried manner in which it had been attempted was only partially successful.
About one-third of the tents were destroyed, but enough were left to furnish accommodation for all our men, which accommodation was thoroughly appreciated.

This camp was christened "Camp Pierce," in honor of Lieutenant Pierce mentioned above as one of the killed in the battle. Among the stores which we found were several barrels of burnt rye, used by the Confederates as a substitute for coffee, which latter they were unable to obtain. We tried some of it, but did not like it as well as the genuine article. Probably an "extract of rye" obtained by a different process would have given better satisfaction.

The First and Second Brigades were assigned quarters in and around Newbern, and in about a week the Third proceeded to attempt the reduction of Fort Macon, near Beaufort, forty miles distant by rail.

In the siege of Fort Macon the Fifth bore a conspicuous part, and my original intention was to include these operations in this paper, as well as the Tarboro and Goldsboro expeditions, including the battles of Rahls Mills, Kinston, Whitehall and Golds-
boro, thus covering the first year's service of the regiment. But my paper is already beyond the proper length for a sketch of this nature, and I must leave those matters till another time, or better still, for another writer, hoping that this imperfect sketch, while not attempting to give a full or connected history of the battalion even as far as it has gone, may have brought out some points not before familiar to the members of our society.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
War of the Rebellion,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.
No. 3. ... Second Series.
ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE

OF

BATTERY F,

FIRST RHODE ISLAND LIGHT ARTILLERY,

TO JANUARY 1st, 1863.

BY PHILIP S. CHASE,

[LATE SECOND LIEUTENANT BATTERY F, FIRST REGIMENT RHODE ISLAND LIGHT ARTILLERY.]

PROVIDENCE:

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1880.
ORGANIZATION AND SERVICE
OF
BATTERY F,
FIRST RHODE ISLAND LIGHT ARTILLERY,
TO JANUARY 1st, 1863.

[Read before the Society, March 20, 1878.]

Battery F, First Rhode Island Light Artillery, known at the time as the Seventh Rhode Island Battery, and better known in the field as "Belger's Battery," was recruited mainly during the month of October, 1861. The rendezvous during the organization was "Camp Perry," located on the west bank of Mashapaug pond, Cranston, Rhode Island.

Three recruiting excursions visited different parts of the State while the battery was in course of organization. The first, consisting of one section, two guns, with men and horses, commanded by
Lieutenant Thomas Simpson, visited the villages in the northern part of the State, going as far as Woonsocket. I was assigned to this command as a private, and received my first instruction in light artillery service at this time. The second excursion consisted of one gun and caisson, fully manned. This detachment, commanded by Lieutenant Simpson also, visited the eastern part of the State, viz., Warren, Bristol, Tiverton, Portsmouth and Little Compton. I was assigned to this command as corporal or gunner. To partially illustrate the popular feeling at the time, some of the experiences of this trip are here given.

Leaving Camp Perry Tuesday, October 22d, 1861, the command marched to Warren, Rhode Island, and encamped. Wednesday it proceeded to Bristol and encamped on the "Common." Salutes were fired and an exhibition drill given, including dismounting and mounting of guns and carriages, which was witnessed by a large and enthusiastic gathering. Thursday afternoon we proceeded on our journey, passing through Fall River, Massachusetts, and encamped that night in the suburbs of that city, on the
Rhode Island side of the line. The night was bitter cold, and not being prepared for unusual weather, we had our first experience in camp life under unfavorable circumstances. Some of the residents of that vicinity, upon viewing their fences and wood-piles the next morning, were no doubt very grateful that our orders prevented us from stopping with them longer. Friday morning we marched to Portsmouth, arriving at the village of Newtown about noon, where the command was sumptuously entertained by the town clerk at his residence. At night we encamped in "Fort Butts," an extensive earthwork of revolutionary times, located on a hill about one and a half miles southerly from Bristol Ferry. The memory of scenes enacted on this spot, served to increase the patriotism of our little band and strengthen the determination to do all in our power for the preservation of the country in its time of peril. (The centennial anniversary of the Battle of Rhode Island, which occurs August twenty-ninth of this year, is to be observed at this fort.) Saturday morning we proceeded to Tiverton Four Corners, where we were again entertained, this time by Holder N. Wilcox,
Esquire, at his residence. Two of his sons afterwards became members of the battery, one of whom was severely wounded. After firing the usual salute, the command proceeded to "Little Compton Commons," pitched the tents and prepared to spend Sunday with the people of that village. In the evening we were taken to the Town Hall, where a fine collation was served.

I think it was the intention of Lieutenant Simpson to visit Newport before returning to Camp Perry, but orders received Sunday afternoon to return at once to Providence, prevented, and we were obliged to disturb the quiet of a Sunday afternoon in the country, by immediately breaking camp and commencing the return march. The command arrived in Swanzey that night, just after the close of the evening meetings, and obtaining permission, picketed the horses in a church yard, and the men occupied the church as barracks. The detachment reached Camp Perry Monday, October twenty-eighth, and as there were men in the battery from the places visited, I presume the expedition was successful in its object.
The third excursion visited the western part of the State, but I am not able to give the particulars of the trip.

The battery was ordered to Washington in two detachments, the first leaving Providence Monday, October 28th, 1861, the second following on Tuesday, the twenty-ninth. The routes taken were Stonington Line to New York, Camden and Amboy Railroad to Philadelphia, and by rail via Baltimore to Washington. I was assigned to the second detachment, which reached Camp Sprague during the evening of Thursday, October thirty-first.

The battery was mustered into the United States service at Camp Perry, October twenty-eighth. The original officers were: Captain, Miles G. Moies; First Lieutenants, Charles H. Pope and George W. Field; Second Lieutenants, Thomas Simpson and William A. Arnold. The names of one hundred and thirty-eight enlisted men appear upon the roll.

Captain Moies resigned his commission about the twelfth of November, 1861, leaving First Lieutenant Pope in command until the arrival, on the twenty-second of November, of Captain James Belger, who
had been commissioned in the regiment and assigned to Battery F.

Captain Belger was an old soldier, having served ten years in the United States Army in the First Artillery, eight years of which time he was sergeant and first sergeant of Magruder's Battery, and seven years of the service was in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas, against Indians. At the first battle of Bull Run, July 21st, 1861, he was chief of the right piece, left section, Ricketts' Battery. He was honorably discharged from the First United States Artillery, at Poolsville, Maryland, September 28th, 1861, by reason of expiration of term of service. His appointment as Captain in the First Rhode Island Light Artillery dates from October 17th, 1861, and he was mustered out of service at Washington, D. C., December 30th, 1864, by virtue of the following Special Order:
FIRST RHODE ISLAND LIGHT ARTILLERY.

"WAR DEPARTMENT,
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, December 30, 1864.

Special Orders,
No. 474.

[Extract.]

10. Under the provisions of General Orders No. 108, April 28th, 1863, from this office, Captain James Belger, First Rhode Island Light Artillery, an escaped prisoner of war, is hereby mustered out and honorably discharged the service of the United States.

By order of the Secretary of War,
(Signed) E. D. TOWNSEND,
Assistant Adjutant General."

Soon after the arrival of Captain Belger the battery was supplied with four ten-pounder Parrott guns, two twelve-pounder howitzers, and a full complement of horses.

The captain had very decided opinions of discipline, and at once commenced the work of placing the battery in a state of proficiency in drill, etc., for effective work.

I well remember an incident that occurred Thanksgiving day, 1861. It impressed upon my mind the
position I occupied as an enlisted man in the United States service. A large number of requests for passes to visit Washington were handed to the captain in the morning, one from myself being among the number. A comparatively small number were granted, and a few of us who felt somewhat mad at being refused, and not having the fear of Uncle Sam's veterans before our eyes, determined to visit the city without the necessary papers. We passed the camp guard, reached the city and had visited some of the places of public interest, when passing down Pennsylvania avenue we were halted by a squad of armed men who demanded to see our passes. I had heard of the guard house, and had no desire to be placed there, as in addition to a feeling of mortification, I was sure to lose my position as corporal or gunner of the second piece if returned to camp under guard. But one of our number was equal to the emergency, replying to the demand that "our colonel was coming, and had them." While waiting with the guard for "our colonel," a soldier who had been imbibing too freely of "commissary" appeared, and while the guard was occupied in attending to his case, we
waited for "our colonel" no longer, but immediately made our way back to camp. A year later I doubt if a provost guard could have been prevailed upon to wait long for such a purpose. The captain had learned of our absence without leave, and summoned us to headquarters, where, in the presence of the officers of the battery, he administered a reprimand in language not to be forgotten, and from that time forward I understood that one of the duties of a corporal was to obey his superior officers, and never attempt to leave camp without the required pass.

The battery remained at Camp Sprague until the second day of December, 1861, when it crossed Long Bridge and many of us stood for the first time upon the "sacred soil of Virginia." Passing through Alexandria, we pitched our tents at Camp California, General Sumner's Division, located if I remember correctly, to the left and in advance of Fort Worth, near Cloud's Mills.

While at Camp California, the sound of the "long roll" and "boots and saddles" at night, greeted us for the first time December 18th, 1861. All was excitement, although there was no confusion, and the short
time occupied in hitching up and moving out on the road, prepared for what might be required of us, was very satisfactory to the officers. We moved to the front and took position on Edsall's Hill, so called, and remained in position there until morning, when we returned to camp, having neither seen nor heard of an enemy.

December 21st, 1861, in compliance with the following order:

"Headquarters Army of the Potomac,
Washington, December 20, 1861.

Special Orders, 
No. 193. 

III. Battery F, Rhode Island Light Artillery, Captain Belger, is assigned to Burnside's Division, which it will proceed to join at Annapolis, Maryland, without delay. The Quartermaster's Department will furnish the necessary transportation.

By command of Major General McClellan,

(Signed) S. Williams,
Assistant Adjutant General.

Official.

Alex. S. Webb,
Major and Assistant to Chief of Artillery."
The battery left Camp California and returned to Washington, bivouacking that night near the unfinished Washington Monument. On the march through Alexandria occurred the first serious casualty, viz: the horse which blacksmith Joseph L. Straight was riding, took fright, ran, and throwing the blacksmith, injured him so severely as to necessitate leaving him in the hospital at Alexandria, and finally causing his discharge from the service, April 29th, 1862.

The next day, Sunday, December twenty-second, the battery was loaded on cars and taken to Annapolis, Maryland. Arriving early in the evening, we were quartered in tents that had been pitched for practice, on the Naval Academy grounds. The men being very tired, for loading and unloading a six gun battery from cars was hard work, anticipated a good night's rest; but during the night, a severe storm of wind and rain arose, and many of the tents—they having been pitched for practice, the pins were driven very lightly—blew down; consequently, instead of the expected rest, they spent the greater part of the night hunting for a dry spot. The next day we were quartered in a college building, where
we remained until the twenty-sixth of December, when the battery went into camp about one and a half miles from Annapolis, naming the spot in honor of the Captain, Camp Belger.

January 9th, 1862, we returned to Annapolis for the purpose of embarking on the Burnside Expedition. Arriving in the city during the evening, we were again assigned to the tents on the Academy grounds, and the scenes of our previous attempted occupancy of those tents were re-enacted, viz: a hundred men looking for shelter, owing to a heavy storm of wind and rain.

The next day, January tenth, the battery embarked—the men and horses on steamer George Peabody, and the pieces, battery wagon, forge, etc., on schooner James T. Brady. The Reverend Mr. Woodbury, in his "Burnside and the Ninth Army Corps," gives the strength of the command at "twelve thousand men, requiring for their transportation forty-six vessels, eleven of which were steamers. There were also nine armed propellers as gunboats, and five barges fitted and armed as floating batteries, carrying altogether forty-seven guns, mostly of small
calibre. A fleet of twenty vessels, mostly of light draft but carrying a heavy armament of fifty-five guns, under command of Flag Officer L. M. Goldsborough, accompanied the expedition."

The George Peabody sailed from Annapolis on the morning of the eleventh of January, and from Fortress Monroe the next day. When off Cape Henry the sealed orders were opened, and we learned that the rendezvous of the fleet was Hatteras Inlet, North Carolina. The passage from Fortress Monroe to Hatteras was attended by very rough weather, and the scenes on board the Peabody partook somewhat of the ludicrous as well as the serious. Most of the men of the battery were taking their first sea voyage, and their condition can better be imagined than described.

The flagship of the expedition, gunboat Picket, Captain Thomas P. Ives, sailed from Fortress Monroe, with General Burnside on board, about an hour in advance of the Peabody, and when we arrived off Hatteras, about two o'clock on the morning of the thirteenth, the latter overhauled her. A heavy sea was running, the beginning of the storm which scat-
tered the fleet, and it was deemed prudent for our vessel to lay by the Picket until daylight, before attempting to round the cape. I shall never forget the noble appearance of the general as he stood upon the forward deck of the gunboat in the early morning of the thirteenth, while the crew of the Peabody were passing a line to the Picket to take her in tow. Our men, or as many as were able to get upon their feet, were drawn up in line on the deck of the Peabody, and gave him three hearty cheers.

Taking the Picket in tow, both vessels arrived at the inlet in safety, crossed the bar and came to anchor in the sound. We all remember the terrible storm that caused so much damage to the fleet, and so much anxiety for its safety at the north. Quoting again from Mr. Woodbury, "the steamer City of New York, loaded with ammunition, the Pocahontas with horses on board, went ashore and were lost; the gunboat Zouave dragged her anchors and was wrecked; the floating battery Grapeshot was swamped, and one or two schooners loaded with forage and provisions were driven upon the beach."

Owing to the terrible gales and storms, the battery
remained on board the steamer much longer than was intended or provided for, and it being impossible to replenish our commissary department, rations and water, also forage for the horses, were getting to be very limited in quantity, and necessarily both men and horses were placed upon short rations, the allowance for the men being a few hard tack, a half pint of water three times daily,—the water being measured as carefully as if it was one of the most expensive luxuries of a soldier's ration,—and occasionally a small ration of coffee.

I remember the first issue of rations after the stock had been replenished. I received the usual hard tack, a thick slice of raw salt pork, very fat, and a little molasses. I think I never enjoyed a meal more than I did that raw pork and molasses.

On the twenty-first of January, the Peabody steamed as near the shore as possible,—there were no landing places that she could reach,—and the battery disembarked on Hatteras Island. It was a very laborious task, and was accomplished without accident by throwing the horses overboard and tow-
ing them ashore astern of small boats, with heaving lines.

While on Hatteras the battery was attached to General Thomas Williams' Brigade, composed of troops who had held possession of the island since its capture by General Butler in August, 1861, and was located at Camp Winfield, about three miles from Fort Hatteras. Our duties at this camp were comparatively light. Occasionally General Williams held a brigade drill, which always included the battery.

We remained at Camp Winfield until the twenty-sixth of February, at which time orders were received to re-embark. The night of the twenty-sixth was spent on the beach at the inlet. A heavy storm of rain and wind prevailed, and being almost without shelter, for it was impossible to pitch a tent that would withstand the force of the wind, it was a very uncomfortable night. On the twenty-seventh we embarked on the steamer Chancellor Livingston, formerly a ferry boat in New York harbor, steamed over the swash and came to anchor in the sound. The wind blew furiously during the night. The steamer
was heavily loaded, and the sea struck her with such force under the guards that it seemed almost impossible for her to withstand the battering. A leak was discovered early in the evening, and water made so rapidly that it became necessary to work the pumps all night, reliefs from the men of the battery being organized for that purpose.

The steamer arrived off Pork Point, Roanoke Island, March second. The crowded condition of men and horses was such as to cause the following letter to headquarters. Those familiar with the amount of room required for a light battery of six guns fully equipped, will appreciate our condition, everything being on board this steamer.

"Headquarters Battery F, 1st Regt. R. I. Lt. Art'y,
Steamer Chancellor Livingston,
Roanoke Island, March 4, 1862.

Captain L. Richmond,
Assistant Adjutant General,
Department of North Carolina:

Sir:—I have the honor to request that measures be taken as soon as possible to relieve the men and horses of my battery, now aboard the 'Livingston.' My men are suffering for the want of a place to sleep and cook in; my horses, one hundred and nineteen, for the want of forage and a place to stand. I
rendered requisitions to the Division Quartermaster for forage yesterday, and it has not been supplied. It is very necessary that something should be done at once, or my men and horses will be unfit for active service if kept aboard this steamer.

I am, Sir,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,

JAS. BELGER,
Captain Commanding Battery F."

As a result of the above letter, a number of the men and horses were ordered on shore, where they remained until the eleventh of March, when they were ordered on board the schooner Crocker, which was taken in tow, and we returned through the sound. Entering the mouth of the Neuse river on the afternoon of the twelfth, it was evident we were going to New Berne, North Carolina. The passage of the fleet through the sound and up the Neuse river on the twelfth, was a delightful trip. The weather was warm and pleasant, the sea calm, and the disposition of the vessels, the gunboats in advance occasionally throwing a shell into the woods on either side of the river, and the transports following in order by brigades, made the scene a nov-
elty to most of us inexperienced in such sights.

Towards night of the twelfth the fleet arrived at Slocum's creek, about eighteen miles from New Berne, and came to anchor. The night was dark and stormy, but at eight o'clock next morning the sun shone out, and at nine o'clock the infantry commenced landing, which was accomplished by transferring the men from the steamers and sailing vessels to the launches, which were taken in tow by tugs, each tug taking long lines of these boats. At a signal the tugs steamed as near to the shore as they could float, the momentum gained by the launches sent the barges forward until they grounded, when the men jumped into the water, generally about waist deep, and waded ashore. During the landing the gunboats steamed slowly up the river, shelling the woods, but they received no reply to their shots.

The schooner Crocker, with a part of the battery on board, in attempting to enter the creek ran aground, and although tugs were brought to our assistance, night overtook us stuck in the mud. Early on the morning of the fourteenth the schooner floated, and as the forces on shore had advanced, we
were towed some two or three miles further up the river, when we made a landing similar to that at Hatteras, viz: by jumping the horses overboard and towing them ashore, and rafting the guns and caissons until the small boats grounded, then drawing the pieces out by hand.

This method of landing a light battery was, to say the least, slow and tedious business; but the men worked with a will, and soon material enough was on shore to fit out a section, which, with First Lieutenant George W. Field in command, was started for the front. Early in our work the sounds of battle were heard from the front, and we knew that we were needed there. After the guns and horses for the section were on shore, it was tedious and vexatious work getting in condition to take the road; the harnesses were mixed, and it was impossible to get the particular harnesses for the horses they fitted, without losing too much time; but after some delay the section was pronounced ready, and started without rations either for men or horses. I was sent with the command as corporal or gunner of the left piece. We traveled as rapidly as possible in the
First Rhode Island Light Artillery.

direction of the fighting, the sounds of which grew more and more distinct as we neared the front, but it was not our fortune, good or bad, to take part in the battle of New Berne, as we reached the battlefield just after the enemy was routed.

Although the Rhode Island battery did not become engaged at this battle, Rhode Island troops were there, and historians have recorded the bravery and valor of the Fourth and Fifth Regiments, and have accorded to them the honor and credit nobly won on that field.

The battle of New Berne was fought about four miles south of the city. The following description of the works occupied by the enemy during the battle, is taken from General Foster’s report, dated New Berne, March 20th, 1862:

“...the victorious Union army, was a truly formidable barrier—a series of well planned works extending in a continuous line for two miles and a half. It commenced on the river with Fort Thompson, the most powerful of the works erected by the confederates, mounting thirteen 32-pounder guns, four of which bore directly on the advancing union lines. From this the breastwork extended for a mile and a quarter to the railway track, whence the defences were pro-
lorged for an equal distance by rifle pits and detached intrenchments, in the form of curvettes and redans, terminated by a two gun battery. The breastwork was mounted with two complete field batteries, besides several small pieces of heavy artillery, and manned by about six thousand men."

Our section, making but a short halt at the battlefield, pushed on towards New Berne and the retreating enemy, arriving at the river, opposite the city, to find the bridges destroyed and no means of crossing. It was late in the afternoon, and both men and horses having been without food, excepting three hard crackers per man issued in the early morning, since the evening before, Lieutenant Field ordered a bivouac for the night, and sent a detail out to forage. The detail returned about eleven o'clock, and at midnight we enjoyed a hearty meal.

An incident occurred during the latter part of this march, trivial in its character, but illustrating the demand made upon us by the inner man. The cannoneers were mounted on the boxes, the section moving along quietly, all seemingly intent upon their own thoughts, when several of the men discovered at the same moment a corncake lying in the
simultaneously a dash was made, and notwithstanding the fact that the section would pass over it, and that it would be well seasoned with sand, we were as eager for a piece of that corncake as our children would now be for fruit cake. I succeeded in getting a bite and pronounced it good, only wishing there was more of it.

The remainder of the battery was landed as rapidly as possible and bivouacked that night on the battle-field, joining us the next morning.

Sunday, March 16th, 1862, the battery entered New Berne, crossing the Trent river about three miles from its junction with the Neuse river, and took possession of a boarding-house as quarters for the men, a dwelling for the lieutenants, a dwelling for the captain, a store for the quartermaster and commissary departments, a large stable for the horses, and smaller buildings for mess room, guard house, etc., all situated on Broad street, near the "junction."

Soon after our arrival we were detailed for duty as cavalry. The infantry outposts were established about seven miles from the city, and we were ex-
pected to perform vidette duty and scour the country beyond. The first scout was made Friday, March twenty-first, the party consisting of about twenty-five men under command of Lieutenant Pope. They went about fifteen miles in the direction of Trenton, North Carolina, but discovering no enemy, returned to quarters. We were then sent out in squads of three men and a non-commissioned officer, to patrol the different roads leading into the city. Each squad remained out three days, when it was relieved.

A number of casualties and hairbreadth escapes occurred during this service. Among them were the following:

On the first scout mentioned above, Sergeant Benjamin II. Draper received a severe wound in the leg from a kick by a horse, necessitating an amputation at the thigh. The operation was performed May eighth. He died May 27th, 1862, at fifteen minutes past six o'clock in the morning, at the Academy Green Hospital, New Berne. Sergeant Draper had won the respect and esteem of both officers and men, and his death under such circumstances cast a
gloom over the battery, and it was long before the men ceased to think and speak of him.

Corporal Benjamin F. Martindale was killed May 2d, 1862, on the Trent road, about seven and a half miles from New Berne. At the time of his death he was in charge of a squad patrolling this road, and while on duty discovered the enemy's cavalry riding towards our outpost. In obedience to orders he immediately returned and reported to the officer in command of the infantry outpost that the enemy were scouting in our front. That officer did not credit the report, but implied that the corporal had been frightened by some non-combatant resident of that vicinity. The corporal replied, "I will prove that to you, sir," and wheeling his horse, rode back to his death, as when near the place where he first discovered the enemy, he was shot and instantly killed.

Private Henry Love, while on duty near Deep Gully, about eight miles from New Berne, was severely wounded in the head by a sabre cut. His life was saved by the nerve and steady aim of an infantryman, who shot the rebel through the heart as he was about to strike another blow. Private
Love had been patrolling the road and was pursued by a half dozen cavalrymen, who did not stop until their leader was killed as he was passing the infantry picket.

Private Philip L. Bassett was taken prisoner March 31st, 1862, while on duty near Deep Gully, and was paroled about the twenty-ninth of the next May. His life was saved by a testament that he carried in his breast pocket, a rifle ball passing nearly through the book.

Private George H. Fuller was taken prisoner while on duty near the junction of the Trenton and Pollockville roads, April nineteenth, and was paroled on the tenth of the next May.

There were many other hairbreadth escapes from death or capture while the battery was performing this special duty. The rebel cavalry in our front had learned that we were not cavalry, and that we knew but little about cavalry service, and towards the last of our performing that duty became very bold. But a surprise was in store for them. Early in May, 1862, the Third New York Cavalry arrived in New Berne, and on the seventeenth of May the
artillerymen were relieved from further picket duty by that regiment. From April 14th to May 18th, 1862, Lieutenant Thomas Simpson, one sergeant and thirteen privates, were on detached service at Newport Barracks, near Beaufort, North Carolina, performing duty as cavalry. From this time until July 25th, 1862, the battery remained in camp performing the usual routine of duty.

Saturday, June fourteenth, two guidons, one for parade and one for drill, were presented to the battery by friends of Captain Belger. A full account of the presentation was published in the New Berne Progress. John McConkey, Esquire, made the presentation speech, to which Captain Belger appropriately responded. The battery paraded in full regulation uniform and gave a street drill on the occasion.

I think it was very rare that a volunteer battery secured the full regulation light artillery uniform; that is, the horse hair plume, the cord over the shoulders, the rosette on the breast, and tassels. I never happened to see another during my term of
service, and never saw ours but once after we left North Carolina.

The Fourth of July, 1862, was observed by the troops at New Berne in a spirited manner. Bells were rung morning, noon and night; the command made a street parade in the morning, at the end of which the Declaration of Independence was read before each regiment and battery; at twelve o'clock, noon, a national salute of thirty-four guns was fired from Fort Totten, and also from the gunboats; at six o'clock, evening: Belger's Battery fired a salute of thirty-four guns, and with the burning of tar barrels during the evening, the celebration at New Berne, of the nation's anniversary, closed. Dinner was made the main feature of the day with Battery F, the bill of fare being roast beef, roast lamb, boiled chicken, boiled ham, plum duff with whiskey sauce, pies and hard crackers. Before going to dinner, whiskey punch was served to all freely, the supply having been made in a barrel. The issue of rations of this character, although very rarely served, had a good effect upon the men.

Our service in North Carolina was more like that
of troops in garrison in time of peace, than in the field in time of war, and much attention was paid to the appearance of men and material. A street parade and drill occurred almost weekly. This drill cannot be found in the "Instructions." On these parades the formation was column of sections, cannoneers mounted, and woe to the poor fellow who did not sit straight, with folded arms, for on the return to quarters the guard house and bread and water would be his reward. The parade was usually performed at a trot, and the principal movement was to "In Battery" as if we were entirely surrounded by an enemy, and was executed by the captain giving the order just as the centre section arrived at the intersection of a cross street, "Action front, right, left and rear!" The officer commanding the right section would command "Action front!" the centre section "Action right and left!" sweeping the cross street in each direction, and the left section "Fire to the rear—in battery!"

Any one acquainted with light artillery service will readily see that executed at a trot, in the streets of a city, by a battery equipped in full regulation
uniform, the movements were exciting, to say the least. I think if the light batteries of our militia could introduce some of those movements at their trainings, it would serve to increase the interest of their men and the respect of many who now ridicule everything connected with the militia.

The first organized raid into the country with which Battery F was connected, left New Berne Friday, July 25th, 1862, at about four o'clock in the afternoon. The next day, Saturday, we passed through the village, I am not sure that they did not call it a city, of Trenton, North Carolina, meeting with but slight opposition, the few retreating cavalrymen attempting unsuccessfully to burn the bridge before the town. We bivouacked the night of the twenty-sixth at McDonald's plantation, the orders being to sleep by the guns; but a terrific thunder shower passing over early in the evening, or rather remaining with us most of the night, sleeping on the ground was out of the question. I remember just before daybreak finding a board, which furnished a comparatively dry bed, upon which I had an hour's sleep. Returning by a different route,
we passed through Pollockville, North Carolina, Sunday, the twenty-seventh, the cavalry skirmishing some as we entered the town, and arrived at our quarters at about ten and a half o'clock on the afternoon of the twenty-seventh. No casualties in the battery.

Early in August, the post of the provost guard on Pollock street, near the rear of our quarters and in close proximity to post number two of our battery guard, had been fired upon several nights in succession, between midnight and three o'clock in the morning, and one or two men had been wounded. All efforts to discover the party firing had been in vain. Buildings had been searched and everything in the shape of firearms confiscated, but still at this same locality, and about the same hour of the morning, the report of the gun and the whiz of the bullet would be heard. The night of the fourteenth of August was extremely warm, so much so that the guard detail of the battery not on post found it difficult to sleep, and nearly all were lounging around the guard quarters hunting for a breath of air, as it were. The time for the firing had arrived, and all
were listening for the shot. Soon the report and whiz were heard, and about five minutes later, some one saying "Open the door, quick, quick." Following the direction of the sound, a citizen was discovered standing at the door of a house nearly opposite our quarters, waiting to be admitted. The circumstance was immediately reported to the battery Officer of the Day, Lieutenant Pope, who, gaining admission to the house, arrested the man. He, of course, denied all knowledge of the shooting, but claimed that he had just returned from fishing. He was turned over to the Provost Marshal, placed in jail to await a trial, but was either released or escaped, and disappeared from the city. Those most interested in the matter, the soldiers required to perform duty in that vicinity, were satisfied he was guilty, as after his arrest there was no more shooting at that post.

This incident illustrates very fairly, I think, the amount of dependence to be put upon the assertions of the natives that they were union men, and were always opposed to the war. This man was one of the garrison of Fort Macon, captured and
paroled a short time previous, and often told me, at his house,—I was at his house several weeks suffering from an attack of typhoid fever,—about being forced into the confederate army against his will, and that he intended to enlist in the union army under General Burnside, and I had all confidence in him up to the time of his arrest.

Saturday, September twenty-seventh, about noon, a courier came dashing into the city with the report that our outpost at Deep Gully had been attacked. The battery was in the midst of the regular weekly preparation for Sunday morning inspection; the harnesses were being thoroughly washed and cleaned, having been taken apart for that purpose, and we were in a very unfavorable condition for immediate service. About three o'clock "boots and saddles" sounded, and in twenty minutes' time everything was in complete order, and the battery hitched up and on the road for the front. Arriving at Deep Gully we learned, as was often the case, that there had been no necessity for our march, as only a few of the enemy's cavalry had appeared, and they retired after a few shots. The battery immediately returned
to quarters, and at nine o'clock in the evening were as quiet as if no alarm had taken place.

October twenty-ninth, an expedition into the country, under command of General J. G. Foster, started from New Berne, and Battery F was assigned to the command. The troops arrived at Washington, North Carolina, the next day, and remained until November second, when the march was again resumed. It very soon became evident that the enemy would resist this advance. At Little Creek rifle pits had been constructed and a stand was made. Battery F was ordered into position and opened fire, the engagement lasting about an hour. The enemy then retreated about a mile to Rawles' Mills, where another engagement took place. At the two engagements Battery F expended about three hundred rounds of ammunition. General Foster, in his official report of these actions, says:

"The engagement [at Little Creek] lasted one hour, when the enemy being driven from their rifle pits by the effective fire of Belger's Rhode Island Battery, retired to Rawles' Mills, one mile further on, where they made another stand in a recently constructed field-work. Belger's Battery and two batteries of the Third New York Artillery were immediately ordered into posi-
tion, and after a spirited engagement of half an hour, succeeded in driving the enemy from their works and across a bridge, which they burned."

During these two engagements the battery sustained no loss.

From the monthly return of the battery for November, 1862, the following memorandum of the route and distance traveled by this expedition is copied:

"The battery left Washington, N. C., on a reconnaissance, November 2d, 1862, and engaged the enemy at Little Creek, N. C., twice, same day; dislodged the enemy and bivouacked for the night. Resumed the march at sunrise November 3d, and arrived at Williamston, N. C., at 11 A. M. Left Williamston at 3 P. M. and arrived at Hamilton November 4th, at 3 P. M. Left Hamilton at 6 P. M. and bivouacked within five miles of Tarboro, N. C., November 5th. Resumed the march at sunrise November 6th, on the return, and reached Hamilton same day. Left Hamilton November 7th, and arrived at Williamston same day. Left Williamston November 9th, and arrived at Plymouth, N. C., November 10th. Embarked on steamer Eagle same day, and left for New Berne, N. C., at which place the battery arrived on the 12th of November, 1862. Distance 369 miles."

On the night of November eleventh, New Berne was the scene of intense excitement, caused by the
appearance of the enemy before the city. The pickets were driven in, and many thought the morning would witness the confederate forces again occupying the place. The expedition which had been absent since October twenty-ninth had not been heard from, and the comparatively small force remaining to defend the city, caused a feeling of uneasiness which could not well be concealed. Of course there were natives who secretly hoped for the capture of the entire post, but from some cause, (perhaps they knew better than those in the city the nearness of the expedition on its return), the enemy contented themselves by simply driving in the outposts, and disappeared as suddenly as they came.

Early in December, 1862, an expedition under command of General Foster was organized for the purpose of destroying the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad bridge across the Neuse river, near Goldsboro, N. C., to which Battery F was assigned. Leaving New Berne on the eleventh of December, the command arrived at the bridge near Kinston on the fourteenth, where a lively engagement took place, resulting in the rout of the enemy, they
attempting un成功地 to burn the bridge. The nature of the ground where this battle took place, known as the Battle of Kinston, was such that artillery could not be used to advantage, consequently Battery F was assigned to the reserve force. From General Foster's report of the engagement, I copy the following relating to the batteries:

"My artillery (three batteries) I posted in a large field on the right of the road and about three-fourths of a mile in rear of line of attack, the only position they could be placed in. I then ordered Colonel Stevenson's Brigade, with Belger's Rhode Island Battery, forward. The Twenty-fourth Massachusetts supported this battery."

I suppose this refers to about the time the enemy began to fall back. As I remember, the battery moved to the front at a trot, and took position covering the bridge as the enemy retreated. Remaining here but a short time, we crossed the bridge, advanced through the town and bivouacked for the night in a cornfield about a half mile beyond.

The next morning, December fifteenth, the command recrossed the bridge and continued the march towards Goldsboro, arriving at Whitehall ferry on
the sixteenth, where a short but sharp engagement took place. The enemy had burned the bridge across the Neuse at this point, and were on the opposite bank in some force. General Foster states in the official report, "this being the direct road to Goldsboro, I determined to make a strong feint, as if to rebuild and cross." Battery F first took position on a hill overlooking the river, but after firing a few rounds, moved down to the low land on the river bank and came into action at short range. Nothing could be seen on the opposite side of the river except trees. The enemy's artillery was soon silenced, and the engagement became a battle of a light battery against sharpshooters, the battery being in an open field without cover, and the sharpshooters entirely covered by the thick woods which lined the bank of the opposite side of the river. The ammunition used was shell and case shot, with fuses cut at two seconds. The engagement lasted about an hour, resulting in a loss to the battery of two privates killed, one corporal wounded by musket ball through the thigh, one private wounded by musket ball through the hand near the wrist while thumbing the
First Rhode Island Light Artillery.

vent, causing the loss of the hand, and a number of horses killed.

During the afternoon of the sixteenth the command continued the march towards Goldsboro, and on the seventeenth the objective point was reached. Here the battery was divided, the right and left sections—four ten-pounder Parrotts—occupying a position near the railroad track and opening fire on the bridge and vicinity, while the centre section—two twelve-pounder howitzers—was stationed a short distance to their right, on a hill overlooking a large open field, the Third Massachusetts Infantry being in support of this section.

The bridge could not be easily captured or crossed, and volunteers to fire it were called for from the Ninth New Jersey Infantry. From the large number offering, two were selected, who, after being supplied with fuses, went forward, accomplished the task and returned to their command in safety. While the two men were performing the extremely difficult and hazardous undertaking at the bridge, supported by their own regiment, a portion of the force was busily engaged in destroying the railroad
track. Several miles were torn up and the rails rendered useless by being thrown upon hot fires fed by the sleepers or ties. The object accomplished, and a large and apparently increasing force appearing in our front, the return march was ordered.

Battery F was assigned to the rear guard, but before withdrawing from our positions, the enemy appeared in our front and made an attack. They formed line of battle at the foot of the hill occupied by the howitzer section, and charged; but they did not advance far, for being in an open field, our men were able to work the guns to the best advantage, and made such fearful havoc among them, shooting down their colors several times, that they left the field in great haste, and appeared to be very much demoralized. This was the first time the battery had been charged upon, and being able to see the effect of their shots, the men were naturally much elated over the result.

The casualties in the battery during the day were: First Sergeant A. M. Massie severely, and Sergeant I. N. Gage and Private C. C. Burr slightly wounded. First Sergeant Massie was wounded as he was about
to sight a gun. He had just taken a field glass from his eyes, when he was struck by a piece of shell, completely shattering the glass, tearing off three fingers and half of his right hand, and the flesh from the under side of the arm to the elbow, leaving the index finger and the thumb unhurt.

As before mentioned, Battery F was detailed as a part of the rear guard, and here occurred an incident that came near proving a serious matter for us. In taking the position last occupied we crossed what appeared to be a small brook, the water running about ankle deep, but when we recrossed in retiring, the brook had swollen to be a small river, the water running about waist deep. The cause of the sudden increase, as we afterwards learned, was the opening, by the enemy, of a dam above us, and probably another half hour in that position would have caused us serious trouble.

As is always the case in an engagement, many narrow escapes took place. I will mention but one, which seemed to me to be of the very narrowest. Private A. B. Spencer, at the battle of Whitehall, on the sixteenth of December, was hit in the stomach by
a spent ball, which caused him to suddenly double up, but nothing serious resulted, and the next day, at Goldsboro Railroad bridge, the same man lost a piece of his pants, from underneath his knee, by a fragment of shell from the enemy's guns. In neither case was the skin broken.

The battery arrived at its quarters in New Berne at about six o'clock on the afternoon of December twentieth, having traveled about one hundred and fifty miles.

The alterations and casualties to December 31st, 1862, left the aggregate of enlisted men in the battery exactly the same as at the first muster, and the commissioned officers one less, as follows:

Commissioned officers, three resigned, viz: Captain M. G. Moies, First Lieutenants C. H. Pope and George W. Field; two appointed, viz: Captain James Belger and Second Lieutenant P. C. Smith. Second Lieutenants Simpson and Arnold were commissioned First Lieutenants in place of Pope and Field resigned.

Enlisted men; three killed, viz: Corporal Benjamin F. Martindale and Privates James L. Gavitt and William Nesbit; ten died, viz: Sergeant Benjamin
H. Draper, Privates John E. Bartlett, Henry H. Baxter, William M. Davis, Job Hazzard, William B. Healey, Alonzo C. Horton, Reuben E. Larkin, John McCombe and Jonathan R. Nye; three discharged for promotion, viz: Sergeants Elmer L. Corthell, Peter C. Smith and Frederick Chase; discharged for disability, one sergeant, two corporals and thirty-one privates; transferred to other commands, one sergeant and one private; deserted, one private; total loss, fifty-three. Judging from the number discharged for disability, I conclude the surgical examination of recruits could not have been very rigid. In my own case and that of two others who enlisted at the same time, there was no examination whatever.

The gain for the same time was, one private enlisted in Virginia, and two squads of recruits from Rhode Island, numbering respectively twenty-seven and twenty-five men; total gain, fifty-three.

The wounded were as follows: First Sergeant Alexander M. Massie, at railroad bridge near Goldsboro, December 17th, 1862; Sergeant I. N. Gage, same date and engagement; Corporal George C.
Manchester, at Whitehall, December 16th, 1862; Privates John Butterworth, same date and engagement; Calvin C. Burr, at railroad bridge, near Goldsboro, December 17th, 1862; Henry Love, while on picket duty near New Berne, North Carolina, March 31st, 1862, and George E. Fuller, while on same duty, April 19th, 1862.

The strength of the battery December 31st, 1862, as appears upon the monthly return of that date, was four officers, one hundred and thirty-eight enlisted men, and one hundred and eleven horses, with four ten-pounder Parrott guns and two twelve-pounder howitzers, caissons, etc., complete.

The health of the men at the close of the year 1862 was very good. Six men were absent sick, three of whom were wounded during the engagements in December, and four men were present sick.

January 1st, 1863, found us in good condition for effective service, requiring only one officer and twelve enlisted men to fill the roll to the maximum.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE

War of the Rebellion,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

Rhode Island Soldiers and Sailors
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THE MARINE ARTILLERY

WITH THE

BURNSIDE EXPEDITION

AND THE

BATTLE OF CAMDEN, N. C.

BY WILLIAM B. AVERY,

[LATE CAPTAIN FIRST REGIMENT MARINE ARTILLERY, NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS.]

PROVIDENCE:

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THE MARINE ARTILLERY

WITH THE

BURNSIDE EXPEDITION.

[Read before the Society, April 10, 1873.]

The Burnside Expedition left Annapolis, Maryland, on the eighth day of January, 1862, and on the eighth of February the island of Roanoke was captured, after a desperate fight, and the whole north was electrified by the news of one of the first real successes to the union forces. Every one connected with that expedition and conversant with the subsequent events in eastern North Carolina will remember the Marine Artillery. The writer, who had gone out in command of one of the boats of the fleet, which was intended to be used as a floating battery, was invited to join the regiment about that time;
and so it happened that a Rhode Island boy became a member of a New York regiment, and attained some prominence in that department as an officer of the famous "Horse Marines," as we were generally called by the rest of the troops.

To that regiment belonged many of the men by whom the government transports were manned, and some of them were present and took active part in nearly every skirmish, engagement or expedition that took place from the time we reached Hatteras Inlet till our final disbandment in March, 1863. The first detachment, especially, was made up of brave and hardy men; and as a sailor never thinks of flight in time of danger, so these men, being nearly all seamen, stood manfully to their duty. Distributed among the different vessels of the fleet at the time we left New York, and under the command of men not their own officers, they endured the hardships of a sailor's life, in that stormy season and on a perilous coast, without a murmur. At Roanoke and New Berne, some of them landed with their guns under command of Captain Dayton, of the schooner Highlander, and fought as bravely as did
the rest of the troops. As boatmen in landing the soldiers, they were invaluable.

I shall proceed to mention some of the chief characteristics of the corps, and then give a brief narrative of one of the many fights in which we took part, as a sample of our mode of operating with the army, hoping that I may thus be able to entertain you for a brief period, and also add my mite to the history of our great struggle for freedom, my part in which I always look back upon with feelings of satisfaction and pleasure.

The regiment was organized in New York by its colonel, William A. Howard, than whom a braver and truer officer never lived. Early in life he had been a midshipman in the navy, but the war found him senior captain in the United States Revenue Marine, which position he temporarily left to form this new branch of the service. The idea itself originated with him, and to his energy and zeal can be attributed much of the success of the undertaking. Similar organizations were afterwards formed in other departments and proved very effective,—notably, the "Naval Brigade," on the Mississippi river, and Gra-
ham's "Army Gunboats," on the James river. Belonging to the army, and under the direct control of the commanding general, expeditions by water could be undertaken without the aid of the naval forces, which were not always at hand when needed. After nearly two years of good and efficient service, and during the absence of the colonel on account of sickness, certain troubles arose in the regiment which finally led to our being mustered out by order of the Secretary of War, though it was believed at the time that had Colonel Howard been present such would not have been the case. As it was, the members mostly all entered other branches of the service—one or two other officers and myself entering the navy, where we received good appointments, and the department seemed glad to avail itself of our services.

Rev. Mr. Woodbury, in his excellent book, "Burnside and the Ninth Army Corps," in one place speaks of the Marine Artillery as "an amphibious kind of force of a few hundred men;" and that phrase is very expressive of the real nature of our duties, as we were at all times ready for service either on land
or water, and many of us were frequently under water even, in the course of our varied experience. During our passage from Fortress Monroe to Hatteras, the Grenade had her rudder disabled, and but for my exertions in getting her repaired, would have been left at the inlet when the fleet moved up to take Roanoke. In order to get her ready in time to receive the company of Zouaves that went up on her, I had to work two hours up to my neck in the cold water, and part of the time had to be under water entirely. But most anything was preferable to being left by the expedition, so eager were we all to be present at the attack on the island.

The uniform of the regiment was nearly like that of the navy. The officers wore a gold band on the cap, but no sash under the sword belt. The shoulder strap was red, with a cross cannon and anchor wrought in silver, afterwards adopted by the general as the emblem of the Ninth Corps. The line officers wore double-breasted coats, and the clothes of the men were all of dark navy blue. The arms were short Belgian rifles with the sword bayonet for those who acted as infantry, and pistols and cutlasses for
those who worked the howitzers, which latter were of the naval pattern and used either in launches on the slide, or on shore mounted on a carriage with trail-wheel and drag-rope. We were especially well drilled in the use of naval light artillery, either afloat or ashore.

The gunboats, on which about half of the regiment was quartered, and by whom several of them were manned, had good batteries of thirty-pounder Parrotts and thirty-two-pounder smooth bores, in the exercise of which we were also proficient. We were like the navy in drill and discipline, and were in reality army gunboats. Indeed, during a portion of the time in the fall and winter of 1862, at which time I was in command of the Lancer, mounting six large guns and two twelve-pounder Wiard steel howitzers, having on board my whole company, we acted directly with the navy, being ordered to report for duty to Lieutenant Commander Flusser, with whom we served on several different expeditions, and by whom I was treated with the utmost courtesy and respect.

We lay one week up the Roanoke river, above
WITH THE BURNSIDE EXPEDITION.

Plymouth, taking our regular turn at picket duty, waiting for the rebel ram to come down, the existence of which we knew at that early date. It did not succeed in getting down that year, however, but the next year it did come down, and the havoc made by the ram Albemarle is familiar to us all. The brave and chivalrous Flusser lost his life, and the ram remained triumphant at Plymouth till destroyed by the daring Cushing, who was one of Flusser's officers at the time we served together the year before.

Four large sounds and a great number of rivers flowing into them from the eastern part of North Carolina, gave us plenty of opportunities for expeditions by water; and as we had a sort of roving commission, we were enabled to be doing something all the time. Aside from our operations with the army in general, we undertook expeditions by ourselves, at which times we would often penetrate inland from fifteen to thirty miles before returning to our boats, in which we had gone as far as possible up one of the rivers. With headquarters at Roanoke Island, the colonel would direct our movements as informa-
tion arrived from the surrounding country, or orders were sent up from department headquarters at New Berne. In operating with the army, our most effective weapon was the howitzer, we acting as a field battery; but when making strikes by ourselves, often at some of the guerrillas, we generally went light, with only rifles or pistols. Sometimes making forced loans of horses we rode, or if at night, and the distance to be covered was short, we went on foot, and generally returned to our boat without making any halt at all. When once on board, however, we had comfortable quarters and plenty of opportunities for needed rest and refreshment, for which reason the health of the men was generally good.

The writer on one occasion landed sixty men from the Lancer at Shilo, on the Pasquotank river, just after dark, marched all of them twenty miles, and a portion of them thirty miles, inland toward Richmond, recaptured several union prisoners on their way to “Libby,” dispersed the gang of guerrillas who had them in charge, recovered a large quantity of ordnance they had stolen, and returned to the
ship the next night without the loss of a man or gun. I need scarcely mention that to get over so much distance, I had mounted myself on a good horse, "borrowed from a neighbor," and that the twenty men who went with me the last ten miles were mounted in five of the two-wheeled carts of the country and drawn by horses, all of which had been appropriated quite unceremoniously for the occasion, but of course were afterwards returned to their owners. In justice to some of the residents, I will say, however, that many of them were good loyal people, ready with information, and seemed to be willing for us to use their stock with which to chase the guerrillas. My taking the horses without their consent was in reality a kindness to them, as they would not then be obliged to incur the hatred of their neighbors by seeming too willing to help us.

The narrative which I now give was written only a few days after the events therein recorded, and was intended only for home use; but as I found it among my war letters, I will give it substantially as then written. It is therefore rather personal in its character, and if I dwell somewhat largely on my
own doings, I trust that I may be pardoned in that regard.

Reports having been received that two or three iron gunboats were building at Norfolk to come down here and destroy our shipping in the sounds, and that supplies of corn were being conveyed up through the Dismal Swamp canal, an expedition was set on foot for the purpose of destroying the lock at the lower end of the canal, and of cutting off and capturing any body of troops stationed south of that point. The fight of which I am about to speak, took place some two miles from the lock, in Camden county, North Carolina, and not far from River Bridge. Our force consisted of five regiments of infantry and two detachments of the Marine Artillery, with two twelve-pounder boat howitzers, and two other howitzers belonging to the Zouaves. Colonel Howard had general command of this artillery force of some fifty men, but it was under the immediate command of Lieutenant George Gerrard and myself, who landed from the Virginia, of which we were at that time officers. General Reno was in command of the expedition, and had come up from New Berne
with two regiments of infantry, the Twenty-first Massachusetts and the Fifty-first Pennsylvania, on the transports Cossack and Northerner. The other three regiments came from Roanoke, and were the Ninth and Eighty-ninth New York, and the Sixth New Hampshire.

We left Roanoke Island on the eighteenth of April, 1862, and came to anchor just below Elizabeth City about nine o'clock in the evening. We, with the Virginia, towed up the schooner Edward Slade, having on board Messrs. Mallifaut and Hayden, submarine engineers, with apparatus and powder for destroying the lock and bridge. A landing was immediately begun, and by midnight all of the troops from Roanoke — three regiments and the Marines — were on shore and ready to march. The transports from New Berne being aground, Colonel Howard went down with the Virginia to their assistance, and remained with them till all the troops were landed. About two in the morning of the nineteenth, Colonel Hawkins received orders to move on with the force already landed, and we fell into line in rear of his regiment, which was the advance of the column.
Rebel pickets were soon routed, but being mounted they escaped to give information of our approach.

Our march had now begun in earnest; and such a march. Deliver me from another like it. As afterwards ascertained, we took the wrong road, and instead of fourteen miles on a good road, as the general and his two regiments had, we went thirty-two miles, and on a very bad road. On our first landing I sent Mr. Hand, clerk of the Virginia, who had been out in the first three months troops from Philadelphia, and who went along as a volunteer, to procure horses from some farmer near there. He succeeded in finding one for each piece, to which we soon had them harnessed. We had to depend mainly on the drag-ropes, however, at which the men constantly relieved each other. Our road at first lay across several fields, ploughed and ditched; the ditches we were compelled to fill with rails in order to get our guns across them. The horses would break away from the piece, and the men were obliged to work hard in the soft ground till we at length reached the road. It was hard marching even for the infantry, but for us with
the guns, and in the darkness of night, it was terrible, and we all had to strain every nerve to get through. On reaching the road it was not quite so bad, but still bad enough.

About daylight my horse began to give out, and I went in search of another. Coming to a large farmhouse near the road, I accosted the planter, who was walking his front porch, and demanded of him a horse. He replied that he had only plough-stock, and pointed to a fine pair of mules which one of his negroes was just hitching to a plough to begin his day's work. I told him they were just what I wanted, and ordered the man to follow me with the mules and harness, which he very cheerfully did. With these and a spare horse for the other piece, we got along better. The harnesses being rather old, were constantly giving out, at which times we kept our place in line by dragging the guns wholly by hand, and hitching on the animals while marching; otherwise the infantry would crowd past us and we lose our place in line. They seemed rather inclined to think us of little account anyway, and that we might as well be left behind; but they
afterwards thought better of us, and were glad to have us in their rear on the return. The negro boy, Enoch, was indispensable with the mules. They seemed to have a great abhorrence for strangers, and would often make it manifest by a free use of their heels in a manner particularly obnoxious to the sailors. Had Enoch been asked to "clew up a royal and furl it," probably he would have known as much about it as the sailors did of harnessing the mules and making them work. He was also of assistance in caring for the mules while we were engaged in the fight, and brought them up as soon as it was over. Some three or four miles further on we overtook a negro with a load of wood, whose cart we took to convey our ammunition, rations, and the pea-jackets, which the men were by this time beginning to throw away. We made him up a good load, and relieved the guns of much weight, thus making them easier to handle. He also was very willing to go with us, and even seemed pleased at the idea.

With an occasional rest, we marched along through a fine, level country, beautifully cultivated, and bearing everywhere the marks of thrift, till about eight
in the morning, when we made a short halt for rest and breakfast. By this time the men were beginning to be foot-sore, not being accustomed to marching. They, however, kept up with the soldiers, proving to them that if not so used to it, they would not be left in the rear. After a hasty meal we proceeded, and soon the hot sun and dust began to tell on all of us, especially the New Hampshire men, who were on their first long march. On our left we heard firing from the gunboats, which were shelling the woods and proclaiming our approach to the enemy. Our men took off their shoes, and bare-footed they toiled at the pieces, lifting on them at the numerous ditches and bad places with which the road was filled. About eleven o'clock we came up with the general and the other two regiments, which we had thought were behind us. They had taken the right road, and though starting some hours after we did, had been waiting there some time for us to come up. There was also with them the two guns belonging to the Zouaves, which Colonel Howard had succeeded in landing and bringing along behind the army wagons, these having been landed from the
Slade and used to convey the blasting apparatus and powder.

We now continued our march, though most of us were pretty well used up. About half-past twelve Colonel Howard, who was in advance with the skirmishers, discovered the enemy well posted at the far end of a large open plain, through which the road ran and on which several houses had been burned and were still smouldering. He at first thought the enemy had left, but when within about five hundred yards they opened fire on him from their battery, placed across the road. He observed well their position, while an aide was sent to hurry forward the artillery, and as fast as it could be got to the front it was by him stationed for action. As for us with the guns, we needed no orders to go forward, but with the first sound of "the cannon's opening roar," strained every nerve and muscle to get to the front.

By this time the men were quite exhausted, and the road had become almost impassable on account of mud. Just as Lieutenant Fearing rode back to us with orders, and we were trying our best to get
the guns out of the mire, in which they were nearly axle deep, both mules jumped clear out of the harness, and it seemed for a short time as though we were never to get any nearer the enemy. The infantry had already given out, and could render us no assistance; but by constant urging and encouragement, our men, fatigued as they were from continued hard work, managed at last to get the guns out of the mud and soon into a good position in front of the enemy. Then commenced an artillery duel, with four guns on each side. The enemy's firing was very good, and their shot fell among us thick and fast; but we gave them as good as they sent, and the colonel, who was watching our fire, was well pleased at the result. The general had meantime ridden up to us and ordered me to keep the enemy occupied while he sent a couple of regiments to flank them. Now that we were at last fighting in good earnest, our men forgot their fatigue and behaved splendidly. A prettier fight could not have been desired.

Up to this time the Marines had been working all of the guns, but now Lieutenant Morris of the
Zouaves came out to us with a detail from his regiment, and took charge of and fought their two pieces. They had only just learned that their guns had been brought forward by Colonel Howard, and supposed they were still on the transports. With this addition to our force we made lively work for the rebels, and kept their battery employed while the infantry were being stationed preparatory to a general assault. By occasionally moving our guns a little we avoided much damage to ourselves, and at the same time planted our shell into the midst of the enemy. They fired only solid shot, so I suppose they had no shells with them, else we should have suffered more severely. After giving time for the flank movement we ceased firing, as the enemy had already done so, and we thought they had fled.

Colonel Hawkins now formed his regiment and prepared for an attack in front. When within some four hundred yards, he observed the enemy posted on the edge of the woods, and at once charged at the head of his men, who, with their wild yell, rushed ahead in fine style, but were received with such a shower of canister from the rebel battery and so
furious a discharge of musketry from the Georgians posted in the woods behind the trees, that they were completely staggered and fell back on the Eighty-ninth New York, which were behind them. They at once rallied, and with the other two regiments kept up a good fight. The infantry firing was now heavy, and quite a lively battle was in progress. The Sixth New Hampshire moved up in line of battle and delivered a volley at the word of command, which was as well executed as though they had been on parade. Though the resistance of the enemy was stubborn, and they were well protected by the woods, still they could not withstand the attack of our troops, and after a while withdrew up the road toward the bridge.

During this time we moved forward with our guns to within good canister distance, and by sharp work succeeded in drawing the fire of their battery again. But so effective were our discharges, together with the furious onslaught of the infantry, that we finally compelled them to "limber to the rear," and the day was ours; not, however, till they had given us a good dose of canister, which, fortunately, was not
very destructive. Some of us were struck, but it was mostly spent and did us little harm.

Feeling satisfied with our day’s work, we took positions assigned us to prevent surprise, and at once began to think of something to eat. A heavy thunderstorm now came up, and our boys took possession of an old cow-shed that had not been burned, and thus secured partial shelter from the rain. The foragers brought in hens, geese and pigs, and preparations were in progress for a fine supper, when a message from headquarters caused me to appear before the general. I at once received orders to mount a horse that had been captured from a rebel picket by our colonel, and return to the fleet and arrange with Commander Rowan for two or three of the gunboats to come up the river and take on board our wounded. It was now about half-past five o’clock in the afternoon, and the landing place was fourteen miles away; but hastily swallowing a little coffee and bread, and accompanied by one of the negroes on a mule as a guide, I was off like the wind, and just at dark hailed one of the steamers for a boat. Covered with mud and wet through, I
presented myself on board the flagship, and after attending to the duty assigned me, went on board our vessel and was soon fast asleep in my own berth, with nothing to molest me till morning.

I remember that Captain Thomas Poynton Ives was on board the flagship, where he had been dining with the flag officer, and was much amused at my appearance as I presented myself in the cabin. He was at that time in command of the Picket, which had been General Burnside's flagship.

When I left camp it was the intention of the general in command to push on at daylight the next morning and complete the work we had so well begun, but for reasons best known to himself, early in the night he ordered the troops into line and began the march back to the landing place. Colonel Howard, with our two howitzers and one company of infantry, composed the rear guard, which honor was considered by all to have been bravely earned and well merited.

It had been arranged by Commander Rowan that I was to go up the river on one of his gunboats the next morning, and so be enabled to join my com-
mand and be with them for further work. Judge then of my surprise at daylight in seeing on the river bank the advance of our troops, and of learning from them that the whole force had fallen back during the night. They immediately began to re-embark, and by afternoon we were on our way down the river. Four companies of the Eighty-ninth New York came down with us, and if ever there was a worn-out looking set of men, it was on board our boat. The crew all slung their hammocks and turned in for sleep, and to get a man on deck was next to impossible.

Thus ended the expedition to River Bridge, which, although not entirely successful, was in no way disastrous to us. The loss on our side was about one hundred, killed, wounded and missing. Many of these were of the Ninth New York Zouaves, Colonel Hawkins being shot through the arm, and the adjutant killed. The latter had been with the regiment only about a week, having just arrived from New York. We took a few prisoners belonging to a Georgia regiment, from whom we learned that the battery which had opposed us was the famous Hen-
ningson battery, named for the filibuster of that name; and also that we were supposed to be the advance of the whole of General Burnside's command, about to attack Norfolk from that side. How much that fight had to do with it is not known to the writer, but it is certain that very shortly afterwards Norfolk was evacuated by the rebels, and we gained possession of the canal and surrounding country.

When General Burnside moved his army to join General McClellan, a few months later, he took a portion of it up through the canal to Norfolk, and I was for quite a time employed in carrying dispatches from Roanoke to Fortress Monroe, and keeping open the canal. I had two guns and twenty-five men on the steamer Emily, and made regular trips up and down all through the summer. In conversation with people who were in Norfolk at the time of our fight at Camden, they informed me that at the time we were falling back to the boats that night, the rebels were in full retreat toward Norfolk, and all the available forces were being mustered to assist General Wise in the defense of that city; but so few were they in numbers, that had General Burnside been so
disposed, he could have taken the city very easily. As it turned out, however, it was just as well that he remained quietly in New Berne with his army, and let them evacuate at their leisure.

I have thus briefly and imperfectly sketched one of the early incidents of the War of the Rebellion. If less important in its results than some of the subsequent events of our great national drama, it will always deserve its place in the theatre of that great struggle, which, though it has left a dark void in many a household, is ever alive in thrilling reminiscences and immutable friendships.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
WAR OF THE REBELLION,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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Burnside Expedition in North Carolina.

Battles

of

Roanoke Island

and

Elizabeth City.

By Lorenzo Traver, M. D.,
[Late Acting Assistant Surgeon United States Navy.]

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November 22d, 1861, I received my commission as Acting Assistant Surgeon in the United States Navy, with orders to report to Commodore Pendergrast, at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, for duty on board the United States steamer Delaware. I lost no time in arranging my business, in order that I might serve my country at the time when the services of every loyal man was required to assist in crushing the hydra of rebellion. I found the Delaware not ready for sea, but in the course of a few days time, after all of the officers had reported for duty and the vessel had received her armament and gone into
commission, we bade good-bye to the old Quaker City, and steamed down the Delaware river to Fort Mifflin, where we received our ammunition (such as shot, grape, canister and shrapnell, with the requisite amount of powder) to be used, we knew not where, and in the afternoon of December thirteenth we arrived at Fortress Monroe, where we anchored for further orders.

The officers of the Delaware at the time of sailing were:

Lieutenant—Stephen P. Quackenbush.
Acting Assistant Surgeon—Lorenzo Traver.
Acting Assistant Paymaster—Frederick R. Curtis.
Acting Master's Mate—James H. Kerns.
Acting Master's Mate—James H. Spriggman.
Acting Master's Mate—Josiah H. Hammond.
Acting Master's Mate—James H. Raymond.
Acting Second Assistant Engineer—John D. Williamson.
Acting Third Assistant Engineer—Asaph Dunbar.
Acting Third Assistant Engineer—Theodore J. Brown.
Acting Third Assistant Engineer—John Davis.

At this period of the rebellion, the city of Norfolk and the Gosport Navy Yard were held by the rebels, and on several occasions, the rebel gunboats had
run down Elizabeth river into Hampton Roads, and made an attack on our gunboats and transports that were lying in the "Roads." I remember on one occasion, it being Sunday morning soon after breakfast, the rebel steamers were seen approaching our fleet. Orders were signaled from the flagship Minnesota to weigh anchor and engage the enemy. We did so, and in a short time we were blazing at each other, at long range, coming nearer and nearer, but the enemy deemed it advisable to retreat under the protection of the guns of a large sand battery, situated on Craney island, at the mouth of Elizabeth river. If any were injured, we never were able to learn the number.

This was the first time that I was under an enemy's fire, and thought, probably as all do, that it was an engagement of considerable magnitude. Although the shot and shell passed over us, and dropped all around the vessel, still we were fortunate in not receiving any injury.

After the lapse of several days, the gunboats, army transports loaded down with soldiers, and schooners with ammunition, provisions, horses and
forage for the same, began to arrive almost without number, until the whole roadstead was nearly filled with vessels. In the evening it presented a beautiful sight; the several lights on each vessel, dancing about at the will and pleasure of the waves, looking more like a large city afloat, than it did like a fleet of vessels laden with death-destroying weapons.

Up to this time we knew not where our destination would be, but of course surmised that it was some point inland, or along the southern coast, where an attack would soon be made.

January 12th, 1862, late in the afternoon, everyone was ordered on board from the shore, and smoke could be seen issuing from the smoke-stacks of each gunboat and transport; the sailors on the different vessels hove their anchors short, and unfurled their sails preparatory to a move; every one could be seen moving about here and there, all showing that something unusual was about to occur. No doubt by this time every commanding officer had received his sealed orders, to remain unopened until arriving at a certain latitude and longitude, then to be made known to the officers and men under his command.
As the sun was going down, the gunboats, transports, and vessels of all kinds connected with the expedition, could be seen wending their way out of the harbor, in a southerly direction; and in a short time not a vessel could be seen, where only a few hours before a large fleet, counted by hundreds, lay peaceably at anchor. During the night everything passed off pleasantly; the sea was quite smooth, with very little breeze, but towards morning the wind began to increase, and by noon it was blowing a fearful gale. We passed several gunboats, schooners, brigs, etc., all apparently centering towards one point, viz., Hatteras inlet, where we arrived January thirteenth, in the afternoon.

On our way down we passed a large bark, loaded with soldiers, with union down; in other words, she was in distress. We ran alongside, and found that she wanted to be taken in tow. We told them that we could not render any assistance, as we had all we could do to get along safely. Soon after a large steamer went to her assistance.

At the time we passed over the outer bar and through the inlet, the sea was very rough, and no
channel to be seen—nothing but one mass of white capped waves and foam—although we crossed over the bar to the harbor in safety, leaving on our port side the transport steamer City of New York, loaded with military stores, hard and fast on a sand bar, with the sea washing over her deck with every wave, and the waves running with such fearful velocity that no boat could go to her assistance. It was a cold, wintry day, and the breakers as they struck the ship, caused her to quiver from stem to stern. The seamen lashed themselves to the rigging, where they remained, without food, without sleep, drenched to the skin, for forty hours, until the storm abated. No help could reach them. Every endeavor was made to send them aid, and two heroic men, Colonel Allen and Surgeon Wellar, perished in the attempt, but all in vain. At length, after the storm had nearly exhausted itself, a steam-tug succeeded in reaching the wreck, and the sufferers, half dead, were rescued.

The second engineer was the last to leave the ship. He remained lashed to the mast until every other man had left. Then climbing to the top-mast,
he cut down the flag, and winding it around his body, bore it in triumph away. "I was determined," said he, "either to die beneath the folds of the stars and stripes, or to bear them safely to land." It is needless to say that the vessel and cargo was a total loss.

All day vessels came filing in one after another, and by sunset the little harbor was literally packed with craft of all kinds and descriptions,—small and large schooners, brigs, barks, side-wheel and propeller gunboats, with a few of the New York and Brooklyn ferry boats, altered over to gunboats; in fact, everything was pressed into the service that drew but little water, as before proceeding to operate against the enemy, it was first necessary to cross what is called "Buckhead Shoal," an expanse of quicksand which had long been the terror of navigators. It is about a mile wide, with a tortuous channel leading through it, varying with the ever-shifting quicksands of the bottom, and with not over six feet of water at high tide.

On arriving at the inlet, we found the United States steamer Philadelphia, which was to be the flag-ship, with flag-officer Commodore Louis M.
Goldsborough on board, who had command of the naval part of the expedition, with Commander Stephen C. Rowan as fighting captain, whose headquarters was to be on board the United States steamer Delaware.

Several days were occupied in getting the vessels over the bar. The transports were loaded with soldiers, some sixteen thousand or more, and all kinds of provisions and munitions of war, and everything being in readiness, at nine o'clock on the morning of February fifth the Delaware gave a general signal for all the vessels—some three hundred—to get under way. They were soon running up Pamlico sound in a column, and part of the way were strung out in file of four or five abreast—all, however, kept near enough to be signaled. The weather was delightful, but cool, and all were in the best of spirits—only too glad to have something to relieve the monotony of the last three weeks, which had been passed in inactivity in the sound. In all there were some twenty gunboats. General Burnside had selected the steamer Picket as his flag-ship, or headquarters during the naval engagement.
At five o'clock in the afternoon we were in sight, and within ten miles of the island, and anchored for the night. It was a beautiful sight to look down the sound and witness the movements of the fleet, as the vessels moved up—one continuous line as far as the eye extended. After the shades of night had gathered around us, one of the steamers went up the sound towards the island to reconnoitre.

On the morning of February sixth the clouds were passing to and fro, as if they anticipated some commotion or shock below. About ten o'clock the Delaware's signal for the whole fleet to get under way and "Prepare for Action," was run up to the masthead; and instantly, all through the squadron, there was a general beating to quarters, and in a few minutes the whole fleet was moving up towards the island, the whole of General Burnside's army accompanying us, when a rebel steamer was seen coming towards our fleet. She stopped a moment to watch our movements, and then left for rebeldom. Every one was busy preparing for the conflict which was about to come off. Soon rain began to fall in torrents, and it became very foggy, when a consultation
of war was held on board of the Delaware, and it was decided to come to anchor for the day, only five miles from the rebel batteries. How discouraging, when only a few hours before our hopes were buoyed up with the prospect of giving the rebels a good whipping, to have them blasted a few minutes later by the sudden change in the weather.

Some three miles above, at the outlet of Pamlico and the entrance of Albemarle sounds, were seen eight rebel gunboats drawn up in line of battle, ready to receive us. In addition to some twenty gunboats, we had six launches connected with the fleet, which were designed to land men, each holding some thirty or forty, and each armed with a twelve-pound howitzer in the bow.

Roanoke island, as you all doubtless are aware, is two and one-half miles wide and sixteen miles long, bearing a little to the northwest and southeast, between Pamlico and Albemarle sounds, and just inside of a strip of sand beach ranging from one-quarter of a mile to two miles wide, extending along the whole coast of North Carolina. The passage to be contested, situated between the is-
land on the right and the main land on the left, was about one and a half to two miles wide, with sunken vessels and a row of piles driven down, extending across the channel from shore to shore, some ten feet apart, only leaving a passage-way just wide enough for their vessels to pass through. This narrow passage was thoroughly guarded by five forts on the island, and one large fort opposite, on the main land, and with eight rebel gunboats drawn up in line of battle, extending across the passage from the island to the opposite shore, making the rebel defences on both sides and ahead of the attacking party, with Pamlico sound in the rear. About two thousand five hundred men manned the batteries on the island, and at Nag’s Head, on the outer beach, five thousand. Such were the formidable preparations which the rebels had made for defense.

The object of this "cheval de frise" was to prevent the union forces from passing up Albemarle sound and through the Currituck Canal and Dismal Swamp to obtain a foothold in the rear of Norfolk and Gosport Navy Yard which were held at that time by the enemy, making a very strong point for the rebels
to hold, as it gave them an opportunity to build vessels and iron-clads, one of the latter class, the Merrimack, came near destroying the small naval fleet left at Hampton Roads, in March, 1862, to protect the fortifications at the entrance of Hampton Roads and the mouth of James river—which would prevent the rebel iron-clads escaping from Norfolk, and running up the James, to join their forces at Richmond, or running by Fortress Monroe out to sea and along the northern and southern coasts, destroying the shipping or whatever might come in their way. The destruction of our fleet by the Merrimack would have been accomplished had it not been for the timely arrival of the Monitor, our first iron-clad, or “cheese box on a raft,” as it was called at that time.

February seventh, at nine o’clock in the morning, the weather was clear and warm, with a fair prospect for a pleasant day. Ten o’clock, the time for an attack had arrived, and the Delaware signaled to the whole fleet to get under way. The enemy was in sight, with their gunboats ahead, and the batteries on the right and left of us, when Nelson’s famous order, modified for the occasion, was run to the mast-
head of the flag-ship: "America expects every man to do his duty." This was responded to with a thunder-peal of cheers from all the ships. The fleet now entered Croatan strait, which is about one mile wide. The vessels as they advanced through the contracted channel stretched out about eight miles in length. All of the fortifications were soon in sight, and the whole upper half of the island seemed to be lined with batteries. The first one approached was on a spot called Park's Point. Opposite this battery were the sunken vessels and the first line of piles filling the channel. Behind this barricade, the rebel gun-boats were stationed, so that in case they were disabled during the fight they could not be pursued.

At half-past eleven o'clock the first gun was fired from the flag-ship, and a portion of the fleet immediately engaged Park's Point battery, while others opened their broadsides upon the fleet, firing across the obstructions. At twelve o'clock we were close to the enemy. They had fired some half dozen shots, but all fell short of us. The Delaware fired her first shot at fifteen minutes past twelve. The firing rapidly increased, and the men were in excel-
lent spirits, having had an extra ration of grog. Their jokes and laughter could be distinctly heard between the discharge of the artillery.

After the gunboats were driven away, the whole fleet concentrated their fire on the batteries. The rebel troops, for some reason, did not vigorously respond. The appearance was, that they preferred the shelter of the casemates, to the exposure of standing by their guns. With glasses, the shot and shell could be seen falling with great destructiveness in and around the enemy's works. Many of the gunboats approached very close to the shore, and poured in with wonderful precision, and rapidity, their destructive fire. Huge shells burst over our vessels, but caused no injury. At two o'clock, two new batteries opened fire on us, making five in all. The shells from our vessels set the forts on fire, and their destruction seemed inevitable. The flames, however, were soon extinguished, only to break out again with renewed vigor a few minutes later. The rebels had several large columbiads, and they worked them with great precision, but still very little damage was done to our fleet, owing to the continuous
movement of our vessels backward and forward, which caused them to get out of range of their guns. All the rebel gunboats kept close under the protection of their batteries.

While the bombardment by the gunboats was going on, the landing of the soldiers from the transports, who were to co-operate with the fleet, began. A boat from the Delaware, with a reconnoitering party, had first been sent towards the shore. They were fired upon by the rebels concentrated in the forest. The Delaware instantly pitched a few dozens of nine-inch shrapnell into the woods. No one could stand this, and the rebels fled, and the disembarkation continued unmolested. Two thousand rebels, with rifles and three heavy guns, had stationed themselves at this point, to prevent the landing. The shrapnell from the Delaware was so destructive, that, in their flight, the rebels abandoned their cannon, and even threw away many of their muskets, that they might run more swiftly.

In landing the troops by General Burnside, the water was so shoal that the launches could not approach close to the shore, and the men had to wade,
many times with the water to their waist, sinking deep in the soft mud. This was very exhausting, as every man had to carry his musket and heavy knapsack, and the water was icy cold.

During the action, one of the quarter gunners, who had charge of the magazine, obtained a key which fitted the spirit room, unlocked the door and helped himself. I chanced to go below, and found him and another gunner intoxicated, using threatening language about blowing up the ship. I hauled him out, shut the door, and reported them to the commanding officer, who had them put in double irons. Fortunately no accident occurred, but the thought of having an intoxicated man in the magazine was anything but pleasant.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon when the United States flag was raised at Ashley's Harbor. The cannonading was still raging at the battery. It continued unabated all day, and as the night was clear and the range was perfect, it did not cease with the going down of the sun. Nothing can be imagined more sublime than a bombardment by night. The glare of the guns, so spiteful in expression; the
roar of the explosions; the shrieking of the shells, as if demons were howling through the air; the bursting of the shells with meteoric brilliancy, and the volumes of smoke rising in the darkness; all these, blended with the gloom of night, presented a scene which, once witnessed, can never be forgotten. About one hour after dark the fleet drew off, and was silent and motionless for the remainder of the night. The land forces had indeed a cheerless prospect before them. Thoroughly drenched and chilled by the cold wintry waves, they were compelled to bivouac on the shelterless shore, without tents, exposed to a cold north wind and a heavy rain. Their discomfort through the night was extreme. The landing of all the forces from the transports had been effected with the loss of but four men killed and eight wounded.

During the naval conflict, the fleet had been severely handled by the heavy shot from the batteries and the rebel gunboats. Only a few of the crew were killed and wounded on board the national ships, although several shots passed through the vessels. The ships were not damaged enough to inter-
fere with the efficient action of the fleet, and all on the island and in the vessels waited impatiently, cheered with hope, for the opening of another day.

The morning of Saturday, the eighth, came. It was cold and dismal. The landing of troops had continued all night, and towards morning the whole sixteen thousand were encamped near the shore. The Delaware anchored close to the shore to protect them. At early daylight, the fleet opened fire upon the battery which the rebels still held. About nine o'clock, large reinforcements were conveyed to the upper end of the island by the rebel gunboats.

While the bombardment was going on fiercely, Lieutenant Jeffers was sent with eight gunboats to remove the obstructions, in order that our fleet might pass through into Albemarle sound. Firing from the battery continued, still the fleet worked heroically until the obstructions were removed and one by one the vessels passed through the gap, and anchored above in the sound. About the same time, the land forces were aroused from their comfortless bivouac, and started at early daylight, under command of General Reno, for a three miles march up the island to make
an attack on the rebels in their central stronghold. They were obliged to pick their way through thick undergrowth, and wade through deep morasses for two hours, when they came upon the enemy, strongly intrenched behind their ramparts. Their battery seemed to command the narrow causeway, this being the only path to the redoubt. General Foster's brigade, composed of the Twenty-third and Twenty-fifth Massachusetts and the Tenth Connecticut regiments, commanded by the young and heroic Colonel Russell, immediately commenced the assault with musketry and a few field pieces. General Reno groped through swamps knee-deep in mud, in order to obtain a more favorable position, and both men and officers co-operated heartily and heroically in this work. While thus engaged, GeneralBurnside was on the beach pushing forward, as rapidly as possible, the disembarkation of the troops, and sending up reinforcements to aid the men in their attack.

At this time I requested and obtained permission from my commanding officer to go on shore and assist in caring for the wounded. General Foster was untiring in his exertions, leading his men with cour-
ageous example, and selecting the points in the redoubt most favorable for an attack. According to testimony, Colonel Russell was very much beloved by his men, and as he was cheering them on, a bullet pierced his heart, and without a word or a groan, he dropped dead. The advance of the assailants was slow, but firm. At length the ammunition was exhausted, and it became necessary to retire, or strive to take the battery by a desperate charge. Major Kimball, of the Hawkins Zouaves, just then came up and offered to lead the charge. "You are the very man," said General Foster, "and this is the very moment. Zouaves—Storm the battery!" In an instant they started, and sweeping like a gale across the narrow causeway, shouting their war-cry, "Zou, Zou, Zou," with a roar which rose above the clamor of the battle. The attack was so sudden and unexpected that the rebels hesitated for a moment in bewilderment, and then fled in a panic, leaving their wounded uncared for. As they rushed away from the fort, the Zouaves, with shouts, went climbing over the ramparts and through the embrasures into the vacated fort. The retreat of the rebels was cut
off by the movement of General Reno in one direction, while General Foster pushed on at double-quick following in their footsteps. The hot pursuit was kept up for nearly six miles by the national troops, crowding them so closely that it gave them no time to rally. Colonel Hawkins, pursuing a little different route, overtook a body of two hundred rebels, who surrendered without a struggle. General Reno fell in with a force of eight hundred rebels, under the command of Colonel Jorden, and compelled them to an unconditional surrender. Everything seemed to be working in favor of the national troops, when General Foster saw Colonel Pool, from the North Carolina Volunteers, with a flag of truce, approaching him, asking on what terms he would accept their capitulation. "Unconditional surrender," was the reply. "How much time can we have for consideration?" was then asked. "Only time to report to your superior officer." This surrender included all the batteries, all the troops upon the island, and all the defences. Over two thousand rebels laid down their arms, and before five o'clock the stars and
stripes were floating over Park's Point battery, and all fortifications on the island.

By this time the fleet had pushed through the barricade, and the national troops were in possession of the whole island, and the vast internal waters connected with Pamlico and Albemarle sounds. The coast was clear. Roanoke island was ours, and six forts, forty-two heavy guns, with a large quantity of smaller arms and munitions of war, with two thousand and five hundred prisoners, fell into the hands of the union forces. The union loss consisted of forty killed and two hundred wounded.

The following general order was issued by Commodore L. M. Goldsborough after the battle of Roanoke island:

"Roanoke Island, N. C., Feb'y 9th, 1862.

To the officers and men under my command, engaged in the reduction of Roanoke Island:

Your efforts of yesterday and the day before, against the enemy, were alike worthy of yourselves and the sacred cause our glorious flag upholds. I thank you for them, and congratulate you upon the results achieved. No Commander-in-Chief could have been more gallantly sustained, or could have desired a more gratifying display of courage, skill and discipline."
We have yet more work of the kind to accomplish, and will soon deliver another blow to crush the hydra of rebellion. From what I have already witnessed, I am sure you will do it well.

Commodore L. M. Goldsborough,
Flag Officer Commanding North Atlantic Blockading Squadron.

The next day was the Sabbath, February ninth. It seemed to be necessary that the routed and demoralized foe should be pursued before he had time to gather his shattered forces for another defence. Fourteen vessels were dispatched under Commander Stephen C. Rowan to pursue the retreating rebel gunboats up Albemarle sound. They had fled to Elizabeth City, at the head of Pasquotank river, directly north about thirty-five miles. Elizabeth City, with two thousand inhabitants, was connected with Portsmouth and Norfolk, in Virginia, where the rebels were in great strength, by the Dismal Swamp canal. About sunset, the union gunboats anchored at the mouth of the river, fifteen miles below the city. There was no escape for the rebel fleet, they were completely entrapped, and their doom sealed. A vigilant watch was kept through the night.
The inhabitants of the city awaited the event with great anxiety. They did not dream that the union forces could pass the barricade and fortifications of Roanoke island, and were unprepared for the disaster bursting upon them. The rebel gunboats had anchored near the city for the purpose of offering all the resistance they could in defence of the town. As soon as daylight made its appearance, the squadron was again in motion, and when within five miles of the city we found seven gunboats drawn up in line of battle to receive us. There was a point of land jutting out about a fourth of a mile in front of the rebel fleet, and upon this a fort was constructed, mounting four guns. On the opposite side of the river from the fort was a floating battery, mounting two rifled guns. The passage between the battery and fort was only half a mile in width, through which the fleet must pass to reach the rebel gunboats. Inspired by Captain Rowan's command to engage the enemy at close quarters, the men immediately prepared for action. Orders were given for all vessels to advance under full head of steam. The flag-ship Delaware took the lead, not paying any
regard to the batteries, but plunged through the shot and shell falling about her in a perfect shower, with the whole fleet following, and before the rebels could recover from the shock of such an heroic attack, the national vessels plunged into the enemy's ships, running them down, and with sabre blows, and bayonet thrusts, our men were upon their decks. Nearly every man was killed, wounded or taken prisoner. A few of them, after setting their vessels on fire, jumped overboard and escaped to the shore. Thus ended one of the shortest and most spirited battles during the war. It lasted only fifteen minutes from the time the first blow was struck, until the stars and stripes were proudly floating over the vessels and fortifications. The union loss, in this truly heroic action was but two killed and twelve wounded. The crews who had escaped from the vessels, in their flight set fire to Elizabeth City, and nearly consumed the little village, consigning many families to want and helplessness.

Soon after the capitulation, the mayor of Elizabeth City, and the surgeon connected with the fort, came aboard the Delaware, and asked Captain Rowan if he
would allow me to go ashore to assist in amputating the arm of a rebel soldier, who was wounded at the battle of Roanoke island. After assuring Captain Rowan that they would return me in safety, I went with them, and on arriving at the house we found the poor fellow had more legs left than courage, and the former had conveyed him to a place where he could not be found. So I returned.

The following general order was issued by Commander Stephen C. Rowan after the battle of Elizabeth City:

"Elizabeth City, N. C., February 11th, 1862.

The Commander of the flotilla in Albemarle Sound, avails himself of the earliest opportunity to make a public acknowledgment of the coolness, gallantry, and skill displayed by the officers and men under his command, in the capture and destruction of the enemy's batteries and squadron at Cobb's Point. The strict observance of the plan of attack, and the steady, but onward course of the ships without returning a shot until within three-quarters of a mile of the fort, excited the admiration of our enemies. The undersigned is particularly gratified at the evidence of the high discipline of the crews in refraining from trespassing in the least degree upon the private property of defenceless people, in a defenceless town."
AND ELIZABETH CITY.

The generous offer to go on shore and extinguish the flames applied by the torch of a vandal soldiery, upon the houses of its own defenceless women and children, is a striking evidence of the justice of our cause, and must have its effect in teaching our deluded countrymen a lesson in humanity and civilization.

Commander Stephen C. Rowan,
Commanding Naval Flotilla in Albemarle Sound, North Carolina."
PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

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THE

BURNSIDE EXPEDITION.

BY

AMBROSE E. BURNSIDE.

LATE MAJOR-GENERAL, UNITED STATES ARMY.

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THE BURNSIDE EXPEDITION.

[Read before the Society, July 7, 1880]

The paper which I am about to read to you was hastily prepared last fall, to be read to a literary society in a neighboring town. Some of our comrades were present at the meeting at which it was read, and exacted from me a promise that it should be given to our society for publication. As I before said, it was hastily prepared, and I asked some time to revise it, before having it published; but up to this moment I have not found the time, and must read it to you in its original form.

Soon after the First Rhode Island regiment was mustered out of service, I was appointed by President Lincoln to the office of brigadier-general. My commission was given to me on the sixth of August, 1861, and I was ordered to report to General
McClellan, who placed me in charge of the division and brigades which were formed of the new troops as they arrived in Washington. My duty was to look after the drill and discipline of these brigades, with a view to giving the men the efficiency necessary for assignment to the older divisions of the army, which were then organizing in Washington under the name of the Army of the Potomac. The duty was interesting in some respects, but was in the main somewhat tame, so that I very naturally desired more active duty.

One evening in the following October, General McClellan and I were chatting together over the affairs of the war, when I mentioned to him a plan that I had given some thought to for the formation of a coast division. After giving him a somewhat detailed account of the plan, he asked me to put it in writing as soon as possible, which was done. The next day it was presented to him, and it met his approval. He laid it before the Secretary of War, by whom it was also approved. The general details of the plan were briefly as follows: To organize a division of from twelve to fifteen thousand men,
THE BURNSIDE EXPEDITION.

mainly from states bordering on the northern sea-coast, many of whom would be familiar with the coasting trade, and among whom would be found a goodly number of mechanics, to fit out a fleet of light-draught steamers, sailing vessels and barges, large enough to transport the division, its armament and supplies, so that it could be rapidly thrown from point to point on the coast with a view to establishing lodgments on the southern coast, landing troops, and penetrating into the interior, thereby threatening the lines of transportation in the rear of the main army then concentrating in Virginia, and hold possession of the inland waters on the Atlantic coast.

After the approval of the plan I was ordered to New York to fit out the fleet; and on the twenty-third of October, orders were issued establishing my headquarters for the concentration of the troops of the division at Annapolis. The headquarters for the fitting out of the fleet were established at No. 7 Bowling Green, New York. Troops arrived from time to time at Annapolis, and all went well in the camp, which was established on beautiful grounds
just outside of the town. The improvement in drill and discipline was very rapid, but affairs did not progress so smoothly at the headquarters in New York. There was great difficulty in procuring vessels of a light draught, almost everything of that sort having been already called into service; but after much difficulty I was enabled to report to General McClellan on the twelfth of September that a sufficient amount of transportation and armament had been secured for the division. It was a motley fleet. North river barges and propellers had been strengthened from deck to keelson by heavy oak planks, and water-tight compartments were built in them. They were so arranged that parapets of sand-bags or bales of hay could be built upon their decks, and each one carried from four to six guns. Sailing vessels, formerly belonging to the coasting trade, had been fitted up in the same manner. Several large passenger steamers, which were guaranteed to draw less than eight feet of water, together with tug and ferry-boats, served to make up the fleet, which gave a capacity to transport fifteen thousand troops, with baggage, camp equipage, rations,
etc. Light-draught sailing vessels were also added to the fleet, on which were stored building material for bridges, rafts, scows, entrenching implements, quartermasters' stores, tools, extra ordnance, stores, etc., all of which were ordered to rendezvous at Fortress Monroe. Coal and water vessels were chartered in Baltimore, and ordered to rendezvous at the same place. The transports were ordered to Annapolis harbor, at which point, after most mortifying and vexatious delays, they all arrived by the fourth of January, 1862, and on this day, orders were promulgated for embarkation, which were received from one end of the camp to the other with most enthusiastic cheers.

I had organized the division into three brigades, which were placed in command of General G. Foster, General Jesse L. Reno and General John G. Parke, three of my most trusted friends. We had been cadets at West Point together, and I had always entertained for them the greatest confidence and esteem; so that you can well imagine my gratification at having my request for their detail granted. In all future operations in the expedition, our close
friendly relations were maintained, and I was never disappointed in any reliance which I placed on their gallantry, skill and integrity. It may be well to state here that I had been notified by General McClellan that our destination would be Hatteras Inlet, with a view to operations in the inland waters of North Carolina. This order was afterwards formulated in an order supplemented to this paper.

On the fifth of January the troops began to embark. During that day there were some delays which resulted from inexperience in the maneuvering of the vessels and in the new work to which they were unaccustomed. On that night, snow to the extent of from two to three inches fell, which gave to the camp and surrounding country, on the morning of the sixth, a most picturesque appearance. Regiment after regiment struck their tents and marched to the point of embarkation, with bands playing, colors flying and the men cheering and singing from lightness of heart. The lines of troops, with their dark uniforms and glittering bayonets, contrasted markedly with the snow-clad fields and trees, as they passed through the quaint old town of
Annapolis, the inhabitants of which at that very day were not remarkable for their loyalty. The men were not cheered and encouraged by many friendly voices, such as they had heard whilst coming from their homes to the seat of war; but they were not at all chilled by the reception, and cheerfully marched on to the work before them. Embarkation had become more easy to each regiment than it was to the preceding one, owing to the greater facility with which the vessels were handled. The order to break camp had been obeyed with joyful alacrity, and more troops poured into the Academy grounds during the day than could be embarked, so that large numbers remained there for the night. This bivouac was one of the most enlivening and beautiful that I saw during the war. There was very little sleep, but great joyousness. The following day and night of the seventh was but a repetition of those of the sixth; and on Wednesday morning every regiment was on board except the Sixth New Hampshire, which arrived late on the night of the seventh, and was on the next morning embarked. The scene in the harbor was inspiring
beyond description. The vessels, as they passed each other from time to time, saluted each other with their steam whistles, while the bands played and the troops cheered, the decks being covered with blue-coats, some chattering, some sleeping, others writing their last letters to their loved ones at home. The whole fleet seemed to be under a mixed influence of excitement and contentment.

On the morning of the ninth, each vessel set sail, under orders to rendezvous at Fortress Monroe. Nothing of importance occurred as they passed down the bay. The trip was made without much regularity as to the order of the vessels, but rather in a go-as-you-please way. By the night of the tenth, all the vessels had joined the supply and other vessels which were concentrated at Fortress Monroe, making altogether a fleet of more than eighty vessels. The harbor probably never presented a finer appearance than on that night. All the vessels were illuminated, and the air was filled with the strains of martial music and the voices of the brave men who had left their homes to battle for the preservation of the authority of the government. Not a man in the
fleets knew his destination except myself, the brigade commanders and two or three staff officers, yet there was no complaint or inquisitiveness, but all seemed ready for whatever duty was before them.

Sealed orders were given to the commanders of each vessel, to be opened at sea. Much discouragement was expressed by nautical men and by men high in military authority as to the success of the expedition. The President and General McClellan were both approached, and the President was frequently warned that the vessels were unfit for sea, and that the expedition would be a total failure. Great anxiety was manifested to know its destination, but the secret had been well kept in Washington and at our headquarters. As Mr. Lincoln afterwards told me, a public man was very importunate, and, in fact, almost demanded that the President should tell him where we were going. Finally, the President said to him, "Now I will tell you in great confidence where they are going, if you will promise not to speak of it to anyone." The promise was given, and Mr. Lincoln said, "Well, now, my friend, the expedition is going to sea."
er left him without receiving any further information. In this jocular manner Mr. Lincoln was in the habit of throwing off the cares of state; and it often occurs to me, that but for that habit he would have broken down under the great weight of public responsibility which rested upon him from the first day of the war to the termination of his noble life. No man has ever lived, in my opinion, who could have gone through that struggle as he did. At no period of his life did I believe his heart was ever stirred with a feeling of enmity or resentment against any one. He was actuated by the simple desire and determination to maintain the authority of the government at all hazards.

On the night of the eleventh the signal for sailing was given, and very soon the fleet was under way. My headquarters were on board a large steamer, the "George Peabody," but I took for my headquarters during the voyage a small propeller called the "Picket," which was in reality the smallest vessel in the fleet, and had with me two or three of my staff officers. I was moved to do this because of the great criticism which had been made as to the unseawor-
thiness of the vessels of the fleet, and because of a desire to show to the men my faith in their adaptability to the service. Their weaknesses were known to me, but they were the best that could be procured, and it was necessary that the service should be performed even at the risk of losing lives by shipwreck. The weather was threatening, but I did not foresee the storm by which we were afterwards overtaken. At that time we had no weather signal reports, but the sailing would not have been delayed in any event, because the orders to proceed to our work were imperative. It was, of course, learned by all, after reaching the sea, that the destination of the fleet was Hatteras Inlet.

Just before midnight the “Picket” weighed anchor, and we were soon at sea, and it was not long before the little vessel was called upon to test her sea-going ability. On rounding Cape Hatteras we met a very strong breeze, and the little vessel got into the trough of the sea. It seemed for a time as if she would surely be swamped; but by skillful management the captain brought her head to, after which she behaved better. We passed a most un-
comfortable night. Everything on the deck that was not lashed was swept overboard; and the men, furniture and crockery below decks were thrown about in a most promiscuous manner. The breeze died away towards morning, soon after which a heavy fog arose and continued the greater part of the day. The ocean's swell during the day, which was something terrible, kept one in constant thought that the little vessel was in momentary danger of going under.

Towards night the wind arose, and within a short time it increased to a terrible gale, and we experienced on that night more discomfort and dread, if possible, than on the preceding one. At times, it seemed as if the waves, which appeared to us mountain high, would engulf us, but then the little vessel would ride them and stagger forward in her course. The great trouble, the captain said, was to keep her head to the wind, but his presence of mind never seemed to leave him for a moment, and every instant of our extreme danger from time to time would be followed by a demonstration of his ability to keep his vessel above water.
The fog had hidden from us the fleet during the day before, (the twelfth,) but at about midnight we discovered a large steamer upon our port bow. We fired a shot astern of her, which she answered by coming near to us. It was the "Eastern Queen"; but we dared not go too near to her for fear of being crushed. She seemed to us a mammoth, and we were all delighted when she answered the signal to lay by us until daylight, but to keep off. In the morning more vessels were found to be in sight, and just before noon of the thirteenth, we hove to, off Hatteras Inlet. Soon after, a tug-boat came out from the Inlet, which, it will be remembered, had been occupied by General Butler and Commodore Stringham. The little boat undertook to do the duty of piloting the fleet over the bar. The "Picket" led the way, and bravely fought the breakers until she was safely anchored inside the harbor.

In thinking of it now, it seems almost miraculous that she escaped the great dangers through which she passed at sea, and the still greater danger of the breakers on the bar. Vessel after vessel followed us in, until we were ready to wish that the fleet were
not so large. At one time it seemed as if our little boat would be crushed between two of the larger vessels which had dragged their anchors and were coming down upon her. Fortunately, the commanders of the vessels succeeded in checking them just as they came in contact with us. Most of the fleet arrived inside the bar during the afternoon.

The propeller, "The City of New York," which was laden with supplies and ordnance stores, grounded on the bar, and proved a total loss. Her officers and crew clung to the rigging until the next day, when they were rescued by surf-boats sent to their assistance. One of the troop vessels also grounded on the bar, after nightfall, and it seemed for a time as if she and her precious cargo would be lost. Some gallant volunteers went to her relief with a tug-boat, which succeeded in getting her off the bar and into the harbor. The water and coal vessels did not approach the Inlet, but went to sea as a matter of safety.

Such of the vessels as were of too heavy draught to pass over the bar, anchored under the cape. From one of these vessels, two officers, Colonel Al-
len and Sergeant Weller, of the Ninth New Jersey, started in a surf-boat to report to me. They succeeded in reaching my headquarters, but on their return the boat was swamped by the breakers on the bar, and they were lost. The crew, who were more skilled in such service, clung to the boat and were rescued. Strange to say, these were the only two lives lost during the entire voyage and entrance into the Inlet, notwithstanding the gloomy prognostications touching the seaworthiness of the vessels of the fleet.

Besides the propeller, "The City of New York," before spoken of, we lost the ship "Pocahontas," with over a hundred horses on board. The gunboat "Zouave" was sunk in the Inlet after she crossed the bar, and proved a total loss, but no lives were lost.

From the fourteenth until the twenty-sixth we had terrific weather, and it required the utmost care on the part of the commanders of the vessels to prevent a general disaster. Many of the vessels were driven from their anchors and grounded on the swash and bar. Many collisions occurred, which caused great damage to the fleet. At times it seemed
as if nothing could prevent general disaster. As I before said, the water and most of the coal vessels were driven to sea by the stress of the weather, and the entire fleet was for many days on short rations of water. Much suffering resulted from this, and at one time a flag of distress was hoisted on many of the vessels in consequence of the want of water.

On one of these dreary days I for a time gave up all hope, and walked to the bow of the vessel that I might be alone. Soon after, a small, black cloud appeared in the angry gray sky, just above the horizon, and very soon spread so as to cover the entire canopy; and in a few moments after, a most copious fall of rain came to our relief. Signals were given to spread sails to catch the water, and in a short time an abundance was secured for the entire fleet. I was at once cheered up, but very much ashamed of the distrust which I had allowed to get the master of me.

To go into a detailed description of all that we suffered during those terrible days would require more time than I can give to this paper. From time to time we made efforts to cross the fleet from the In-
let into Pamlico Sound, over what was called the swash, which separated it from the Inlet. We had been led to believe that there were eight feet of water upon the swash, but when we arrived we discovered to our sorrow that there were but six feet; and as most of our vessels, as well as the vessels of the naval fleet which we found at Hatteras Inlet on our arrival, drew more water than that, it was necessary to deepen the channel by some process. The current was very swift upon the swash, which circumstance proved to be much in our favor. Large vessels were used in going ahead, under full steam, on the bar when the tide was running out, and then anchors were carried out by boats in advance, so as to hold the vessels in position. The swift current would wash the sand from under them and allow them to float, after which they were driven further on by steam and anchored again, when the sand would again wash out from under them, and so on the process was continued for days, until a broad channel of over eight feet was made, deep enough to allow the passage of the fleet into the sound.

On the twenty-sixth, one of our largest steamers
got safely over the swash and anchored in the sound, where some of the gunboats had preceded them. By the fourth of February the entire fleet had anchored and had passed into the sound, and orders were given for the advance on Roanoke Island. Detailed instructions were given for the landing of the troops and the mode of attack.

At an early hour on the morning of the fifth the start was made. The naval vessels, under Commodore Goldsborough, were in advance and on the flanks. The sailing vessels containing troops were taken in tow by steamers. There were in all sixty-five vessels. The fleet presented a most imposing appearance as they started up the sound. The day was most beautiful, and the sail was enjoyed beyond measure by the soldiers, who had been so long penned up in the desolate Inlet. At sundown, signal was given to come to anchor within ten miles of Roanoke Island. At eight o'clock the next morning the signal to weigh anchor was given, but our progress was very much retarded by a gale that sprung up, so we anchored, but very little in advance of our position of the night before. During
that night all lights were carefully concealed. The naval vessels were well out in advance to protect the transports from the inroads of the rebel gunboats.

On the morning of the seventh the gunboats passed inside the narrow passage known as Roanoke Inlet, and were soon abreast of the lower part of Roanoke Island. Soon after the naval fleet had passed through, the transport fleet began its passage. The rebel gunboats were seen close in shore under the batteries of the island. At half-past ten o'clock a signal gun was fired from one of the forts, announcing our approach. At half-past eleven, one of the naval vessels opened fire, which was replied to by the rebels. Signals were given by the commodore of the fleet to begin the action, and by noon the firing became rapid, and soon after the engagement became general. The rebels had driven a line of piles across the main channel to obstruct the progress of our vessels, leaving a narrow space for them to retreat through, and as our naval vessels pressed them they availed themselves of this means of safety. Our guns soon got the range of their batteries, and by most extraordinary skill and rapidity of fir-
ing, almost silenced them. I ordered a reconnoissance, just before noon, by a small boat, with a view of ascertaining a point of landing. A young negro, who had escaped from the island on our arrival at Hatteras Inlet, had given me most valuable information as to the nature of the shore of the island, from which I had determined that our point of landing would be at Ashby's Harbor, which was nearly midway up the shore. The reconnoitering party was accompanied by this young negro, and all that he had told us proved to be correct, so that I directed the landing to be made there.

At one o'clock, the quarters of the garrison in one of the forts were fired by one of our shells. The rebel gunboats retired up the sound, but still continued a brisk fire as they were followed by our vessels. Orders were given for the troops to land at three o'clock. The ground in the rear of Ashby's Harbor was cleared by shells from the naval vessels, and our large surf-boats were lowered, rapidly filled with troops and towed up in long lines by light-draught vessels until they came near to the shore of the harbor, when each of the surf-boats was cut loose
and steered for the shore. There was no obstruction to their landing. In less than an hour four thousand troops were ashore, and before midnight the entire force was landed, with the exception of one regiment, which was landed on the morning of the eighth.

I will not go into a description of the island and its fortifications, because it has been so well described in books which are entirely familiar to all of you. It is enough to say that the advance of our troops was ordered on the morning of the eighth—General Foster being in the advance and centre, General Reno on the left, and General Parke on the right.

Just above Ashby's Harbor, the island from shore to shore was marshy, swampy ground. A causeway had been built up the centre of the island, and on this, about one mile and a half from the harbor, was a fort, which was flanked by what seemed to be impassable ground, but it did not prove to be so to our troops. General Foster pressed the rebels in front, General Reno passed around the left with his brigade, often waist deep in marsh, through most impen-
etrable thickets, until he gained the right flank of the enemy's line. General Parke performed equally good service on the right, and after advantageous positions had been obtained, the work was carried by a simultaneous assault, and there was no hindrance from that time to the march of our troops to the head of the island and to the forts on the shore, where the entire garrison was captured.

The naval fleet pursued the rebel gunboats, nearly all of which, however, were destroyed by their crews, to prevent capture.

The results of this important victory were great, particularly in inspiring the confidence of the country in the efficiency of their armies in the field.

The troops enjoyed their rest at Roanoke Island, but were not allowed to remain idle long. On the twenty-sixth of February, orders were given to make arrangements to embark for New Berne, and within four days they were all on board.

On the twelfth of March, the entire command was anchored off the mouth of Slocum's Creek, and about fourteen miles from New Berne. The approach to the city had been obstructed by piles and sunken
vessels. About four miles from New Berne a large fort on the shore had been built, with a heavy armament, and a line of earthworks extended from the fort inland, a distance of some two miles, where it ended in almost impassable ground.

On the night of the twelfth, orders were given for landing, and on the morning of the thirteenth the troops were put ashore, in very much the same way that they were at Roanoke. By one o'clock the debarkation was finished, and the troops were put in line of march. About this time the rain began to fall, and the road became almost impassable. No ammunition could be carried except what the men could carry themselves. No artillery could be taken except the small howitzers, which were hauled by the troops with drag ropes. This was one of the most disagreeable and difficult marches that I witnessed during the war. We came in contact with the enemy's pickets just before dark, when it was decided to delay the attack until morning. A most dreary bivouac followed that night. Early the next morning, notwithstanding the fog, the disposition for the attack was made. General Foster was ordered to
engage the enemy on the right, General Reno to pass around on the extreme left, and General Parke to occupy the centre. We were much nearer to the enemy than we expected, and were soon in contact with them. General Foster rapidly closed with them, and met with severe resistance. He asked for reinforcements, but was told that every man had been ordered into action, and that there were no reserves. The contest was sharp, but brief. The Fourth Rhode Island broke the enemy's line near where it crossed the railroad, after which the enemy wavered, and a general advance of our whole line placed us in possession of the works. The enemy fled to New Berne, burning the bridge behind them. Our troops rapidly pursued, but the fact that they had to cross the river in boats, prevented them from capturing the main body of the enemy. As it was, large numbers of prisoners and armament fell into our hands.

In the meantime, the naval vessels had worked their way up to the city, and aided in the transportation of the troops across, and New Berne was occupied on the afternoon of the fourteenth.

It still remained for us to reduce Fort Macon. To
this work General Parke's brigade was ordered. The country between New Berne and Beaufort was immediately occupied, and a passage by hand-car was made between the two places, all the rolling stock having been run off the road. By the morning of the eleventh of April, regular siege operations had been begun by General Parke, and were pressed rapidly forward, and by the twenty-sixth of April the garrison at Beaufort had been forced to surrender.

Thus another victory was to be inscribed upon our banner. The Rhode Island troops bore the most honorable part in this conflict. After that, several small expeditions were sent into the interior of the country, all of which were successful.

Much to my sorrow, on the third of the following July, I was ordered to go to the Peninsula to consult with General McClellan, and after that my duties as commanding officer in North Carolina ended, but a large proportion of the troops of the expedition served under me during the remainder of the war, as members of the gallant Ninth Corps.

The Burnside expedition has passed into history;
its record we can be proud of. No body of troops ever had more difficulties to overcome in the same space of time. Its perils were both by land and water. Defeat never befell it. No gun was lost by it. Its experience was a succession of honorable victories.
GENERAL McCLELLAN'S ORDER.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
WASHINGTON, January 7, 1862.

Brigadier-General Ambrose E. Burnside,
Commanding Expedition:

GENERAL: In accordance with verbal instructions heretofore given you, you will, after uniting with Flag-Officer Goldsborough at Fort Monroe, proceed under his convoy to Hatteras Inlet, when you will in connection with him take the most prompt measures for crossing the fleet into the "bulkhead" into the waters of the sound. Under the accompanying general order, constituting the Department of North Carolina, you will assume the command of the garrison at Hatteras Inlet, and make such dispositions in regard to that place as your ulterior operations may render necessary, always being careful to provide for the safety of that very important station in any contingency.

Your first point of attack will be Roanoke Island and its dependencies. It is presumed that the navy can reduce the batteries on the marshes and cover the landing of your troops on the main island, by which, in connection with a rapid movement of the gunboats to the northern extremity as soon as the marsh battery is reduced, it may be hoped to capture the entire garrison of the place.
Having occupied the island and its dependencies you will at once proceed to the erection of the batteries and defences necessary to hold the position with a small force. Should the flag-officer require any assistance in seizing or holding the debouches of the canals from Norfolk, you will please afford it to him.

The Commodore and yourself having completed your arrangements in regard to Roanoke Island and the waters north of it, you will please at once make a descent upon New Berne, having gained possession of which and the railroad passing through it you will at once throw a sufficient force upon Beaufort, and take the steps necessary to reduce Fort Macon and open that port.

When you seize New Berne you will endeavor to seize the railroad as far west as Goldsborough, should circumstances favor such a movement. The temper of the people, the rebel force at hand, &c., will go far toward determining the question as to how far west the railroad can be safely occupied and held. Should circumstances render it advisable to seize and hold Raleigh, the main north and south line of railroad passing through Goldsborough should be so effectually destroyed for considerable distances north and south of that point as to render it impossible for the rebels to use it to your disadvantage. A great point would be gained in any event by the effectual destruction of the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad.

I would advise great caution in moving so far into the interior as upon Raleigh. Having accomplished the objects mentioned, the next point of interest would probably be Wilmington, the reduction of which may require that additional means shall be afforded you. I would urge great caution in regard to procla-
mation. In no case would I go beyond a moderate joint proclamation with the naval commander, which should say as little as possible about politics or the negro. Merely state that the true issue for which we are fighting is the preservation of the Union and upholding the laws of the General Government, and stating that all who conduct themselves properly will as far as possible be protected in their persons and property.

You will please report your operations as often as an opportunity offers itself.

With my best wishes for your success, I am, &c.,

Geo. B. McClellan,
Major-General, Commanding-in-Chief.

P. S.—Any prisoners you take should be sent to the most convenient Northern post. You can, however, exchange any of them for any of your own men who may be taken.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
War of the Rebellion,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.
No. 7. . . Second Series.

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1880.
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1880.
REMINISCENCES

OF

TWO YEARS WITH THE COLORED TROOPS.

BY

J. M. ADDEMAN,

[LATE CAPTAIN FOURTEENTH R. I. HEAVY ARTILLERY, COLORED.]

PROVIDENCE:
N. BANGS WILLIAMS & CO.
1880.
REMINISCENCES OF TWO YEARS

WITH THE

COLORED TROOPS.

The circumstances attending the organizing of a colored regiment in this State are well remembered. In the summer of 1863, white men were no longer eager to enlist for a war the end of which none could foresee; but nevertheless the war must be prosecuted with vigor; another draft was impending and the State's quota must be filled. With difficulty Governor Smith obtained permission to organize a company, and, as this rapidly filled, then a battalion, and finally a full regiment of twelve companies of colored men for heavy artillery duty. In common with many others I did not at the outset look with particular favor upon the scheme. But with some hesitation I
accepted an appointment from the State as a second lieutenant and reported for duty at Camp Smith, on the Dexter Training Ground, in this city. After serving here for some weeks in the fall of 1863, in the organizing of companies and forwarding them to Dutch Island, where the regiment was in camp, I successfully passed an examination before what was known as "Casey's Board," and after some preliminary service with a company of the third battalion, was assigned to the command of Company H of the second battalion, with whose fortunes my lot was cast till the close of our term of service. On the turtle-backed crown of Dutch Island we remained amid fierce storms and the howling winds that swept with keen edge over the waters of the Narragansett, until the 20th of January, 1864, when, as I was about to make a visit home, the transport, Daniel Webster, appeared in the harbor and orders were issued to prepare for embarking on the following day. At the time appointed, we were on board, but the sutler's arrangements were not completed until early the next morning, when we got up steam and were soon out of sight of our familiar camp.
WITH THE COLORED TROOPS.

The incidents of the voyage it is not necessary to recite to any comrade whose chance it was to make a trip in an army transport, which had long since seen its better days, and which had been practically condemned before Uncle Sam found for it such profitable use. The men packed like sheep in the hold, the officers, though far better off as to quarters, yet crowded too much for convenience and comfort, the inevitable sea-sickness, the scanty rations, and what was worse, the extreme scarcity of water, were annoyances but the counterpart of those endured by many brave men who preceded and followed us to the scene of duty. But in the main the weather favored us, and on the hurricane deck we spent the hours off duty, gazing far across the illimitable waste of waters, as day after day we approached a warmer clime with its glowing sunshine and glittering waves and the deep blue sky bending down in unbroken circle around us. The rebel cruisers were then in the midst of their destructive work and it was natural, as we caught sight of a distant vessel, to speculate whether it was a friendly or a hostile craft. When we were in the latitude of Charleston,
a steamer appeared in the far distance, then a flash, a puff of smoke and a loud report notified us that it was sending us its compliments. It approached nearer, a boat put out and officers from the gunboat Connecticut came on board, examined our papers and soon allowed us to proceed. The weather rapidly grew warmer and our winter clothing proved very uncomfortable. The steamer's supply of water was exhausted and we had to depend on sea-water, distilled by the vessel's boilers, for all uses. The allowance of an officer was, I think, a pint a day. Warm and insipid, its only use, as I remember, was for our morning ablutions, which were more a matter of form than of substance. In rounding the coast of Florida we bumped one evening on a sand bar or coral reef. I was very unceremoniously tumbled over, and the game of back-gammon, in which I was engaged with a brother officer, was of course, ended at once. Rushing on deck we found ourselves clear of the obstruction and again on our way. But the breakers, in plain sight, gave us assurance of the peril we had so narrowly escaped.

In the early morning of February second we
WITH THE COLORED TROOPS.

crossed the bar and noted well that line stretching far to the right and left of us, drawn with almost mathematical exactness, which marked the demarcation between the clear waters of the Gulf and the turbid waters of the Mississippi. In going up the river the buckets were constantly dropped into the muddy stream, and their contents, when allowed to stand for a few minutes, would soon furnish an abundance of that luxury we all craved so much,—clear water, cooled by the ice and snows of the far north. Reaching the inhabited portions of the river, we saw the planters busy with their spring work, and though the air was chilled with the icy breath of northern climes, the orange trees in blossom and the green shrubbery on the shores, gave indication of the semi-tropical climate we had reached. Arriving at New Orleans in due season, our senior captain reported for orders. I must not pause to speak of the strange scenes which greeted our eyes in this, the most cosmopolitan city of our land. A delay here of two or three days proved almost as demoralizing as a campaign, and I, for one, was glad when the orders came to move. For reasons that af-
Terwards transpired, we dropped down the stream some fifteen miles to a point called English Turn. It derived its name, as I remember the tradition, from the fact that as the commander of some English vessel was slowly making his way up what was then an unknown and perhaps unexplored body of water, he was met by some French explorer, coming from the opposite direction, who gave him to understand that all the country he had seen in coming up the river, was, by prior discovery, the rightful possession of the French monarch. Though no Frenchman had perhaps seen it, yet with his facile tongue he worked persuasion in the mind of the bluff Englishman, who at this point, turned about and put out to sea—hence its name, English Turn. We found here relics of very early times in the form of an old earthwork, and an angle of a brick wall, built, when, and whether by French or Spaniard, none could tell. Here we soon selected a site and laid out our camp. The time rapidly passed in the busy occupations which each day brought, in little excursions into the surrounding country, in conversations with the colored people whose sad memories of the old slavery days
recalled so vividly the experiences of Uncle Tom and his associates in Mrs. Stowe's famous tale. Nor were the days unvaried by plenty of fun. Music, vocal and instrumental, we had in abundance. The mimic talents of our men, led to the performance of a variety of entertainments, and in their happy-go-easy dispositions, their troubles set very lightly on them. Their extravagancies of expression were by no means an unremarkable feature. When I at first heard their threats to each other, couched sometimes in the most diabolical language, I had deemed it my duty at once to rush into the company street and prevent what, among white men, I would suppose to be the prelude to a bloody fight. "Oh, Captain," would be the explanation, "we'se only a foolin'!"

While here, we had a little flurry of snow, which reminded us of what we had left in abundance behind, but which was a startling novelty to the natives, few, if any, of whom, had ever seen anything like it before. Their explanation was that the Yankees had brought it with them. In the course of a week or two, an assistant Inspector-General put in an appearance and gave us a pretty thorough over-
hauling; but what astonished him the most, was to find us in so healthy a condition; for it appeared that because of a few cases of measles on board ship, we had been represented as being in very bad shape, and it was for sanitary reasons that we were sent to English Turn.

We now began to hope for some change. The place was decidedly unhealthy. Our men were dropping off rapidly from a species of putrid sore throat which was very prevalent. The soil was so full of moisture that we had to use the levee for a burial ground. Elsewhere a grave dug two feet deep would rapidly fill with water, and to cover a coffin decently, it was necessary that two men should stand on it, while the extemporized sextons completed their task.

Washington's birthday was duly celebrated, and foot-ball, wheel-barrow and sack races, among other sports, furnished fun for the whole camp. Even the inevitable greased pig was provided, but he was so greasy that he got over the lines into the swamps and—freedom.

Our battalion commander, Major Shaw, arrived on
the third of March, and on the following day, it was my good fortune to witness, in New Orleans, the inauguration of Gov. Hahn, who, by some form of election, had been chosen the chief executive. The unclouded sky, the rich foliage and the beautiful atmosphere, combined to make a glorious day, and the spectacular arrangements were in keeping. The place was Lafayette Square. Flags of all nations waved in the breeze. In seats, arranged tier above tier, were five thousand school children of the city, dressed in white with ribbons and sashes of the national colors, while many thousands of the citizens were gathered as spectators. Patriotic songs were sung by the little folks; five hundred musicians filled the air with sweet sounds, and in the anvil chorus which was sung, fifty sons of Vulcan kept time on as many veritable anvils; while some half dozen batteries of artillery came in heavy on the choruses. These were fired simultaneously by an electrical arrangement; and the whole was under charge of P. S. Gilmore, a name not now unknown to fame in grand musical combinations. An elaborate address
by General Banks, then commanding the department, was an interesting feature of the occasion.

Our life at English Turn, was varied by little of special interest. Of course there was no enemy at hand except those foes which a hot climate breeds so rapidly. A mysterious order came one day, to detail one hundred men "to join the expedition," and we were notified that a steamer would call for them on the morrow. Details of picked men were selected from each company. Five days' rations and forty rounds of ammunition, were dealt out to each, and in light marching order they waited several days for the steamer to appear. It was in vain, however, and we reluctantly gave up the prospect of some little excitement. We came to the conclusion that somebody at headquarters had forgotten to countermand the order, or, like Mr. Toots, had deemed it of no consequence.

We discussed the varying prospects of change, sometimes coming as a rumor that we should be ordered to Texas, where was the first battalion of our regiment; sometimes that we should join the Red River expedition, which was then forming, or the ex-
pedition against Mobile which was in contemplation. But after six weeks delay at English Turn, we received orders to move up the river to Plaquemine, a point some one hundred and twenty miles above New Orleans, a few miles below and on the opposite bank from Baton Rouge. This town was at the entrance of the Bayou Plaquemine, of which Longfellow makes mention in the story of Evangeline's search for her lover; a description which gives so good an idea of the bayous by which Louisiana is intersected, that I quote it in this connection.

"They * * * entering the Bayou of Plaquemine, Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and devious waters, Which, like a network of steel, extended in every direction. Over their heads the towering and tenebrous boughs of the cypress Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals. Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken save by the herons Home to their roosts in the cedar trees returning at sunset, Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter."

Here we relieved the Forty-Second Ohio, and went into camp. As we marched through the streets of the village to the site of our camp, the scowling looks of the white spectators, sufficiently indicated
their sentiments and especially their wrath at being guarded by "niggers."

We found the state of affairs very different from the tranquil neighborhood we had just left. The surrounding country was infested with guerilla bands, and in the jail were a number of rebel prisoners who had been captured in recent raids. The latter received from the town's people very gratifying evidences of sympathy, and in their comparatively comfortable quarters and abundant supplies, afforded a vivid contrast to the treatment received by our boys at Libby and Andersonville. Intimations were quite freely expressed by the prisoners, that it would soon be their turn to guard us, and we were cautioned by friends and from headquarters, to be on the alert against a sudden attack.

In the evening of the day after our arrival, we were startled by a steamer approaching the landing, all ablaze from stem to stern. The entire heavens seemed illuminated, and it was light enough to read with perfect distinctness. The vessel was loaded with some three thousand bales of cotton, and in landing at a point above us, the sparks from the
torch—a wire basket filled with pine knots, and used after dark to light the loading and unloading of the steamer,—had set the cotton afire. The motion of the boat and the perfect draft from her construction, peculiar to nearly all the river craft, of course spread the fire with great rapidity, and only time sufficient to rescue the passengers was permitted. The vessel had a large freight of live stock, some of which escaped to the shore, but most of them perished in the flames, filling the air with their piteous cries. Our particular attention was devoted to our magazine, which was an ordinary store-house and exposed to some danger. Its contents we could ill afford to lose, and their explosion would have made a sensation much more lively than even the destruction of the steamer.

At Plaquemine an earth work had been begun by our predecessors. It had four bastions, one of which was assigned to each of our companies. The work was in a very incomplete condition, and except for the protection its parapets afforded, would have been of little service. In the threatening aspect of affairs, it became necessary at once to strengthen our
defences, and under the direction of an engineer, details of men were set to work, and rapid progress was made.

In April parties of guerillas and rebel cavalry began to operate actively in our neighborhood. At Indian village, a few miles distant, they burned a large quantity of cotton which had been sent in by planters or collected by speculators and was awaiting transportation. About the same time mysterious signals attracted our attention, and soon afterwards, we learned that a body of two hundred cavalry had crossed the Grand River for the purpose of attacking us. The men slept on their arms, but no attack was made. A week or two afterwards, I had occasion to visit New Orleans on business, and while there, heard a report that Plaquemine was "gobbled up" by the rebs. I was very much relieved on my return to find everything in statu quo. A raid shortly afterwards on Bayou Goula, a trading station a few miles below us, resulted in the destruction of considerable property, but no captures of prisoners.

On the twenty-fifth of May the gunboat 54 was
sent to cruise on the river in our neighborhood, and it was a welcome reinforcement to our meagre numbers. On the twenty-eighth of May the cavalry of General Banks' army, on their retreat from the Red River campaign, passed through our post, remaining a short time in our vicinity. Among them was a portion of our Third Rhode Island cavalry, and no hospitality ever gave greater mutual pleasure than that which it happened to be in our power then to grant. The record of that expedition has been made up, but there was a refreshing vigor of opinion expressed by our comrades on the conduct of the campaign. It seemed very lonesome when they left us with their commander,—a true Rhode Island son, General Richard Arnold.

Orders came within a day or two from Baton Rouge, announcing a change of commanders of the district, and exhorting us to get everything into fighting trim. It will be remembered that flushed with victory the rebels followed close on the heels of our retreating army, and were only stopped by the lack of transportation to cross the swift and deep Atchafalaya. Of course we presumed that they
would make one of their raids down the coast and attack our post, and that of Donaldsonville, some twenty-five miles below us, which constituted the principal defences on the river above New Orleans. With the exception, however, of capturing some of our cavalry pickets, we had no trouble, though frequent alarms kept us on the qui vive. The beating of the long roll was almost a nightly occurrence; but this I should not mention to soldiers, except to refer to an instance that now occurs to me in illustration of the rapidity of the mind's movements, at times. About the time of the raids on our northern frontier, I was dreaming one night, that we were ordered home to proceed at once to some point on the border. All the movements incident to our departure and to our arrival at Providence, were before me. As we were halting in Exchange Place, with arms stacked and men at ease, I obtained permission to go home for a few minutes to see my family, to whom our arrival was unknown, when the roll sounded and we were ordered to fall in at once to take the train. Of course my momentary disappointment was great, but awaking at once, I heard the drums beating in
reality, and jumping into my outer clothing and equipments in a hurry, was shortly at the head of my company. The first beat of the drum had probably started the long train of the incidents of my dream.

In the midst of these rumors of attack, in the early morning of August sixth we were visited by a body of mounted men. They dashed upon our pickets who made a bold stand for a short time, and then scattered for shelter. The rebels had caught sight of the officer, Lieutenant Aldrich, who was in command, and while a part of them made diligent search for him, the remainder dashed into the town, and breaking up into parties raided through the various streets, firing somewhat indiscriminately, but more particularly at what contrabands they saw. The companies gathered in their respective bastions in the fort and we expected a lively brush. As I stood on the parapet and got a glimpse of a portion of the enemy, I ached to let fly a shell, but the danger to innocent parties was too great to warrant it just then. I remember how amused I was at the appearance of the gallant commander of our post, as with his coat and equipments in one hand, and holding up his nether
garments in the other, he was "double-quicking" from his quarters in the town, to a place of security in the fort. After that he selected quarters nearer us. The prospect of being "gobbled up" was not particularly gratifying, especially to a "nigger" officer, who had Fort Pillow memories in mind. As the rebels did not appear to be coming to us, a strong detachment under command of Adjutant Barney, was sent out to exchange compliments with them. They gave us no opportunity for this but soon retired, taking with them three of our pickets and one cavalry vidette, whom they had captured. We understood, the next day, that our men were shot in cold blood. Lieutenant Aldrich and the men with him, escaped through the friendly protection of an osage orange grove. Others swam the bayou and thus escaped certain death if captured. I think our casualties were, besides those taken prisoners, one man killed and a few wounded. Several of the rebels were said to be killed or wounded. One of the latter, as I remember, fell into our hands and was taken into our hospital where he received the same treatment as our own men. Subsequently we learned
that the raiders were Texans who boastfully declared that they asked no quarter and gave none. In consequence of the barbarous treatment of our men who were captured, some correspondence passed between General Banks and the rebel commander, but I am not aware that it amounted to anything.

On the eighteenth a scouting party of our cavalry was captured at Grand River and others in our nearer vicinity. We had two companies of the Thirty-first Massachusetts mounted infantry, who were used for vidette duty. Being more exposed than our own pickets they suffered occasionally from guerilla raids. One party of them, were surprised, probably in consequence of a little carelessness, and were taken prisoners with the exception of one man who was killed. He had been a prisoner once before and fought to the last, rather than again be captured. On some of these occasions the attacking parties were dressed in our own uniform.

All through the country back of us, a constant and merciless conscription was going on, sweeping in all able-bodied men between fifteen and sixty years of
Of course many refugees and occasional deserters came within our lines.

During the fall of 1864 we received from time to time re-inforcements of several companies of colored engineer troops, who continued the work on the fort which we had begun. Though not comparing with the arduousness of field service, our duties were by no means slight. It must be remembered that we were in a semi-tropical country, where to an unacclimated person the climate was itself almost a deadly foe. The extreme heat produced a lethargy that was depressing in the extreme. In a few days of dry weather, the surface of the ground would be baked like a brick. Then would come most violent storms, converting the soil into a quagmire and covering it with water like a lake. At this time, there was no small danger of falling into the deep ditches with which the fields were intersected, for drainage. In this way I lost one man of my company. Of course it will be understood how productive of disease would be the malaria from the soil and the adjacent swamps. Our men with all their buoyancy of disposition, had not the resolute will of white men, when attacked by
sickness, and would succumb with fatal rapidity. As captain of a company, my most arduous duty, when not on special duty or detached service, was as field officer of the day. This necessitated the visiting occasionally during the day and night, our videttes and picket posts which were stationed on the roads into the country, and at intersecting points in the fields; and also crossing in a skiff the Mississippi river, to visit the troops stationed to guard a telegraph station on the other side. This station was in the vicinity of a famous duelling ground,—a path not far from the river bank,—to which in former days the young bloods of the town and vicinity would resort to repair their wounded honor, according to the rules of the code. As we were too short of horses always to furnish a mounted orderly, the officer of the day would at night, have to make his rounds alone. There was a picturesqueness in those rides in the solemn hours of the night, a portion of the way over deserted plantations where the weeds would be as high as one's head on horseback, the path at times fringing the borders of swamps where the moss hung in festoons from the stately cypress trees, past lonely
REMINISCENCES OF TWO YEARS

negro cabins, where sometimes I heard the inmates in the midnight hours, singing some plaintive melody in tones the most subdued.

In addition to our routine work, our officers were largely detailed for staff, court-martial and other duties. The frequent attempts at smuggling contraband goods through our lines, also necessitated military commissions for the trial of these as well as various other civil offences,—on which duty some of us were always engaged. As a consequence, we were always short-handed, and tours of duty came as often as was agreeable. The fall months of 1864 were marked by occasional raids in our vicinity, with orders, at times, to sleep on our arms. The capture of a large supply of revolvers, which were surreptitiously landed near us, indicated the necessity of strictly guarding the lines, and at the same time, furnish those of us who needed them, an ample supply of that weapon.

During this period, we organized schools for the instruction of our men. While some of them were comparatively well educated and were very serviceable in various kinds of clerical work, a large propor-
tion of them were destitute of the most rudimentary knowledge. Through the Christian Commission, of which Ex-Mayor J. V. C. Smith, of Boston, was in our department the efficient agent, we were amply supplied with various kinds of books and utensils, embracing primers, arithmetics, slates and pencils, besides a liberal allowance of reading matter. Our men were eager recipients of these and made good use of them. We tried to stimulate their pride in every way possible, and the great majority of them learned to sign their names to our rolls instead of making their mark. I had some pride in having my rolls signed by the men themselves, but I remember one of my men, however, whom I ineffectually ordered to do this. He admitted to me that he could write, but in consequence of some trouble he had in former years, got into by the use of the pen, he had made a vow never to write again, or something to that effect. My impression is that it was some kind of forgery he was engaged in. It is possible he may have been an unfortunate indorser; if so, his determination would not seem so strange.

At the same time, we were trying to make a per-
manent improvement in the way above indicated, we were troubled by difficulties, which were incident to army life at all times. Liquor, of course, would make trouble for us, and I think I never knew of any stimulant more demoralizing, in its way, than Louisiana rum. This fiery fluid would arouse all the furies in a man when it had him under its control. Gambling was another vice against which we labored with more or less success. Sometimes, after taps, I would make a raid on some of the men who were having a quiet little game. When winter came, we had replaced our worn out tents with shanties built from the materials of confiscated houses. These would be darkened, and in voices hushed to the lowest whisper, the men would indulge in their favorite pastime. On one occasion, I remember that suddenly forcing the door open, I dropped, most unexpectedly to them, on a small party of gamblers. As I scooped in the cards and the stakes, one of them remarked that it was no use to play against the Captain, for he got high, low, jack and the game.

In the preparations that were making against Mobile in the winter of 1864–5, we anticipated an op-
portunity to change our comparatively inactive life. But General Sherman (T. W.) said he could not spare us from the important post where we were stationed, and it was with regret that we were deprived of a share in that brilliant affair which has been so well described in a former paper. During this winter, the rebel forces in Western Louisiana, under command of General Kirby Smith, were comparatively inactive, though raiding parties gave us occasional trouble. Towards spring they began to move, and attacks on parties of Union cavalry were not infrequent. Unpleasant rumors of the capture of the Third Rhode Island Cavalry reached us, but proved to be unfounded, except that several couriers were taken. Some rebel prisoners were captured by the scouts, who were encamped near us, but our freedom from attack, was probably largely due to the inundated condition of the country. Owing to the neglect of the levees, the river at its high stage in the spring following broke through the embankment above and overflowed a large tract of country west of us. A raid contemplated by the rebels, which would have given us sharp work, and a force which
would have been large enough to annihilate us, unless in the meanwhile reinforced, were prevented by the condition of the intervening country, from giving us trouble.

As an illustration of the disastrous effect of this overflow, I am tempted to give a brief description of a trip I made through a portion of the country that suffered in this way. Before the waters had subsided, I was ordered by Brigadier-General R. A. Cameron, commanding the district of La Fourche, in which we were located, to report at his headquarters in Brashear City, for duty on his staff. Taking a steamer to New Orleans and then the train at Algiers, which is opposite New Orleans, I proceeded very comfortably to a place called Terrebonne, where steam travel came to a sudden stop. A hand-car for a mile or two furnished transportation and then we found the railroad completely washed away by the flood above named. The General's quartermaster and myself secured a boat and with a crew of colored soldiers, we rowed some twelve miles to a place called Tigerville, on the Alligator bayou. Our route lay over the bed of the railroad, the track washed to one
side of the cut, and a stream of water several feet deep on top of the bed. The road had been built through what seemed, most of the way, a primeval wilderness. The rank growth which skirted both sides of the stream, with no sound to break the silence, save the measured stroke of the oars, for even the birds which occasionally flitted across our path, were songless, though of brilliant plumage; the sight of an occasional moccasin or copperhead snake coiled on the stump of a tree, and not infrequently of an alligator sunning himself on a log, were features of a situation that must be seen to be fully realized. The few small settlements through which we passed, were drowned out. Some of the houses were nearly under water and large quantities of debris were afloat on the slowly moving current. Through the long weary hours of our boat ride, the sun poured its rays upon us with unmitigated fervor. Reaching Tigerville, we found an ugly little stern-wheeled boat tied up in what had been one of the thoroughfares of the village, and which the quartermaster at once ordered to take us to Brashear City. The captain of the craft, incidentally remarked that
his boiler was in bad shape and might blow up at any

time. The quartermaster was willing, however, to
take the risk, and getting up steam, we were soon on
our way. But with the remark of the captain in my
mind, as I looked at the stagnant bayou with its wa-
ters black as ink, and gazed off upon the interminable
swamps on either side, and thought of the monsters
from which it took its name, I concluded that the
extreme bow would be a little the safest place, and
taking passage on an empty water cask I found
there, I lighted my pipe and tried to feel as tran-
quill as the circumstances above suggested would
permit. Through the winding bayous, we pursued
our way and sometime after dark, we safely reached
Brashear City, or that portion of it which was visible
above the waste of waters. Speaking of the bayous,
it would be difficult to give a clear conception of
their peculiarities. Equally strange are the people
who inhabit those solitudes. Time would not per-
mit me to describe the “Cajans”—corruption of
“Acadians,”—descendants of the exiles who early
settled the territory of Louisiana, but who have
been driven from their first places of settlement by
those more ambitious and unscrupulous. Living in isolated communities, with their artless and unambitious characteristics, their simplicity and exclusiveness, they would furnish material enough for an elaborate paper.

Many reminiscences occur to me in connection with my service on General Cameron's staff, but any attempt to detail them would transgress the proper limits of a paper. In spite of the surrender of Lee and Johnston, a show of hostilities was kept up in the trans-Mississippi department, it being supposed that Jeff Davis was making his way in that direction to still retain a semblance of power in a country which had not felt the severest ravages of the war. Upon his capture, however, the rebel army in western Louisiana, rapidly crumbled to pieces, and while the rank and file were seeking their homes, the officers were continually coming in to our headquarters, to make their peace formally with Uncle Sam. Having occasion to remove our headquarters from Brashear City, to a place called Thibodaux, probably not more than fifty miles distant by rail, we were obliged, by reason of the overflow, to take a steamer and make a
circuit of some four hundred and fifty miles, going up the swift flowing and extremely crooked, Atchafalaya, much of the way through a very desolate country, then down the Red River and the Mississippi to Algiers, and thence, by rail, to our place of destination. On our journey we had the company of several rebel officers, some of high rank, who availed themselves of the General's courtesy to reach the Crescent City. In a few weeks the General was mustered out, and soon afterwards, I returned to my company, which, with the battalion, had in the meanwhile, been ordered to Donaldsonville. Among the duties here assigned to me, was service as Provost Marshal of the Parish, an office which combined as varied a responsibility as can well be imagined. In certain civil cases I had, as judge, jury and executioner of my own decisions, plenty of employment. With an occasional call to join in matrimonial bonds sundry pairs of hearts that beat as one, I had much more frequent cause to settle disputes between planters and employees, where neither party was disposed to meet the other half way. Vexatious and varied as my employments were, and anxious as I
might be to do justice, I was liable to be overhauled by headquarters from misrepresentations made by angry and disappointed suitors. One event in my administration of the office, caused quite a sensation for the day. In the presence of a crowd of whites and blacks, I heard a case in which a colored woman, who had till recently been a slave, was plaintiff and principal witness, and a white man who was defendant, and gave judgment in favor of the former. This may seem to you a very simple matter, but it was evidently no ordinary occurrence in that place, and I presume this was the first occasion in the experience of many of the spectators, in which the sworn testimony of a negro was received as against that of a white person. I seem now to see the glaring eyes of one indignant southerner as he scowled upon the proceedings with the intensest malignity. It was not difficult to guess at his opinion of the changed order of things, while to the colored people, it was evident that the year of jubilee had come at last. Thus with comparatively tranquil incidents, the summer of 1865 passed away. Peace with all its attendant blessings, had come. But disease laid its hands
heavily on some of us, and death was not an infrequent visitor to officers as well as men. From one scourge of that climate, we were fortunately exempted. Thanks to the thorough policing, on which our commanding officers insisted, "Yellow Jack," who in former seasons had been master of the situation, gave us no trouble. But many of our number, particularly those of us who, during the summer, were on court-martial or other duty in New Orleans or its vicinity, had some uncomfortable experiences with the "Break-bone fever," a species of malarial disease, whose name is sufficiently indicative. The services of our regiment were sufficiently appreciated to delay our muster-out till the second of the following October. The three battalions were consolidated at Carrollton, and a few days after we embarked for home on the good steamer North Star. Some of our officers who took passage in the ill-fated Atlanta, lost their lives by the foundering of that vessel. In the fearful storm, the beginning of which we felt as we passed the Jersey shore, more than a hundred vessels were wrecked on the coast, and among the number was the 'Daniel Webster,' which took us from
WITH THE COLORED TROOPS.

Dutch Island to New Orleans. In New York we made a parade which was witnessed by crowds of people with apparently hearty demonstrations of favor. On our return home, we received a cordial greeting from the authorities, and in a few days our regiment was disbanded at Portsmouth Grove and ceased to exist except in history.

It had endeavored to do its duty, and by those who knew it, I believe it had been fully appreciated. General Banks complimented it in orders, and so strict a disciplinarian as General T. W. Sherman, pronounced it a noble regiment, which, from that source, is no small praise. But though most of its officers had served in former organizations during the war, and our lieutenant-colonel was also a veteran of the Mexican war, and with many of his associates brought to the discharge of their duties, the advantage of enlarged experience, a reputation for courage and a high degree of skill, it was not given to the regiment or its several battalions, to participate in any of those engagements or campaigns, some of which it has been the pride and pleasure of comrades here to describe. It was, however, from no hesitation
or unwillingness of theirs. The call was hopefully expected but disappointedly unheard. Yet, may they not fairly claim to share in the glory of the result, and to them may not the words of the poet justly apply,—

"They also serve who only stand and wait."
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
WAR OF THE REBELLION,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
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1880.
A RECRUIT

BEFORE PETERSBURG.

BY

GEORGE B. PECK, JR.,

[LAGE LIEUTENANT SECOND RHODE ISLAND INFANTRY.]

PROVIDENCE:
N. BANGS WILLIAMS & CO.
1880.
A RECRUIT BEFORE PETERSBURG.*

[Read before the Society, Jan. 14, 1880.]

On December 14th, 1864, I was mustered into the national service as a second lieutenant of the Second Regiment, Rhode Island Volunteers, upon condition that I raise a company (G) toward refilling said regiment; was placed on waiting orders January 3, 1865; was sent to the draft rendezvous, more popularly known as the Conscript Camp, at Grapevine Point, then in Fairhaven, now in New Haven, Connecticut, on the fourteenth of the same month; and was shipped with my command on March thirteenth, by the screw transport Euterpe, to City Point, Virginia. Anchor was cast on the evening of the sixteenth in James River, some twenty miles below our destination, and here was received the first intimation that I had ap-

*I have endeavored to portray a soldier's life as he lived it. That is sufficient explanation of certain statements and expressions.

G. B. P., Jr.
proached a dangerous neighborhood. I had retired to my stateroom and just fallen asleep when my first lieutenant (William Vincent Carr, of Providence), entered and asked.

"Is your revolver loaded?"

"Yes sir!" was the response, given as promptly as though I had lain awake for hours.

"Is it in convenient reach?"

"Yes!"

"Where?"

"In its holster, hanging with belt and sword on yonder hook."

"Had you not better have it under your pillow?"

"I can reach it in ten seconds."

"I think you had best place it under your head," he continued, at the same time handing me the weapon.

"Very well! What's the matter?"

"Oh, nothing; only I thought you should have it ready for instant use;" whereupon he left and in three minutes I was sound asleep. Next morning, seventeenth, I asked.

"What was the trouble last night."
"The commander of the Euterpe stated night attacks are frequently made by guerillas and confederate pickets upon vessels lying midstream; we therefore set double guards and made every preparation to receive callers."

"Why did you not tell me this last night?"

"I did not wish unnecessarily to alarm you!"

"Thank you!" was the simple response gratefully returned for such thoughtful consideration.

We anchored off City Point about ten o'clock; a tug conveyed us to the shore. So much time was occupied by the formalities attendant upon the transfer of the large squad of general recruits to the provost marshal's department, that we were detained until the six o'clock train. This was composed neither of hotel nor palace cars. But a single passenger car could be found. Two freight cars accommodated our company, the men sitting on their knapsacks, the officers on their valises. For the first few miles we speed along right merrily, but soon sensations most unique are experienced. The cars are not rocking unusually, but—can it be possible? they certainly are plunging! Yes! despite most persistent effort it is
impossible to maintain verticality. We are testing that novelty of modern warfare, Grant's military railway. Peculiar in its origin and purpose, it was no less singular in construction. Unprecedented conditions presented themselves as essential elements in its engineering problems, and their fulfillment indicates the power of military necessity. Its vales were so deep that had trains stopped therein, they had been hopelessly imprisoned; its hills so frequent we seemed to bound from crest to crest as on the restless billows; its trestlework so light a McClellan might well hesitate to trust himself with a hand-car thereon; and yet the fragile structure was the aorta of the army. Therewith was borne to every portion unfailing supplies of life and strength. And this within easy cannon range of the enemy's picket!

Dark night had settled upon us when we reached—somewhere! Our cars had been uncoupled, and we were alone in the gloom—most emphatically "strangers in a strange land." After brief consultation, Lieutenant Carr, with a sergeant as escort, started forth in search of information. Stumbling by chance into some general's quarters, he secured an
orderly for guide and straightly returned. (He departed crookedly, "not knowing whither he went.") Column was formed in four ranks, doubled files, and the order given, "MARCH!" The sacred soil had been thoroughly baked, and every wheel track and hoof print of the entire winter was preserved as by cast-iron. Moreover, surface drains, natural and artificial, abounded. Over all and through all these we staggered, with scarce a star to cheer us, not even a match flicker to illume our way. After a half hours groping (it seemed thrice as long), we discovered a slight ascent just ahead, and simultaneously heard the sharp challenge, "HALT! who goes there?" "Company G, Second Rhode Island," was the answer. The word passed like wildfire along the regimental guard, its sergeant relieved our guide, and lo! the entire regiment had rushed from its quarters and with enthusiastic shouts welcomed us to its midst. We passed through the broad street in front of the officers’ huts, to regimental headquarters, where our captain, (Charles W. Gleason) was introduced, the men billeted upon their antecedent comrades for present entertainment, and the two lieutenants in-
vited by the commander, (Lieutenant Colonel Elisha H. Rhodes) to tea. That supper-table was most curiously scanned! I had heard much concerning the privations endured by our brave soldiers before Petersburg, and was naturally somewhat anxious; but when I viewed the savory ham, the light, white bread, the sweet butter and rich cheese, the delicious sweet-cake and fragrant coffee, all served with neat white ware, my spirits rose and I felt that possibly I might survive, even though as a subaltern I could not fare quite so sumptuously every day.

After our frugal repast was concluded, the officers were invited to headquarters and introduced. A very pleasant social evening followed. At its close, we were shown to a snug little "tent" near the center of the officers' street, our quarters for the night. This was so perfect a gem, I became desperately enamored at sight; indeed, when Captain Gleason announced some days later that our new, spacious and elegant stockade was ready for occupation, I convinced him it was not worth the trouble to move until we should discover what the disturbances then rife would amount to. Hence, the palace was occu-
pled, never! But to return to my little "shebang"; it was a miniature log cabin, save that in place of a shingle roof there was a triple thickness of tenting. The side walls were less than five feet in height; the ridge pole a trifle over six feet from the ground; the width of the hut about seven feet, and the length, say fifteen feet. The floor was of the "sacred soil" beaten so hard as to resemble cement; the chimney occupied one entire end, save the doorway, and was constructed of double length kindling wood. Mud served well for plaster whenever required. At the opposite end was the bedstead; four forked stakes driven into the ground formed the support; straight ones about two and one-half inches in diameter, connected the two on either side; these in turn were joined by an indefinite number of straight twigs an inch in diameter lying lengthwise, and resting so closely separation and bulging were impossible; upon these was scattered a tolerable quantity of old hay; next came sundry rubber blankets, and above all a liberal supply of woolen ones. I have found more uncomfortable resting places in many a pretentious residence. On one side the room was a small
stationary table, made of boards that once encased "hard tack;" upon it rested a cheap tin candlestick, and above was a single shelf; a solitary stool of rough boards stood in front; on the opposite side was, space just sufficient for two army valises; lengthwise and above, in the topmost log, was a row of nails for hats, caps, overcoats, sword-belts, etc. The door, swinging on leathern hinges, was of the same material as the table, was closed with a wooden latch, and was secured by a thong. Such was my home before Petersburg. I ne'er shall find its equal for pleasure and repose.

Next morning, Saturday, eighteenth, I naturally looked around to discover what manner of place I was in, and first I went to view the rifle trench. This consisted, at that particular point, simply of a low parapet—say four and one half feet in length—without banquette, but revetted with turf and fascines. The superior and exterior slopes were not accurately graded, yet the latter was sufficiently steep to afford decided vantage should it be necessary to spring to the top and use the bayonet in repelling an attack. The ditch was simply an irregular
depression whence earth had been taken as convenient to build the work. Looking forth directly to the front—northwest just there—a plain stretched away unencumbered by trees or shrubs. Distant about two hundred yards could be distinguished, with difficulty, our picket line, protecting not only ourselves but a double row of abattis just this side. On the right, three-eighths of a mile away, was Battery Twenty-six; on the left about equidistant, Fort Wadsworth. Facing to the rear we observe first an avenue one-hundred and fifty feet wide, following the line of earthworks, and furnishing an unobstructed passage-way for troops; next a village of six streets, to which was subsequently added a seventh, at right angles to the avenue. Upon these, front huts of diverse form and size, whose inmates were determined originally by similarity of tastes. Beyond is a street twenty-five feet wide, occupied on the farther side by the row of officers' huts. Midway in this line is quite an interval revealing, still farther to the rear, a low palisade with narrow gateway. Immediately within and parallel to the fence, is a deep but narrow draining ditch, crossed by
a light bridge. Next is a carefully prepared bed, ellipsoidal in shape and intended possibly for flowers when spring shall be sufficiently advanced. Around this are grouped the quarters of the field and staff. At the foci are two stakes to which are fastened by day the state and national colors. Between these a path runs direct from the gate to the opposite side of the plot, terminating before the door of a hut, which is official headquarters. Here all routine business is transacted, and until our arrival it was simply an office. Now the acting major, Captain James A. Bowen, makes it his home. It is flanked by two tents, the one for horse equipments, the other for general stores. At the southwest extremity of the ellipse, is an elegant and spacious hut with boarded floor and paneled door, erected by the regiment during the colonel’s absence in the early Spring, and occupied by himself and surgeon, (William F. Smith, a subject of Great Britain.) Opposite is an ordinary hut, the domain of Acting Adjutant Frank S. Halliday and Quartermaster Robert W. Small.

To the right and to the rear of the camp, is quite an abrupt descent. Near its base is an inexhausti-
ble spring of peerless water. Beyond the valley is the railroad, and higher knolls more remote. Camps are thickly strewn on the right and the left. On my extreme right a signal tower rises conspicuously more than a hundred and fifty feet. The grass has hardly started; all trees have been leveled and consumed; yet the picture seems but that of a grand military picnic. Not a sound breaks the peaceful quiet save the twitter of the vernal birds, the whistle of the locomotives, and—what! how shall I describe that sound? Surely there are no ducks nor geese around; there is no running water; nor yet any live turkeys. But what can that be? I hear it again. It will not do to ask. I wait patiently several days, when by chance strolling near the stable, that now familiar sound again salutes my ears. I turn quickly and discover a long-eared, light-heeled, narrow-tailed songster of the field energetically rehearsing for the next concert.

No cannonading was heard until evening and then it was quite distant—say two miles, or the region of Fort Hell (Sedgwick). The sound seemed a cross between that produced by a battery of light artillery
practicing with blank cartridges, half a mile removed, and distant thunder.

Sunday morning, nineteenth, heard some brisk picket firing, also in the distance, not unlike a party out gunning, as of course it really was. On our own front this rarely occurred; the boys had a tacit understanding not to annoy one another. In the forenoon I visited a neighboring chapel and listened to an excellent discourse on "Christ the Head of the Church." The congregation was composed of enlisted men, with but a moderate sprinkling of shoulder straps. At the close of the service ten men publicly professed their attachment to the Redeemer, in the manner customary to pedobaptist denominations. It is true that some of the delegates of the Christian Commission, through errors of judgment, occasionally preached and prayed when they should have been ministering to the physical necessities of those around them, thereby casting a certain discredit upon the cause to which they were truly devoted. Yet by the greater value of the soul over the body is to be estimated the greater importance of their work to any other.
A RECRUIT BEFORE PETERSBURG.

On Monday, twentieth, as officer of the day I had charge of camp. In the afternoon the regiment marched off to participate in a grand review of the corps by Admiral Porter. When it returned everyone was so begrimed it was impossible to recognize even old friends. The effect of dust is wonderful; so long as a person remains in the crowd and takes his share, he maintains his relationship; let him be away, and everyone becomes a stranger.

In the evening Colonel Rhodes, having been duly empowered when at home, opened a lodge of the Union League, and conferred membership upon Lieutenants Dorrance (John Kinnicut,) Carr and myself. However solemn the rites may have been in spacious halls, adorned with costly paraphernalia, they could not have been half so impressive as when performed almost within range of hostile guns; the banners, battle-flags to be defended even at the cost of life; the swords, blades that on more than one occasion had drank deep of an enemy's blood. The obligations were thus possessed of a reality found nowhere else.

About half-past eleven o'clock the brigade sutler,
some distance removed, having excited the ire of the boys by alleged unjust transactions, received a visitation. The tent pins were quietly drawn and suddenly he found the canvass dropped on his head completely enveloping him. After considerable exertion he tunnelled his way out and fired three shots from his revolver at retreating shadows. No one was hurt—neither did the spirits retire bootless. As this took place beyond my precinct, I could not interfere.

Tuesday, twenty-first, afternoon and evening was characterized by a very severe rainstorm, yet the canvas roof protected the interior of the "tent" so perfectly that we slept as sound and dry as if in marble halls.

Wednesday, twenty-second, I was sent in charge of the fatigue detail to Fort Fisher, two and a quarter miles distant as the crow flies, towards the left, and the most salient work in that section. It was nearly completed save the bomb proofs. My squad, thanks to its diminutiveness, was set to turnpiking, the easiest duty in that neighborhood. Its nature may be inferred by those who have witnessed the repair
of country roads. Should a person be overmuch afflicted with military romancing it can most speedily be cured by assigning some such task for a few days. It is far more prosaic than marching.

Thursday, twenty-third, was a memorable day. A heavy gale prevailed for many hours, unroofing huts and levelling tents. The sacred clay, as already intimated, had been thoroughly baked, but constant attrition of countless feet had reduced protuberances to finest dust. This was borne aloft by the wind, and for hours it was impossible to see twenty-five feet, frequently not six feet ahead. As I sat in my “shebang” with door tightly closed, so readily did the dust penetrate my practically waterproof roofing, that in five minutes after brushing my coat it looked as if its wearer had just been extricated from a meal bin. I speedily learned not to be over fastidious in dress.

Two points of vital interest may well be alluded to here; my subsistence and my society. Of course it could not be expected that a subaltern should fare as sumptuously as he who sported a double row of buttons, nor his viands be served as elegantly; yet the
necessity of eating rested equally on both. Our mess, unusually large, was composed of two captains, and four or five lieutenants. Immediately upon taking the field it was broken up, Captain Gleason, Lieutenant Carr and myself, remaining together. Regimental sutlers had been ordered to City Point before my arrival, hence we depended chiefly on government supplies. We had hot short-cake and cold meat for supper; cold short-cake, "soft bread" (baker's bread) and either cold or warm meat, for breakfast; hot meat and excellent potatoes, with bread, for dinner. Onions, that best of antiscorbatics, were abundant, and I had them on the table generally twice a day. Our coffee was the very best, though I preferred Adam's ale; frequently toast was served; this last was generally prepared from "hard tack" a cracker resembling the ordinary pilot bread, so justly esteemed for chowders, save that its shape was square. The condensed milk at hand was quite sweet and of scarcely less consistence than the cream of cream-cakes. An excellent substitute for these was extemporized by dipping three spoonsful of the milk upon a slice of soft bread. The meat was
served variously; in the form of a pie, a stew, a soup, a fry or a broil. It was invariably porcine or bovine. Two or three days after the Fort Steadman difficulty our supply of fresh meat gave out, and subsequently we lived chiefly on ham. Soft bread disappeared about the same time. Our table and kitchen ware was exclusively of tin and steel.

Concerning social privileges it may be remarked that in camp as elsewhere, "birds of a feather flock together," and one's natural temperament will speedily attract congenial spirits. Moreover, two hidden chains bind closely those elsewise perfect strangers; the ecclesiastic and the mystic tie—a common faith and a common brotherhood. Their strength and durability is as their respective origins; the former drew me to my regimental commander then, the second has since thrown its influence around me also. The paternal consideration he manifested towards his junior officer, the wise counsel and gentle encouragement given, secured at once my highest regard, my profoundest gratitude, and the intervening decade and a half has but strengthened these sentiments. My captain was a man of superior
natural ability, of unflinching, yet unpretentious courage, of unquestioned honor and integrity; courteous, even gentle to his men, yet a strict disciplinarian. In all the line there was none so qualified to rank his associates. He was one of nature's noblemen, and I could but weep bitterly, when, as I lay upon the ground at the field hospital at Sailor's Creek, news of his untimely fate was imparted me. My senior lieutenant had secured my regard by weeks of intimate association at the draft rendezvous; what need had I of other friends? And yet my associates of the line were all that could be desired. The regiment was practically, if not absolutely, temperate. The colonel said he would not have a drunken officer in his command, and he did not. All knew what conduct is "becoming an officer and a gentleman," and nearly every one conformed himself strictly thereto. While I am willing frankly to admit that I could not have seen camp life more favorably circumstanced, I wish most emphatically to declare that there is nothing of itself demoralizing or debasing in a soldier's career. War simply develops character; it makes a good man better and a
bad man worse. The same influences produce antagonistic effects. Fifteen years of careful observation in the ranks, line, field and staff of the naval, military and militia services, have but intensified my convictions.

On Friday, twenty-fourth, was notified I should have charge of the picket detail on the morrow.

On Saturday, twenty-fifth, was up and dressed at half-past five. Had heard firing on the Ninth Corps front every night since the eighteenth, but it seemed unusually lively now. Both cannonading and musketry were rapidly increasing, until it became evident somebody was making a serious disturbance in that section; still everything moved on in camp as usual. About seven, the picket detail fell in and I marched therewith to brigade headquarters. In a few moments the several details were ordered back to their respective commands. Upon reaching camp I found the regiment drawn up in line of battle. With accustomed foresight, Colonel Rhodes had directed the men to prepare for marching and fighting with one day's rations in their haversacks, so when orders came for him to move at once to the scene of
discord, he had only to wait the return of my squad. Its members fell in promptly with their comrades and the Second Rhode Island was the first to march. I was ordered to report to my captain.

It does produce on the reflective mind peculiar sensations, thus to witness the departure for the field of strife of a body of men, all acquaintances and many warm personal friends, while the crash of resounding arms fills the ear. Some shall never again be met on earth; others will be dismembered; many more seamed or scarred by steel, lead or iron: all will endure danger, privation and suffering; and everything so imminent.

Special orders directed one company of each regiment should be left to guard the line. Company G was detailed for this purpose, more particularly, perhaps, because hitherto it had not received muskets or cartridge boxes. My first duty then was to assist the captain in distributing these important equipments; also, a liberal allowance of cartridges. Unlike most, our cartridge boxes were worn just below the breast, and thus maintained by two straps passing straight over the shoulders and attached to the
waist-belt behind. The complicated nature of this arrangement was such as to secure from the boys the epithet of "mule harness." My second duty was to assist in instructing the men in the manual of arms. While thus engaged the left of a strong line of skirmishers appeared, which, taking intervals from the right, extended along the rifle trench from the battle ground, about half a mile to our left. About ten o'clock the firing ceased. It was quite hazy whence the sound proceeded, and had been from earliest morning. At eleven o'clock we were ordered to hold ourselves in readiness to march. The baggage wagons were packed and preparations made for striking the tents, some of which were indeed taken down. At noon the brigade returned to its headquarters, where it enjoyed a brief rest. About the same time I heard brisk cannonading on the left, in the direction of Fort Fisher. The brigade moved on, and the firing increased in intensity. I mounted the breastwork and scanned that horizon with eager eye. I could see the flash of the thirty-two pounders on Fort Fisher, and hear the whistle of their balls; also the rattle of musketry. The atmosphere became
densely fumid, especially when nearer forts opened. Even Battery Twenty-six, on our right, tossed over a few shells by way of additional gentle stimulus.

While viewing the prospect I turned to my superior and veteran officer with the remark, "Captain, do you know what a battle sounds like?" "No!" was the reply, "what does it resemble?" "Well," said I, "if you take a dozen bunches of powder crackers and tie to them while in cluster, at chance points, twenty or more cannon crackers, and then light the fuses at one end, I think you would have a pretty good representation of a battle, at least, so far as noise is concerned." "If you were there you would think of powder crackers," he exclaimed, in rather a sarcastic manner. "Oh," I replied, "of course it would sound louder and perhaps different if one were engaged;" and yet I am to-day unable to give a better recipe for producing the din of battle in a modest way.

At half past three o'clock the wagons moved off. A large New York regiment appeared and took its place before the camp; Company G was in line a little to its left. About five there was sharp firing on
our front, so the captain gave the order "Load with ball—Load!" It was rich to see the eagerness with which the young recruits inserted their bullets. It seemed as though some would climb the barrels and dive into the muzzles of their pieces, such was their joy at even the remote prospect of work. None came to disturb our quiet, however, so after a half hour's interval arms were stacked and the men dismissed. At six o'clock the firing ceased almost entirely. Meanwhile we had been ordered to hold ourselves in readiness to march at an instant's notice, and our baggage train had departed; yet at eight o'clock in the evening the wagons returned, so we felt sure we might expect the regiment sometime. It appeared about two in the morning, Sunday, twenty-sixth, decidedly fatigued, the officers having had nothing to eat since breakfast the day before. Of their experience I may not speak, for I did not participate.

At half-past seven the next morning I was sent with my detail to brigade headquarters for a second time, but was again ordered to camp. The Johnnies were so exasperated at the events of the last thirty-
six hours that it was not safe for groups of men to be seen around the picket line, though generally, as already indicated, there was no firing on our front. Soon after noon I strolled over to the chapel, but learned there would be no service until six o’clock, that the men might rest after the severe labors of the preceding day—a proper exemplification of the principle: "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath."

I was hardly settled again in camp when the adjutant informed me the picket must go out in a few minutes—so for a third time I visited headquarters, and this time successfully, for speedily we were marched, and most literally to the front! The Union line in that section resembled a horseshoe, taking Fort Davis as one heel calk and Fort Fisher the other, the curve being re-entering. The picket lines of both forces had conformed themselves measurably thereto, but about the time of the affair at Fort Fisher, more definitely when we heard the firing on our front, our picket line charged and gained ground sufficient to render the line comparatively straight. I was assigned a position to the right of the Halifax
road, extending across and beyond the Weldon railroad, which there was directly parallel and but a few yards removed, at a point where the enemy had constructed a rifle pit, as it turned, for our especial benefit. Occupying it in reverse we found the earth just high enough to fire over, and just thick enough to stand. At intervals of forty yards were groups of six men in charge of a corporal, forming outposts. Each of these sent forward some thirty yards two sentinels, who at intervals of sixty feet crouched behind stumps or small piles of earth with their rifles at a ready, and peered intently into the darkness for an hour, when they were relieved. Each post had its little fire, which could be extinguished instantly in case of attack, whereby the men, as well as their coffee, were warmed. My first post was on the railroad track. The brigade officer discovering it was my first turn of duty gave me some special instructions as follows: I must not return the enemy's fire unless it should come pretty lively—not for two or three, or even more shots; then he would be with the reserve a few rods to the rear, on the road, and he would repair therewith to that portion of the line...
which was hardest pressed, to me or to my neighbor, as occasion required; but in any event I must not retreat an inch; I must hold the line at all hazards. He also indicated the position of the division grand reserve as still farther to the rear on the same road. Now, I was perfectly ignorant of the practical meaning of the phrase "hard pressed," but the last direction I clearly understood, and reflecting upon the mile or two intervening between myself and camp, also upon the blissful condition of standing between two fires should we indeed be driven back, I concluded it would be quite as healthy to stick to the breast-work under any circumstances and settled my mind accordingly.

At ten o'clock, and again about two, I visited my sentinels. There was no moon and the sky was overcast sufficiently to conceal nearly every star. In making my rounds I went to my right post, thence forward to my right sentinel, then to the left, knowing the railroad would indicate my last man. Of course they were not in exact line, but scattered as cover was available. On more than one occasion, so intense was the darkness, I was obliged to kneel, and,
placing my head against the ground, relieve my man, not sixty feet off, against the sky, in order to ascertain his whereabouts. Once I had thus determined a sentry's location, and was making my way toward him, as I supposed, when suddenly, from some twenty feet to my left, came the low challenge, "Halt! who goes there?" "Oh, that's where you are!" was my reply. "Yes," said he, as I made my way toward him. I had mistaken my course and gotten thus far beyond the lines, a situation most interesting, not only from the possibility of encountering prowling scouts, but also because the men had orders promptly to shoot any one attempting to pass the lines. About four o'clock, the brigade officer notified me that the Johnnies were forming in line of battle on our front, and we must be ready for a brush at any instant, directing me at the same time to warn my men. I sent my sergeant to inform the sentinels, while I looked after the posts, and until daylight paced up and down the line seeing every man was wide awake. What rendered our condition the more enjoyable, were the facts that no abattis had yet been constructed on our front, that not an eighth of a mile
away was a thick wood providing excellent cover for our neighbors until they should be close at hand, that the Halifax road afforded superior facilities for transposing their troops, and that the picket fires revealed our forms clearly to their sharpshooters. Up to that time I had considered the moon a very decent creation, designed for the accommodation of lovesick youth. Since then I have had the greatest respect for her majesty—her benignant smile has been esteemed most precious. No disturbance occurred, however, and when about eight o'clock, Monday, twenty-seventh, I observed the relief coming down the road, I felt extremely good-natured. Most of that day was spent in the recovery of lost sleep.

Tuesday, twenty-eighth, the regiment fell in at the trenches at four o'clock, as on the preceding noon; it remained under arms until daylight. Both forenoon and afternoon I assisted the captain in drilling.

On Wednesday, twenty-ninth, large bodies of colored troops moved to the left, followed by apparently an unending stream of wagons. If I remember rightly, on the preceding day I observed Sheridan's cavalry moving in the same direction. Early in the
morning we received orders to pack and hold ourselves in readiness to march at short notice. This looked like moving. Accordingly every thing valuable was packed in our valises, save those articles considered indispensable on the march. Toward night we were directed to loosen the coverings of our "shebangs." More ominous yet. I patronized the company barber, that I might the better preserve a cool head during the events apparently imminent. Just after tea and as dusk was drawing on apace, while writing in my hut I was summoned to the door to view the most magnificent pyrotechnic display I ever witnessed. All the officers were watching it, and they unanimously testified they never beheld aught so brilliant. Off to the right five or six shells, sometimes eight, could continuously be seen exploding in mid air—on either side the flashing of their guns; and later the trajectories of the projectiles were readily determined by the blazing fuses. Yet not a sound disturbed the serenity of the hour—naught impaired the attractiveness of the scene. At length we retired to our huts, only to be called
out at half-past ten to the rifle trench, whence we were dismissed after an hour.

At four o'clock Thursday morning, thirtieth, we were directed to have all our men equipped and armed ready to form at an instant's notice, but on account of the driving rain they were permitted to remain in their huts. The storm continued until the middle of the afternoon when it cleared away finely. Thereupon we congratulated ourselves, for no one likes to march in mud; yet none of the line really expected marching orders. During the morning we could hear the sound of fighting from the distant and extreme left; at one time in the afternoon, nearer; cannonading and musketry, apparently at or about Fort Fisher. Wearied by the loss of sleep, I had turned in early, when the adjutant ordered all hands to headquarters. I dressed quickly and went; found all the officers present. We were directed to have the men pack, strike tents, load guns, but not cap them (all this to be done noiselessly), leave fires burning brightly, light neither pipe nor match, nor fire a gun until ordered, under penalty of being shot. We separated, notified our
respective companies, and at once made preparations for leaving. At nine o'clock the wagons were all packed and the regiment in line ready to march. After a time an orderly rode up to the colonel, gave the necessary order, and started for the next camp. He had scarcely left when a staff officer came up and countermanded the order. We were dismissed to our quarters but were not permitted to put on our roofs; therefore, for the first time in my life, I slept directly beneath the broad canopy of heaven.

At four o'clock Friday, twenty-first, we were in the trench as usual. It had just begun to sprinkle, and ere long it rained quite fast. When dismissed, some old tents were procured to about cover the "shebang" — that portion containing the bunk, entirely. My wet clothing I hung by the fire to dry, and lay down for a nap. Could you have seen me then you would have readily believed I was taking comfort. The floor was changed to mud, everything was damp, and the waters descended with no prospect of remission. Finally the teams unpacked. I put on other clothing which I wore two hours, when orders came to pack and be ready to start at a moments notice.
Back the things were hustled into the valise and speedily was I again in fatigue suit ready for instant duty. I proceeded to remove my tent roof, when another orderly appeared, the command was countermanded, and soon we were directed to fasten on our tents.

About one o'clock Saturday, April first, I was awakened by some shots close at hand; a moment or two later the long roll was heard springing from one regimental guard-house to another down the line from Fort Fisher with the rapidity of a rockets flight. As its advanced crest passed us on its way toward the Ninth Corps, the weird hour nor its fearful portent could impair the beauty of its sound, the charm of its magic progress. Almost instantly we were at the trench, and for an hour most patiently waited a call from our neighbors. But they did not favor us, so we returned to our peaceful cots.

At three o'clock, an hour earlier than usual lest we should be anticipated by our erring friends, we were again in line, and rested in line until daylight, as it proved for the last time. At eight o'clock I went on officer of the day, also, for the last time. In
the evening, just after dark, we were ordered to headquarters, when the colonel informed us that Thursday evening's programme would now be carried out. Commanders of companies immediately notified their first sergeants to form their men, and most speedily was the regiment in line, in heavy marching orders. The fires were left burning brightly, and as most of the "tents" were unroofed the camp presented an unusually cheery appearance. I frequently wondered what the Johnnies would think of our apparent frequent illuminations, and indeed, subsequently I ascertained they were sorely perplexed thereat. Distant batteries had hitherto been firing, but every thing was quiet on our front. The regiment was on the point of starting when the question arose, What shall I do, and when, and to whom shall I look for orders? So I approached the colonel and waited a suitable opportunity. Suddenly the neighboring works opened. It was indescribably magnificent—the brilliant flashes, the heavy reports and the shrill whistling of the shells. About that time he turned with "What is it Mr. Peck?" "I was waiting for orders, but as the charge is to be
made over here"—"What is that?" ejaculated he, meekly. I replied, perceiving it is not proper for a subaltern to know too much, "I was merely waiting for instructions." "Go to brigade headquarters and the brigade officer of the day will give them to you." I saluted and retired, subsequently discovering I had divined what was proper only for the field officers to know—that the assault would be made near Fort Fisher.

After the regiment had departed I reported at brigade headquarters and received orders to have every man at the breastwork the entire night; none must be allowed an instant's sleep; and in case of a counter attack, I must hold the line at all hazards. These were readily comprehended. I returned and posted my men in the trench, about twenty-five feet apart. During the remaining hours of that memorable night I paced my lonely beat, watching the lightning flashing guns, the glittering trajectory of the shells, and the fitful glare of their explosion, listening eagerly to every sound, striving to divine the position of my comrades, while equally intent that no danger should unexpectedly assail me. The
neighboring forts soon ceased because too retrocedent to damage aught but our recently advanced picket line. Forts Fisher and Sedgewick remained centers of attraction. It did seem as though they were trying pretty hard to hurt some one in those sections.

The morning hours of the day of rest were spent in gazing at light wreaths of sulphurous smoke gradually rising from the Ninth Corps front, an acceptable offering of incense from the altar of exalted self-sacrifice and patriotism. Clearly I heard cheering, as from three or four distinct charges. The earlier ones were broken off suddenly, as from a repulse; the last were much more prolonged, re-echoing and dying away gradually, as from victory. I am positive they proceeded from the Yanks by their quality. And still the hubbub continued with little remission until nearly noon. Later in the day I observed column after column of smoke rise toward heaven, and more and more remotely to our left. I accepted them as proofs of my comrades progress, the burning of abattis. And still later in the day when I heard of the gallant deeds of the regiment, how its colors
were the first planted upon the hostile works, and how our beloved Colonel Rhodes, than whom is no truer soldier, was himself the first to scale the battlements, though followed almost upon the instant by his entire command, a deep regret obtained that I had been deprived participation in the pleasure and perils of that never to be forgotten day.

Since daylight I had permitted the men, who were still kept at the breastwork, to take much needed sleep and rest where they were. Toward night I divided them into five posts, each consisting of five men and a corporal, one of whom was constantly standing on the parapet peering into the darkness. Powerful force, thought I, to defend a line for which the entire battalion was scarcely sufficient. About nine o'clock, having slept none since daylight Saturday, I was prevailed on by the sergeant of the guard to take a nap, he promising to call me at midnight or when the moon should go down. At three o'clock Monday morning, third, I woke with a start, finding it perfectly dark. I lit my candle, dressed, and was about opening my door, when a corporal came, rapped, and asked if I would
like to see Petersburg on fire, pointing to a bright light over that city. About four o'clock an explosion occurred, followed by a marked diminution of the crimson cloud. At light we were ordered to pack, our picket joined us, and the various details assembled at a neighboring camp, whence we took the Halifax road for Petersburg. Passing at length through lines of abattis and rows of chevaux-de-frise of most perfect workmanship, we crossed, on a bridge composed of two logs, a ditch some twenty feet deep and equally wide, scaled a parapet towering nearly the same distance above our heads, crossed a small tract of very rough country intersected with deep ravines, and found ourselves within the suburbs of Petersburg. Here we halted for an hour, near to a little grocery that appeared not to have any proprietor; hence the boys helped themselves to what they desired—no one saying "Why do ye so?" The tobacco was promptly removed and distributed. Nothing else was found eatable save half a cask of prunes two or three years old, dry, and slightly mouldy—not a very tempting viand, yet most every one took a handful. Sundry
individuals appropriated little china and glass vases and statuettes as keepsakes, but I doubt if many of them reached the north. Just as we moved on I saw smoke pouring from one of its windows—some vagabond had fired the store. But we could not tarry to remedy the mischief for the order to march had been given.

We had nearly reached the centre of the city when loud cheers were heard from the right of the column and rapidly nearing. I looked up, and lo, President Lincoln accompanied by Generals Grant and Meade, with full staff and escort of cavalry. With hat in hand he graciously acknowledged the greetings of the soldiers, who enthusiastically swung their caps high in air, and made the city ring with their loud hurrahs. His careworn countenance was illumined with a benignant smile; it was the hour of triumph; he was receiving the reward of four years of unparalleled toil, anxiety and care. He was unrecognized by the late slaves who lined the streets in considerable numbers, but upon learning his identity they too joined heartily in the welcome. The white residents were for the most part invisible; some
could occasionally be discerned peeping through the half-turned blinds of the upper windows. As he passed I turned for one last lingering look, impressed that it was my only opportunity. Little did I imagine, however, that his noble career would be terminated so speedily and in such a manner. Those brief moments amply repaid me for what I had previously considered a serious mischance, and their recollection will be sacredly cherished to the latest moment of life.

We now turned to the left, passed the white wooden house where it was said General A. P. Hill died, and again we were in the open fields, hastening to rejoin our comrades. This territory had hitherto escaped the ravages of war, and bright peach-blossoms, tender leaves and azure sky, with attendant circumstances, conspired to place all in the very best of spirits. We travelled route step by the right flank, doubled files, resting occasionally for ten or fifteen minutes. In the afternoon we were ordered to rest in the wood by the roadside, while the Ninth Corps marched by us. I was indignant, for certainly on more than one occasion "Sheridan's heavy cavalry"
showed it could out-march as well as out-fight any other body of men in the Army of the Potomac; but of course I had to submit.

Once again we started and I marched on. At sunset I found myself, with Sergeant William A. Aymer, a re-enlisted veteran, and a half dozen men, on the heels of the Ninth Corps, with not a Greek cross in sight. How did that occur—where were the rest of the details? I don’t know. I simply recall at this moment the dim outline of a chap on horseback, who looked rather hard at me once; but he said nothing, nor did I. At nine o’clock the Ninth Corps massed in an open field near a wood and bivouacked. I wished to pass on with my squad and overtake the regiment, but Sergeant Aymer positively refused; the men agreed with him that they could not march further; I did not see exactly how I could compel them to proceed, hence I yielded. We went to the outer flank of the corps, found an old apple tree and make a little fire. The men heated their coffee, warmed their meat, and ate their suppers. We then wrapped ourselves in our blankets and went to sleep.
On Tuesday, fourth, I waked with a start. It was very dark and very still. Here and there some faintly glowing embers could be discovered. Not a man of that mighty host was visible; not a sound was heard. I awoke my sergeant with the remark: "Come let us be off; the Ninth Corps has gone." "Guess not," said he. At that instant the reveille sounded—half-past five o'clock in the morning. In a few moments a thousand fires were brightly blazing, kettles boiling, sauce-pans frying. By seven our frugal repast was finished, and upon my direct order we started ahead of the Ninth Corps. We passed a few wagon trains and soon after nine overtook the Sixth Corps, resting by the roadside. Cordial greetings marked our return to our regiment. One man presented me with a small chunk of raw beef. I thrust it on the end of a pointed stick and held it over a neighboring fire until slightly brown, then straightway proceeded to devour it, for two days had elapsed since tasting any, and a portion of the time I had been on short allowance. While here staff officers rode up to each brigade and read the official announcement of the occupation of Richmond. The land
was slightly undulatory, so that I embraced in a single glance nearly the entire corps. It was most inspiring to witness the hats, caps and knapsacks tossed high in air; to hear the enthusiastic cheering, and to listen to the national anthems, which never sounded half so sweet as when thrown on that balmy spring air by those brigade bands. We marched that day until half-past seven o'clock in the evening, and then pitched our shelter tents, Lieutenant Carr and myself occupying one together. Of course we rested meanwhile — say ten minutes in an hour — the process being as follows: The leading brigade turned a little to one side of the road, marched its length parallel to the road and halted. The second brigade filed in to the rear of this, the third to the rear of the second, and so until the nine brigades of the three divisions of the corps were massed. As the last man of the last brigade marched on to the ground, the right man of the first brigade started. Thus each received his allotted portion of rest, while the corps was constantly moving.

On Wednesday, fifth, I arose early and took a bath, the first since leaving Petersburg. Where did I get
the water? Out of my canteen of course. That which remained unused from the preceding day. There was none to spare it is true, but then, water when used economically, will go a great ways. It was very satisfactory. I mention the fact simply to show that sundry so-called privations were the result of negligence or laziness, though it is certain even the canteen of water could not always be procured. We started about seven o'clock, and halted about ten for rations. General orders were read, thanking the men for their valor and congratulating them upon the work already accomplished, but now it might be necessary to test their devotion in other ways; other privations might be required in order to close the war promptly; they must be prepared to endure hunger. One and a half days, rations would be issued which must be made to last three days; then, if the teams were up, more would be supplied, elsewise they must make out as best they could. Moreover, no rations were to be issued to officers. "Encouraging," was my sole reflection. But lo, the colonel with accustomed forethought had sent in a requisition, with due amount of red ink and tape, probably,
for seven days rations for his officers, and had had it approved, so that, much to our joy, we had all the supplies we could carry and a surplus to distribute among our men. Moreover, by some lucky chance an extra box of hard-tack was sent to our company. The boys being raw recruits began some demonstrations of joy, but they were promptly silenced and the windfall quickly distributed.

I think it was this noon that we rested for a few minutes on a beautiful knoll, surmounted by a large two-story frame house that had not been painted for some years prior to the war, yet evidently belonged to a very well-to-do family. The grounds were in an excellent state of cultivation, and the entire plantation seemed pervaded with an unusual air of thrift. But alas, the residents had foolishly forsaken their homes. A window was raised; some one entered and opened the front door, and immediately the house was ransacked for meal and other edibles. Just as we left smoke was discovered issuing from crevices in the shingles; some vandal had undoubtedly fired it, and though nearly every one was loud in their execrations of the wanton deed, I presume it was impossible to dis-
cover the offender. Had the proprietors remained the residence had been preserved. This misdirected prudence was scarcely equalled by that other family, which, observing the approach of the Yankees, gathered its pigs and poultry in pens close beside the house, instead of turning them into the neighboring wood, where it would puzzle a native, much more a stranger, to find one. It chanced the path of our corps led directly through their back yard, and I well remember the amusing scene, as, having just passed the crest of a hill, I could observe in the near valley our advanced bammers surround the pens and plunge their glittering bayonets into piggy's flanks, and having captured bear them proudly off to their knapsacks. Nor did the poultry coops fare better; but no indignity was offered to the residents.

But to return to my story. It had grown decidedly warm, and most of the men devoted their halt to the task of lightening the knapsack. For nearly half a mile from the burning building, I could have walked on blankets, overcoats, old uniforms, albums, books, etc., each one ridding himself of surplus bag-
gage according to taste. After this rests were few and far between. In the afternoon we frequently passed through roads where the rail-fences, grass, and sometimes even the woods were all ablaze, kindled from the camp-fires of the retreating host. I noticed when we traversed such places, the column was well closed up. The air was like that at the mouth of a fiery furnace. The exertion began to tell upon me, though I carried nothing but my woolen and rubber blankets, in a coat-sling, so that about five o'clock the blood burst from my nostrils in profuse streams. This was precisely the manner in which I had expected to give out. Having been mustered conditionally, I escaped an examination that I doubt I could have passed—and here I was. I asked the captain what I should do. He said he did not see but what I must fall out. I told him I could not do that. I had always entertained a profound commiseration for those soldiers who had never smelled powder. I had not yet been under fire, and the next chance must not be missed, let the consequences be what they would. Fortunately we were passing a burning tobacco-house, fired in the way
already indicated. The men half loitered for an instant to view it, when I ran to the right of the regiment and asked the adjutant to lend me his horse for a few minutes. He readily assented, and dismounted. I took his place, permitted surplus blood to escape, loosened my clothing about the neck, cooling off gradually, returned the horse after an hour, and marched until I was so weary I could have slept while walking—until half past eleven. Fires were at once lighted, coffee made, meat fried, and supper made ready. As the only water available was that procured from a little rill which had just been forded by at least two brigades, I concluded I would take coffee for supper. It was slightly cloudy, but we guessed it would not rain before light, so spreading my rubber blanket on the ground and wrapping myself in the woolen one—with haversack containing clothing, coffee and sugar for a pillow, and my slouched hat for a nightcap—I composed myself to peaceful slumbers.

Next morning, Thursday, sixth, was awakened by a drizzling rain in my face. Concluded it was high time I was up, for I never thought it wholesome to lie
on damp ground, so I sprang at once to my feet. Soon reveille was sounded and breakfast served. Because the water was still muddy, I filled my canteen with coffee, though generally I allayed thirst by munching hard-tack. Our first course was in a north-easterly direction, but before we had made more than three or four miles we were faced about, returned almost to the spot whence we started, and then continued marching, with halts few and brief, in the pathway of the sun. Hour after hour we trudged, and trudged, and trudged; encouraged now and then by discovering, in adjoining fields, ambulances that might have been new in the Mexican campaigns; carts and wagons, indisputably the property of the first families of Virginia; caissons and gun-carriages, with pieces that evidently had not received an hours repairs since the Gettysburg campaign; and finally, dropped in the very middle of the road from utter exhaustion, old horses literally skin and bones, and so weak as scarcely to be able to lift their heads when some soldier would touch them with his foot to see if really they had life. Between three and four o'clock, I think, from some
commanding eminence, I caught my first glimpse of a distant line of battle. It was at rifle practice. The position of the men, the dead and wounded scattered over the ground, the officers galloping to and fro, corresponded so accurately to the delineations of Harper's Weekly, that it seemed but the recurrence of an old familiar scene. Soon the order was given, "Double quick—March!" One old gray-headed fellow, over six feet high in his stockings, and so ungainly we never took him out on parades, had positively refused to lighten his knapsack in the least during all the fatiguing march. At this command he exclaimed, "Oh, captain, I can't keep up any longer; I am all tired out." The captain replied, "You should have thought of that before; you must keep up now." He renewed his energies and remained with us to the end of the engagement, but I never saw him again, for the self-imposed severities of the pursuit bore so hardily on his constitution that he was sent to the hospital, whence he was discharged at the close of the war.

We now advanced for ten or fifteen minutes almost at a run, then lapsed into a walk sufficiently long to
regain breath, and on again as before. During one of these half pauses we met a man in butternut suit, beardless, with very red, blooming cheeks and yet darkly tanned, long-haired, with broad-brimmed hat, and dilapidated horse equipments. I was amazed to see the cordial greetings he received, and the hearty hand-shakes from many of our officers and men, as we still kept marching on. It was none other than our Major (Henry H. Young, chief of scouts on General Sheridan's staff), who had just returned from a tour through the enemy's lines, and imparted information to his commander upon which the conduct of the impending battle would be based. About the same time we passed, drawn out one side the road, a battery of light artillery, the gorgeous shoulder-knots and elaborately embroidered jacket of whose commander, revealed it at once to be Battery H of the First Rhode Island Light Artillery, Captain (afterwards Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel) Crawford Allen, Jr., commanding. A little previous, as we came suddenly upon a clearing (most of this double-quick was through pineries), I caught sight of something on the ground, and looking down I discovered, almost
at my feet, a man about twenty-eight years of age, clad in a dark blue jacket with yellow trimmings, his countenance darkened, and a red spot in the centre of his forehead. "Suggestive," was the first reflection; and the second "Well, I have seen a dead cavalryman."

When the order for accelerated movement was given, I concluded there might be a little brush with the enemy speedily, but through some mistake supposed we were in the left brigade, and, therefore, as reserve, I should have a splendid chance to witness a fight. Suddenly, however, I heard the order "By company into line—March!" and immediately I found myself in the line of battle. Glancing to the left, as the remainder of the battalion came up, I found that another brigade was to form the reserve, and that we were on the extreme flank, a position whose beauties are familiar to all. We were on the crest of a hill, where we halted for some minutes. A second glance towards the left revealed a farm-house in the distance. I noted its bearings, feeling sure a field hospital would speedily be established there, and ere long I might need to visit it. I also noted a
group of horsemen on a projecting knoll, gazing at the opposite height. They soon turned and rode up the rear of the line toward the right, affording me my first glimpse of General Sheridan and General Wheaton (Frank, Brevet Major-General, commanding First Division, a former colonel of the Second.) These and other accompanying dignitaries appeared decidedly rough, the former especially. I was now well satisfied that I was about to engage in my first battle. Silently commending myself to the kind consideration of the Supreme Arbiter of destinies, I at once opened, as it were, a mental photograph album containing the faces of all my friends, and those scenes to which I was deeply attached. Upon each I bestowed a single keen glance. About a dozen faces received a second; a third was bestowed on three or four. Finally two were studied tenderly, carefully — my mother, and one whose gentle form long since blended with common dust. Thus I gazed, how long I know not, but the entire pause could not have exceeded ten minutes, probably was not protracted half that time — until the colonel’s clear voice sounded “ATTENTION!” when the album was instantly
closed, and now, business, was the only thought.
Descending the hill, "Prepare to cross a marsh!"
was passed along the line. I trod gingerly and on the
hummocks, for I did not care to loose my whangs,
broad, flat, low-heeled shoes of the pattern issued
the enlisted men, the very best for continued heavy
tramps. Three or four minutes later we found our-
selves confronted by a hedge so high and so dense,
it was impossible to see what was beyond. There
was an involuntary pause— but only for an instant.
Glancing around to find some available opening, I
discovered the colors, some twenty paces to the left,
had advanced about a yard and a half beyond the ob-
struction, and that every one in their neighborhood
had clustered around the breach thus made. My own
men were scattering to the right and the left. The
colonel stormed, and officers shouted "Go ahead."
but no perceptible progress was made. Thinking I
could clear a passage for my own men, I thrust my
hands into and through the hedge, spread them
apart, and found a stream of muddy water a dozen
feet wide. Visions of New England brooks at once
rose before me. I was slightly held by numerous
withes, and moreover was unwilling to injure my hands with briars, so with the exclamation "Company G, this way," I boldly jumped for the middle of the stream expecting to land knee-deep in water. I went through the hedge and struck where I expected, but immersed above the sword-belt, and with feet so firmly imbedded it was impossible to stir them in the least. Thoroughly startled at the idea that perchance I had jumped into a Virginia quicksand, I seized hold of the farther bank and held on tightly. Finding I did not sink, I began working my feet gently to the right and left, soon extricated them from the mud, and then clambered out. Captain John A. Jeffrey's face now appeared at the opening. He enquired about the depth of the water. I reported, and warned him to let himself down easily. After assisting him and two enlisted men over, it seemed that every one was across and our line was formed.

As the brigade came into position, it was found some of the advanced regiments occupied more space in column than was requisite; they accordingly closed up to the right immediately on crossing the creek,
so that we found ourselves, on gaining the farther bank, separated from the remainder of the line by a very considerable interval. Due regard to our own well-being forbade this of course, so we faced to the right, without doubling, and marched until the distance was reduced to little more than fifty yards. As we started, a regular battery on the hill we so recently occupied, opened fire and dropped a ball in the morass some thirty feet short of us. It was amusing to see the men, naturally disturbed and irritated, shake their fists and hurl maledictions at the blunderers. A second shot just cleared our heads, but the third struck half way up the hill on our front, and the fourth reached the enemy's lines. At the same time the bullets began to fall as hailstones around us, and twigs from the hedge just passed covered the ground like snow-flakes. Under this double fire the men became slightly, but only slightly, nervous, and diminished the distance from breast to knapsack, so that when we faced again to the front the files were a trifle crowded. I endeavored to impart mathematical precision to my company, but speedily relinquished the impossible venture, with
the consoling reflection. "There'll be enough elbow room soon!" The men were now directed to crouch, as the bullets fell thicker and faster around us, but the colonel, Captain Gleason and two or three other officers, remained standing. Having, as a file-closer, no particular responsibility, I busied myself with observing the situation. We were at the foot of a moderately steep, turf-covered declivity over whose summit the foliage of dense trees was visible. Some twenty rods to our left this growth, sufficiently dark and threatening, extended down the hillside to the creek. Fine place for a flanking party, thought I; but the colonel said "Those woods are occupied by our cavalry," so professionally, I was satisfied. Still as none of us had seen indications of said occupation, we strongly suspected somebody had been lying. Thus it proved, though Colonel Rhodes was not the one at fault. Cause of false statement: fear that we would not do our duty, should we know the actual state of affairs—a most unwarrantable reflection on those first to surmount the ramparts of Petersburg. We did obey orders in complete distrust of the imposition. From the lieutenant-
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colonel commanding to the humblest private, “If this be so, all right,” was the thought, and sometimes the word.

Next I studied the line. I was always very curious as to the deportment of men under fire, so with rare eagerness turned from right to left and left to right, watching the movements of each individual. Every imaginable position was assumed, from the half erect to an apparent attempt to tunnel the hillside. It was especially comical to observe many of them bob their head as bullets passed close to their ears. Suddenly, “whit!” sped a ball by my right ear; involuntarily I imitated those I had been ridiculing, and thereafter stooped about two inches lower. And all this time, while the leaden missiles were as thick as mosquitoes in early autumn, I saw not a grayback, nor yet a rifle flash.

At length the order to charge was given. The tactical combination ensuing, I will not describe. How the regiment made a charge, virtually unsupported; how it received a murderous fire at short range, from three sides, and indeed from the left rear also; how it was driven to the foot of the hill, and,
after re-forming, again charged in time to participate in the bagging of eight thousand men and seven generals will be told by the commanding officer in a forthcoming paper. My narrative is strictly personal. At the word "Forward!" the men sprang to their feet, fired into the woods, and with a cheer dashed forward on the run. Gaining a few rods, they fell, loaded (officers meanwhile simply stooping), rose again, fired, and made a second dash, suggesting, even there, the Turcos of the Franco-Italian war of 1859, as delineated in Harper's Weekly and the Illustrated London News of that date. I was gratified thus to know that a soldier's fighting capacity depends upon the individual, not the uniform. I rejoiced at the power of adaptation to circumstances—for my men, at least, had received no such instruction. By this time there was more than sufficient elbow room.

With the third dash came the words: "Now close on them—Go for them!" I always had a horror of stepping on the wounded, especially my own; besides this was my first charge, and that over anything but smooth ground; so naturally I devoted
considerable attention to seeing where I was going. At length I imagined I had about reached the summit, and must be ready to close on the hostiles, so I looked up; but lo! no one was before me. Surprised and perplexed, I turned to the left and no one was there. The colors were already half way down the hill and moving deliberately to the rear; the soldiers on the extreme left had already reached the creek. Glancing now to the right, I found the nearest man, eight or ten feet away, was wheeling about. As I did not care to present any confederate with either sword, watch or revolver, and could offer but slight resistance when single-handed, I concluded to retrace my steps also, and accordingly commenced a march in common time to the rear.

In taking my rapid survey, I noticed thirty or forty "secesh" on a projecting knoll, enjoying a comfortable little target practice. I thought if any expert chap should take a fancy to send a ball after me, I prefered the bullet should pass through by the most direct route, reducing thereby all damage to the minimum; hence I made a half face to my left, and quietly travelled down the hill. Just before effect-
ing this change of direction, I saw one man run—the only one in the entire regiment. Now in such circumstances it is very natural to imitate that example, but I soliloquized, "If I were up there and saw a fellow running, I would send a ball after him, merely from love of mischief—just to hurry him up a little. Now I don't want any more bullets coming after me than is absolutely essential under the circumstances, so I guess I had better walk." When one third down the hill, I observed Corporal Thomas Parker, who had carried the State colors on many hotly contested fields, fall prostrate, dashing the flag to the ground. Now men were rather scarce in that neighborhood at that time, in fact each was doing as seemed to him good, and therefore I determined to go and pick it up; but that very instant Sergeant William Wathy, who was not more than twenty feet distant, sprang forward, raised the fallen flag, and was just straightening up when a bullet went across the top of his cap, at once bisecting and knocking it to the earth. He did not stop to repair damages, but bore away the flag, carrying it until Corporal Parker, who was only winded by a bullet in
his knapsack, returned and demanded its restoration. I had reached the foot of the hill, and was about thirty feet from the edge of the creek, when I felt a dull blow in the neighborhood of my left hip. I realized I was shot, and was at once curious as to the amount of damage. I looked down and saw the hole was too far to one side to implicate the groin; forgetting a possibly severed artery, I threw my weight on my left leg, and finding no bones broken, began to laugh as the ludicrousness of the whole affair flashed upon me. "You're never hit till you run," was my first reflection—not altogether correct, as I shall subsequently indicate—and my second, "Three weeks, lacking one day, and in the hospital! Such is glory." These investigations and reflections consumed not more than fifteen seconds. I do not believe the man who fired at me ever knew he winged his bird.

Do you want to knew how it feels to be shot? Ask your brother to step into the yard some bright February day, when the water is running freely in the streets, scoop a double handful of snow from the top of the nearest bank, spat it once only with hands
at right angles, and hurl it with ordinary force from a distance of twelve feet. The dull spreading sensation will be sufficiently accurate.

On reaching the border of the creek, I hesitated for a moment. I did not relish the idea of having that muddy water run through my side, moreover I was fearful it might hurt; yet no alternative presented, so I lowered myself gently, crossed, and looked for that farmhouse heretofore mentioned. Failing to discover it, I started for my former position on the crest of the hill. After trudging on a spell, using my sword meanwhile for a cane, I discovered myself directly in front of Captain Allen's battery. A cannoneer was beckoning to a fellow obstructing the range of one of the pieces, who at once ran toward the gun, delaying its fire so many seconds longer. The artilleryman's gesture indicated that I too was bothering them, so I made a square face to my left, and had stepped not half a dozen paces when a shell shrieked by, taking my benedictions to friends across the flood.

Passing to the rear of the battery, I occasionally met fellows whom I asked concerning the location
of a hospital, but could elicit no information. Attaining the crest, I spied the little farmhouse on the extreme left of the original line of battle, and with glad heart thitherward directed my weary steps. Twenty rods this side I met a couple of the ambulance corps, and asked if a hospital was there. "Yes, where are you wounded?" I indicated the spot. 
"Let us assist you there." "No; I can walk." "But let one of us take your arm." I consented and started; but if the other had not been ready to seize my right, I should have fallen, dragging the former upon me. They entirely sustained me the rest of the way.

When within a hundred feet of the house, I was laid upon the grass, and one went for a surgeon. Upon arrival he asked where I was wounded. I showed him.

"Let me examine it."
"What for?"
"To see if a bone is broken."
"There is no bone broken."
"But I must examine."
"Well, let some one hold my hands."
Clasping them, an attendant firmly held them, while the surgeon explored the wound with his index finger — at least he said he did — I felt nothing. He remarked, "Lieutenant, you have had a very narrow escape." "I am perfectly well aware of it," was my response. He took my silk handkerchief, rinsed it thoroughly in cold water, and laid it on the double wound. That was all the dressing it received in three days.

Next thing I knew I didn't know much of anything. I was winking and endeavoring to open my eyes. Soon I discovered tree branches and men wearing caps. I thought I must be in a street fight in Providence, and wondered how I came there, for I felt that did not exactly accord with my style. I opened my eyes a little wider; hearing returned to my ears and the cannon's roar restored me to myself. Just then a surgeon who had been sent for by a faithful soldier, Private William A. Lincoln, under the impression I was dying, knelt by my side and asked how I felt.

"All right now, only I should like a little water."

"I'll have something for you in a minute," and in
an instant after he added, presenting a tin cup,
"Here, drink this."
"What is it?"
"Whiskey."
"No, I don't drink whiskey."
"But you must drink this;" so down it went; but
the potation was perfectly tasteless — that sense also
had failed me.
A few minutes later I heard the order, "Fire
second fuzes;" I instantly inferred the Johnnies
must be pouring from their wooded hill-top in disa-
greeable numbers and might be descending to the
creek. I began calculating what resistance I could
offer should they raid on that farmhouse. Mean-
while the guns were hurling rotten shot with mar-
vellous rapidity; but they soon slacked up. I felt
the wave had been swept back, and I might rest in
ease and contentment.

An hour later it began to rain, so Private Lincoln
went to the house to secure, if possible, my removal
thither, for every other officer had been quartered
there as soon as he was brought in. He returned
with a litter on which I was taken to the house. I
was then placed on the floor of a room in which there were two beds, each occupied by two severely wounded officers, while in the third corner, on the floor, were at least a half dozen more. The only place found for me was in front of one of these beds; my head close beside the hall doorway, where stood the operating table, with surgeons working the entire night, my body forming the bound of a passage-way to the kitchen door in the fourth corner, whence people continually passed and repassed. Yet when my wet clothes had been removed (a delay which caused a three months cough and nearly cost my life) and myself wrapped in a couple of army blankets, I slept quietly, happily, until daylight.

Friday, April seventh, awoke quite refreshed. Asked Lincoln to look on my right shin and see if he could find any mark of a bullet there. He said "No." I told him I had been struck by a spent ball there, before I had advanced a dozen paces on the charge. He began to laugh; you probably have heard of men who imagined themselves shot because a bullet struck within a couple of yards. Slightly irritated, I told him to get my pants from the kitchen and examine
them. He returned, and showed three bullet holes at the spot I had designated—a fold in the wet cloth adhering closely to my person, had saved my right foot. My attendant now seemed satisfied that any statement of mine relating to the recent affray could be depended upon.

After dressing came breakfast. This consisted of two hot biscuits and a cup of beef tea. Oriental manners were adopted during the repast. At ten o'clock the surgeons had completed their work, and most of them mounted their horses to overtake their regiments. Toward noon the ambulance train came up. Some one asked me if I could ride sitting up. "I guess I can," was the reply, "but don't know for surety." "Where are you wounded." I indicated the spot. "You had best ride lying down." So when all the other wounded officers had been provided for, save three or four too weak for removal, I was borne to an ambulance and placed therein, flat on my back, head toward the horses, and my sound limb next the side of the carriage. A confederate adjutant of heavy artillery, who had lost his right leg just below the knee, in this his first battle, was placed
on the opposite side, while between was laid an enlisted man who had been wounded through the chest. We were so snugly packed with extra blankets, it was impossible to move a muscle, and hence long before the train was packed, half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, I was perfectly familiar with the location of every prominent bone in my back. Meanwhile I found comfort in the reflection that the jar of the ambulance over corduroy might sometime free us from durance vile. It did effectually. We had not moved a dozen rods when I succeeded in twisting myself half way on my side and thus permitted my companions to change their positions. This was accomplished on a good road, but soon we entered upon the full enjoyment of corduroy. We formed but a light load, and when we passed over rough places—obstacles one would not think of driving an ox team over at home, as our driver forcibly expressed it—whether trotting or walking, we received their complete benefits. Frequently we would be tossed six inches, as we bounded over the logs at the foot of steep declivities; again, as a wheel plunged into some deep hole, the carriage
would lurch like a ship in a heavy sea, and seem ready to capsize; and this was often followed almost instantaneously by a roll in the opposite direction. I particularly remember one occasion, when the ambulance preceding ours was nearly mired. Our driver would not venture farther, so the rail fence was taken down and thrown into the wayside ditch, to diminish its depth as much as possible. Then down our carriage plunged and up the steep bank; next over a cornfield, with stubs still standing, for a quarter mile; then over the ditch again to the road. Now all this was fun for me, as I clung to one of the bows supporting the top, and kept myself in such a position that the bouncing came on soft parts, moreover thereby I was somewhat steadied, but not so with my companions. The union soldier had nothing to hold to, and he groaned heavily. The confederate officer was equally unfortunate; as he was thrown up the stump of the amputated limb would drop by its own weight, and when he came down the end would, of course, strike first. His cries of agony may well be imagined; but then each thought only of himself. At times I engaged with
the adjutant in quiet conversation, chiefly on the abilities of various confederate leaders. At eight o'clock, after a six hours ride, we reached Burkesville Junction, and were placed under perforated canvas, on the soft sides of pine boards.

Thus it was I scraped acquaintance with the dogs of war. When next they howl around these Plantations, I shall proceed at once to interview them, I hope with greater profit to Uncle Sam.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
WAR OF THE REBELLION,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
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PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

OF THE

CHANCELLORSVILLE CAMPAIGN.

BY

HORATIO ROGERS,

[late colonel second rhode island volunteers, brevet brigadier general u. s. v.]

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PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

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CHANCELLORSVILLE CAMPAIGN.

[Read before the Society, June 16, 1880.]

Hurled back from the heights of Fredericksburg on the memorable thirteenth of December, 1862, the Army of the Potomac, baffled and discomfited, had retired to the north side of the Rappahannock, and there sat down to watch its victorious foe. In those days of McClellan hero-worship, the Army of the Potomac was a dreary place for a general who proposed to advance boldly on the enemy, instead of cautiously proceeding with a spade in one hand and a pick-axe in the other, by a tardy system of par-allels and circumvallations. General Burnside had realized it, as he was thwarted not less by his own
generals than by the common enemy and, with his Ninth Corps, had withdrawn from Virginia to the south-west. General "Joe" Hooker had succeeded to that slaughter-house of the fame of hitherto successful generals—the Army of the Potomac, and all of us who belonged to that army were looking forward with different degrees of anticipation, to the approach of May, when the peculiar soil of Virginia would permit the transportation of artillery and of heavy trains.

The camp of the Second Rhode Island, surrounded by the other regiments of the Sixth Corps, was back of and a little below Falmouth, about two miles from the Rappahannock. It presented a rather picturesque appearance, located as it was on a gentle declivity, with its tents all banked or walled up for a couple of feet at least, while the left companies extended into a belt of woods through which the parade was reached. Back of all, the regimental headquarters, environed by an artificial evergreen hedge, opened into a little courtyard protected from the gaze of the enlisted men. Adjoining each tent, and rising two feet, more or less, above it, was a pile of
split fagots laid cross-wise, out of which smoke curled, and which presented a most incendiary appearance, as it seemed as if very ample arrangements had been made to fire the whole camp. Notwithstanding the seeming incongruity, however, these apparently inflammable structures were the chimneys of the camp, and, plastered well inside with Virginia mud as they were, served their purpose admirably.

After the regiment was fairly settled in winter quarters, the weeks passed peaceably enough so far as the enemy were concerned, though not without interest to that particular organization. The monotony of camp life, with its drills and its gossip, was broken at intervals by a three days tour of picket. The regiment and its colonel did not always serve together, as a general officer had charge of the Sixth Corps line, while under him a colonel commanded the detail of each division. One of these occasions had an eventful, not to say serious, termination for the writer. It was in March and I was in charge of the picket line of the Third Division of the Sixth Corps, which was stretched along the bank
of the Rappahannock below Falmouth, looking towards Fredericksburg. The tour passed off very pleasantly till the last night, when I was seized with malaria, previous attacks of which in South Carolina had threatened to prove fatal to me, and the next day I arrived in camp a sick man. After struggling with the disease for some days I was sent to Rhode Island by the medical director of the division, Dr. Carr, our regimental surgeon being absent on leave, and few believed that I would long survive. Home and home care had a most salutary effect, so, as April was rapidly passing and the papers were filled with rumors that the Army of the Potomac was to move at once as Hooker was impatient to strike the enemy, I started for the army before I had entirely recovered, despite the earnest protests and remonstrances of friends and family physician, fully determined that the Second Rhode Island should not go into action without its colonel at its head. Having telegraphed my coming to the regiment, I was met at the depot by quite a cavalcade of officers and escorted to headquarters, and never did the camp of the Second Rhode Island, which I had risked so much
to reach, look more picturesque to me than on that April morning with the air full of rumors of an approaching campaign. As there was now no time to indulge in the "luxury of sickness," the excitement of preparation and the anticipation of coming events completed my cure.

The Army of the Potomac, however, did not move for several days after my return, and during that interval our brigade changed commanders, as General Devens, now the Attorney-General of the United States, was promoted to a division in the Eleventh Corps. When he took his departure most of the mounted officers of the brigade, myself among the number, escorted him far on the way to his new command. He left us much to the regret of all who were serving under him, as he had deeply impressed us all with the nobleness of his character, and it is not too much to say that he will carry with him through life the affection and respect of every member of that brigade. Colonel Brown, of the Thirty-sixth New York, being the ranking officer, at once assumed command of the brigade, and after days of expectancy, days filled with all sorts of ru-
mors and reports, the orders to move, so long and so anxiously waited for, came at last.

On Tuesday, April twenty-eighth, we broke camp, and all my soldier hearers will fully realize what that implies. Numerous odds and ends that collect in winter quarters, various appliances sent from home, superfluous clothing that overflows the narrow limits of an army valise, and a myriad of little nameless things that one does not wish to abandon, had been expressed to Washington or to Rhode Island at the earliest rumors of moving; but when the orders actually came, there was hurry and bustle, nevertheless, as tents had to be struck and packed, the separation had to be made of what was to go on the wagons, which no one knew when we were to see again, and what was to go on our own or on our servants' backs, or, if mounted officers, on our spare horses; and finally the men had to be got into line, a job by no means easy, as each had some last thing to do, which it seems to be an invariable rule with every old soldier not to do till the very last fraction of a second. At last when the regiment moved off, what a caravan it was. It almost makes one laugh
to think of it. Every soldier had his gun and equipments, of course, but then, too, swinging on one side of him, he had a big haversack stuffed full of rations, as he was presumed to start with enough for eight days, which the Lord only knew how he was to carry. A canteen swung on his other side, while in a big roll, usually encircling him from the shoulder on one side to below the waist on the other, reminding one of Laocoon in the toils of the serpent, was his shelter tent, rubber and woolen blankets. Last but by no means least in this nomadic outfit, was the invariable tin cup holding a quart or possibly three pints, which was suspended from somewhere, just as it happened, and which served as a drinking cup and as a kettle to make coffee in. Following the regiment proper, came a gipsy looking band of servants loaded in most fantastic style with whatever could minister to the support or necessities of man, while the mounted officers' spare horses afforded as miscellaneous an appearance as could possibly greet the eye. Don Quixote's Rosinante and Sancho Panza and his ass, were aristocrats in appearance, compared with this motley crew. The
Second Rhode Island, be it understood, was but a representative of every other regiment in the army. After the Second was formed it joined the rest of the brigade and then waited a long time for the orders to march. While it thus waited very diverse thoughts were running through the minds of the different members of that regiment. Not only had the Army of the Potomac changed leaders since it moved last, but the Second Rhode Island had changed commanders twice in the same period. The colonel was a new man to the regiment, and he and his field officers were all new to their present positions. When Colonel Wheaton became a brigadier in December, 1862, the lieutenant colonel and major were both, properly enough, advanced a grade; but the elevation of Chaplain Jameson to the majority proved a veritable apple of discord in the regiment, it being the general opinion that the chaplain who had started out ostensibly to serve his God, had ended by very effectually serving himself. The result of the embittered contention that ensued was an entire change of field officers, so, when the new colonel came from another organization, his coming was a
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disappointment to some and a pleasure to none, for while the officers with rare exceptions desired him to remain in command, it was only as a choice of evils. As we halted there patiently awaiting events, the regiment eyed its colonel to see what manner of man he was, and wondered whether, in the test by which he was about to be tried, he would be found wanting. The colonel, on the other hand, sat astride his horse coolly watching his officers and men, and on his part wondering whether they were ready to follow wherever he might dare to lead.

About three o'clock in the afternoon, after much halting and waiting, we proceeded down nearly to the bank of the Rappahannock, bivouacking for the night in a ravine concealed from the view of the enemy. Soon after daylight the next morning (Wednesday, April twenty-ninth), the regiment, accompanying the brigade, wound down the road nearest the river, to nearly opposite the ruins of the Bernard house, and there we lay all day Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and a part of Saturday. Our post was at the head of the pontoon bridge below Fredericksburg, where we acted as a sort of guard, with
nothing to do but to watch and wait. The air was filled with rumors, and at last came printed orders from General Hooker, announcing, in rather grandiloquent terms, some early successes on first crossing the river.

The First, Third and Sixth Corps, under General Sedgwick, formed the left wing, but now the Third Corps was detached and sent to General Hooker, and then the First Corps, while the rest of us lay on the river bank and wondered. At night the sky was lurid with burning houses or material, and the heavens were literally lighted with the torch of war. The effect of all these rumors by day and of the lurid glare at night was to exhilarate some, and to rouse all manner of apprehensions in others. It certainly did not have an assuring effect upon weak nerves.

At length we crossed the river about half-past nine Saturday evening (May second), and as we did not reach Fredericksburg, but three miles distant, till the dawn of day, my hearers can readily imagine how much dreary halting and waiting we did. We lay in the streets of Fredericksburg till eleven o'clock in the morning, when we were ordered up
above the town to support our Rhode Island Battery B., Captain T. Fred Brown, of the Second Corps,* which was playing on the enemy. The beauty of that scene I shall never forget. Battery B occupied the crest of a ridge, just below which in the rear was the Second Rhode Island in line of battle. Behind and below us on our left, was the town of Fredericksburg, seeming strangely out of place with its peaceful appearing mansions, from the door of one of which a refined looking elderly lady furtively peered at us as we passed. Before us and stretching far on either hand was an intervale through which we had an unobstructed view, while beyond that again, directly in our front and extending a long distance, was a ridge occupied by the rebels, and known as Marye's Heights. A creek ran between us and them, across which, so far as I could see, was a single road and bridge, and this was quite a little distance to our left though in plain sight. This road, where it crossed the bridge and extended through a cut up

*This battery belonged to General Gibbon's division of the Second Corps. General Sedgwick in his examination before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, says: "General Gibbon's division belonged to the Second Corps, but was ordered to cross and report to me at Fredericksburg."
the hill on the other side, was known as “the slaughter-pen” in Burnside’s attack the previous December, and well it deserved the name.

The opposing batteries on the opposite ridges boomed away at one another vigorously, and while Captain Brown seemed to get his shell in among the rebels most successfully, they were not able to depress their guns sufficiently to harm him. Presently our Rhode Island Battery G, Captain George W. Adams, came thundering up alongside of Captain Brown, and went into action on his right. Soon after, a column of infantry poured out from Fredericksburg up through the slaughter-pen into the smoke of the rebel batteries and battalions that encircled them. Oh, how the cannon roared and the musketry rattled, and what a terrible suspense, though only for a moment. Then a loud cheer broke forth, and we could see the rebels breaking away in all directions from that road and getting to the rear. What was now to be done with the Second Rhode Island, was the question that presented itself to me. Evidently the batteries needed no further support, and as a constant stream of troops was pouring through
the slaughter-pen and generals were scarce in my locality, I deemed it a safe rule of conduct, in the absence of orders, to always go for a rebel when I saw one, especially when he was trying to get away, so I started the old Second along. Our passage through the slaughter-pen, with its dead and dying scattered around, at once showed but too plainly how well it deserved its name; and after chasing rebels awhile on the extreme right, one of General Gibbon's aides ordered me to report back to my brigade, which I found on the plank road, a mile or so west of Marye's Heights.

We pushed westward along the plank road in the direction of Chancellorsville, and as our brigade formed the very rear of the Sixth Corps, the Second Rhode Island was the extreme rear regiment of the whole column. We went along peaceably enough for three or four miles, until we approached a little range of hills, when we halted and rebel shell roared uncomfortably over our heads. A shell bursting in the air directly over my head, was one of the things I could never take kindly to. Of all the fiendish, infernal, diabolical, devilish noises I ever heard, that is
the worst. It seemed as if the devil must be in it, and was making a terrible racket in getting out. Though I am not an expert in that sort of thing, I always fancied it sounded as might a summons from hell, and, I am free to say, I never liked it. It was apparent that we had found obstacles, and that the rebels were in force in our front. We halted quite a little while for the regiments on our right to form in line of battle, and then we advanced again by the flank. At last we halted with the rest of our brigade, and one after another of our regiments was marched off. A battle was going on directly in our front, and it seemed as if the Sixth Corps was getting the worst of it. Finally, the Tenth Massachusetts, which was just ahead of us, started off, and the Second was left all alone on the plank road with directions, as it was in reserve, to wait for orders. It seemed to me like being on a sinking, burning ship, and told to stand quietly by until some one should come and tell me to do something for the common weal. It was clear that some of our troops were panic-stricken and that the line had given way somewhere. From the front and right of us a constant stream of men were
thronging to the rear, with every indication of utter demoralization. As they went, they threw away their guns, and tore off their equipments and threw them away also. I had seen retreats, but I had never before seen the like of this. It seemed as if Bedlam had broken loose and chaos reigned supreme. Then a battery directly before us, and but a short distance off, limbered up in a trice and went to the rear as if it, too, had been smitten by a demon. I sat quietly on my horse and wondered where in the world were the orders I was told to wait for, and when, in the name of common sense, could reserves be more wanted than then. The steadiness with which the regiment had patiently halted on the very threshold of that battle-field, and witnessed the demoralizing scenes around it, was certainly very remarkable, and required more real nerve than actually participating in the battle itself; but we we had not long to wait.

Just after the battery thundered to the rear, a few dust-covered, bedraggled-looking horsemen came directly down the road, and not till the leader got close to me did I discover him to be General Newton, and as I was a comparatively new com'er in the Army of
the Potomac, it is doubtful if he recognized me. Drawing rein as he reached me, he inquired, "What regiment is this, Colonel?" "The Second Rhode Island, sir," I replied, "directed to wait here for orders." "Colonel," said General Newton, in a deeply earnest voice, "form here and go to the right of that house, close to the woods"—indicating the direction with his hand—"we are being badly driven, hurry up and help them." We had been marching up the road by the right flank and had simply halted a little before reaching the ridge on which the battle was raging. Forming a line on the right of the road, for the point indicated by General Newton was apparently on the extreme right of our line of battle, I advanced the regiment, wheeling gradually all the time to the left in the arc of a circle, so that we might come into action on a prolongation of our main formation of battle, as the Union line was formed in an oblique direction to the road.

As the Second came up, there was still a strong drift of affrighted men to the rear, and a broken battalion of Pennsylvania Dutchmen came pell-mell, as if they were going to run over us. I shall never
fail to remember the advance of the Second Rhode Island. It surpassed its ordinary self, for it swept up, battalion front, despite its distracting surroundings, as steadily and well aligned as if on parade, and the broken Dutchmen, seeing but little chance of breaking through there, gave it a wide detour, assisted by some of our field officers, who, from the backs of their horses, with their heavy cavalry sabres, knocked some of the flying cowards head-over-heels. As we reached the ridge a wild scene unfolded itself, for it was apparent that the right of our first line of battle had been broken to pieces and hurled back in confusion, which explained the panic we had seen, and that the Second Brigade of the Third Division had been hastily pushed in to stop the advance of the victorious rebels. Fortunately, that brigade had been equal to the emergency. The formation of the ground was such that it would not admit a regiment in prolongation of the existing line of battle, and when the Second Rhode Island attempted to join on the Tenth Massachusetts, on the extreme right, all but the three left companies were thrown down hill in such a manner as not to be
able to see the rebels at all. Accordingly, I ordered the regiment entirely clear of that hill, a little forward and to the right, across a brook and up another hill, where we unexpectedly found ourselves, owing to the peculiar angle of our main line of battle, much more detached from the rest of our troops and in their advance, than had been intended. But, whatever the colonel may have thought or intended, the boys as they now had plenty of rebs in their immediate front, improved the opportunity to relieve their long pent up nerves and to blaze away as fast as they knew how. The three left companies had been too busy firing to heed the orders to advance with the rest of the regiment, and hence I had but the seven right companies, with the lieutenant-colonel, with me, the major with the three left companies having remained on the right of the Tenth Massachusetts, actively engaged in emptying the barrels of their muskets at the rebels. A portion of the Fifteenth New Jersey, which had formed a part of the first line of battle, came up and were formed on our right.

The scene then was a noticeable one. On our left,
a little distance off, was our main line of battle opposed to the rebel line; then, with quite a gap between, came the Second Rhode Island, off beyond both lines of battle but advanced far beyond a prolongation of the Union line, and opposite the Second was a broken mass of rebels that had stretched out over the space between the left of their present line and the right of our original or shattered line. The rebs in our front retreated before us, and it was evident that our movement was neither relished nor understood. Way across an open field, well to our right and in front of us, an American flag fluttered in the edge of some woods, and raised the suspicion that the rebels were playing another Fair Oaks trick by attempting to deceive us with false colors. It was, however, in the precise direction of our first line of battle, and about where its right undoubtedly rested. Presently a first lieutenant came running across the field, making a wide circuit to avoid the rebs, and, greatly excited, rushed breathless up to me, announcing himself as the adjutant of a New Jersey regiment in the woods there where the American colors were, stating that
it formed the right of the first line of battle, that the rest of the line having been broken had left it in the woods heavily engaged, nearly surrounded and almost out of ammunition, and begging me in the most earnest terms to go over and help them out. Here was a quandary, indeed. Already I was far in advance of our main line, and an enigma to the rebels and probably a source of anxiety to our own people. However, general officers were not around, and General Newton had given me a sort of roving commission; at least, I proposed to treat it so, and here was a case that demanded action. The prompt reply to the distressed lieutenant was "I will go;" but the next question was how to go, for it is no easy job to stop a line of battle when firing and advance it in the nature of a charge. Though I was satisfied the broken bodies of rebs in front of us would retreat before a resolute advance, yet in the din of battle the human voice can not be heard ten feet, and mere verbal orders would be of little account to effect the desired purpose.

When a captain in the Third Rhode Island, I had seen the difficulty of charging with a line of battle,
at Secessionville in South Carolina, though gallantly accomplished at last by Colonel Edwin Metcalf, then a major in command of a battalion. An infantry colonel's position, according to tactics, is thirty-five paces back of the file-closers in rear of the centre of his line; but, if I had proposed to myself to occupy that position, I might about as well have been in Rhode Island for all the good I could have done. So, when an advance was determined on, I directed Lieutenant Colonel Read to go along the front of the regiment from the right, while I did the same thing on the left, and knock up the men's pieces with his sword, at the same time ordering the officers to aid in stopping the firing and in advancing the line, by taking positions in front of their men, just as they would on dress parade, when ranks were opened, and follow the colonel. The excited nerves of the men would induce them to stop and fire, unless by so doing they would shoot their officers, but they would follow without a shot if their officers only led, rapidity of motion being essential to success. It was a novel formation for an infantry advance, but it answered the purpose, as we reached
the woods quickly, and the rebels prudently got out of the way. It was a sore enigma to the left of the rebel line of battle, who did not understand it at all, as it might be some sort of a flank movement, or something else, but what it was they certainly did not know. Our own people were equally at a loss to understand it, and Colonel Eustis, of the Tenth Massachusetts, who, when Colonel Brown of the Thirty-sixth New York was shot, succeeded to the command of our brigade, exclaimed—"Oh, my God! there goes Colonel Rogers and the Second Rhode Island without any support." Never was a man more glad to see another than was that New Jersey colonel to see that Rhode Island one. He said his ammunition was about exhausted, and he wished to know how he should get out of there. So the Second formed directly behind him, and his regiment fell through our ranks.

The next thing was to get out myself, for the fire was withering, the rebels being at close musket shot and having a wicker fence for a partial protection. Our boys lay as flat to mother earth as they could get and fire, and fearful that the rebels would make a
rush when we retreated, I sent Lieutenant-Colonel Read back for my three left companies, and also begged him to get another regiment if he could; and I added this inane injunction: "Now, Read, be careful, and don't be such a fool as to get shot." It is true my major was not with me, and I was just sending off my lieutenant-colonel, when, if anything happened to me, his services would be needed in the woods, but I had not the slightest fear of being shot, and I felt that my captains were all capable. I really only expected to get my three left companies, and wished some one to go who would pilot them where we were and who could speak, as it were, with authority. Meanwhile, the rebs and the Second were firing away at each other in the liveliest possible manner, and I verily believe that some of the boys fancied they understood what the prophet Isaiah meant when he said: "Hell hath enlarged herself and opened her mouth without measure," and that they thought they were then in the enlargement referred to. It was hardly to be expected that men would stand under such a withering fire without recoiling a little, so from time to time the flags would
be carried forward, and right gallantly would the men rally upon them and go at it again. At last, after half an hour, or perhaps more, and it certainly seemed longer, I ordered the regiment to fall back steadily, believing that the lieutenant-colonel had had time to bring us relief if he was able to do it. As we got to the edge of the woods we gave the rebs three parting cheers, and there we found our three left companies and the Tenth Massachusetts, under Colonel Eustis. The battle was over and the rebs had fallen back, so that the field was much clearer than when we came across. Colonel Eustis ordered the Second to the rear without delay, and himself set the example by marching off the Tenth Massachusetts; but I could not bear to leave our brave wounded comrades in the woods without an effort to recover them, and as the rebs had shown no disposition to pursue us, I ordered each captain to send ten men under a sergeant into the woods and bring off all the wounded they could find, and waited for them to do it. Then we followed the Tenth Massachusetts, at some distance, back across the field to the house whence we started. Ammunition was
served to us on the field, and we lay there in the front line of battle with one eye open the entire night, but all was quiet.

The next morning we had some mournful duties to perform, and we commenced the day with burying two first sergeants who had fallen the day before, and whom we laid tenderly away under a large tree with their blankets as their winding-sheets. Then came calling the roll to make up the casualty list, and no one present will ever forget it. We lay there in line of battle, ready for the enemy, and each company was called in presence of the regiment. About a hundred were either killed or wounded, but as some had only slight hurts the list was reduced to eighty-three out of less than five hundred taken into action. As each name was called, the bearer, if present, answered, "Here," and if he was hurt he so reported and his case was looked into. If, however, there was no response, inquiry was made as to the reason why, and the report of an eye witness would furnish the sad evidence of death or conveyance to the hospital. But some names were called which were not answered to, and about the bearers of which
no testimony could be elicited. Of some of the poor boys no intelligence has been gained from that day to this. The simple recital would be by one or another of his comrades—"I saw him go into the woods, sir, with his company." We all drew the grim deduction that he never came out.

All that day we lay in line of battle by the house, and the air was heavy with rumor. Stonewall Jackson had swept around our left flank and captured Fredericksburg; General Hooker was in full retreat, and some thought the Sixth Corps' prospect of going to Richmond was remarkably good, but not with arms in their hands. Army croakers are a doleful set, and the corps was full of them. Early in the afternoon heavy firing was heard off to our right, as we were, so to speak, in a bag, and the rebels were trying to close the mouth of it, while General Sedgwick sought to keep it open and preserve a passage to Banks ford, several miles up the river, where a pontoon bridge was laid across the Rappahannock, the bridges at and below Fredericksburg having been severed at the time of Stonewall Jackson's raid. Every one looked sober and felt as he looked. Our sole hope of
salvation lay in preserving communication with Banks ford, which was disputed the whole afternoon. After nightfall troops were passing us continually, going from the left to the extreme right, up the river in retreat to Banks ford. As the Second Rhode Island was on the right of the line, it was the last to start, and it seemed to some as if it never would start. Finally, when the time came to go, no one stopped to question the reason why, but went at once. The march to Banks ford was a race of diligence between us and the rebs, and the rebel column marched along parallel with us. At times, it seemed to me, it was not more than a hundred yards distant, but we were nearest the river, and when the rebs found that they could not head us off, they began to shell us. We got safely over the Rappahannock, and every one breathed easier. Not far from three o'clock in the morning, we stumbled into bivouac as well as we could, a mile or two from the river bank, and slept till daylight.

Tuesday was hot and sultry, as the Second had ample opportunity to find out, as about noon the regiment was ordered down to Banks ford to guard
the pontoons, some of which had been hauled up on
the river bank—a service the general informed me
was of the utmost importance and required unceas-
ing vigilance. The hot Virginia sun wilted several of
the officers and men on the march, and the rebels, see-
ing us approach, burst shell over us till we reached
the cover of the woods skirting the river. The pon-
toons had been placed in the narrowest part of the
stream, and it seemed as if the rebel pickets on the
other bank were only a few hundred feet away. In-
deed, we were so near that we could distinguish the
features of several rebel officers who came down to
the river brink to look across but, though we were
so near, neither offered to molest the other. There
we lay for several days, and at times it rained in tor-
rents, so we had to serve as clothes-horses a part of
the time to dry our wet garments on, as we had
nothing with us but what we stood in. Rarely
have I ever had a heavier burden of responsibility
resting upon me than those pontoons, as my orders
were, if the enemy attempted to cross, to fight to
the last man, and the rebels were so near and flushed
with victory, and it seemed so easy for them to
cross, that the orders appeared terribly significant.

At last the Second Rhode Island was relieved, and marched back nearly to its old location below Falmouth, after an absence from it of eleven days, in which we had not taken off our clothes, and for more than a week I did not even take off my boots. The generals were unanimous in the expression that the Second Rhode Island had done its whole duty; its old commander, General Wheaton, said it had added another bright leaf to its already brilliant record; and the General Assembly of Rhode Island tendered it a vote of thanks for its gallant conduct. Thereafter neither regiment nor colonel wasted any more time in wondering about the other, and thenceforward the latter ceased to be regarded as a stranger, and was looked upon as a fully initiated Second Rhode Islander.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
War of the Rebellion,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
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THE BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN:

A PERSONAL VIEW.

AUGUST 9, 1862.

BY

REV. FREDERIC DENISON, A. M.,
[FORMERLY CHAPLAIN OF FIRST RHODE ISLAND CAVALRY.]

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THE BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN:
A PERSONAL VIEW.

[Read before the Society, November 10, 1880.]

This engagement, which occurred August 9th, 1862, in Culpepper County, Virginia, near the northwestern base of the remarkable dome-like eminence from which it was named, was the first regularly planned and stubbornly fought battle in which the First Rhode Island cavalry, as an entire regiment, was brought under the enemy's fire. Portions of the command, in scouts, reconnoisances and advance movements, had previously become intimate with secession shells and bullets, as near Warrenton Junction, April sixteenth; Rappahannock crossing, April eighteenth; Front Royal, May thirtieth; Columbia
bridge, June second; Miller's bridge, June fourth; Mountain road, June ninth; and in a short dispute near Raccoon ford, just before the battle of which I am to speak. The charge of our second battalion at Front Royal, May thirtieth, had deservedly brought large notice and credit to our command. From the nature of cavalry service and the peculiar plans and operations of the war in its first stages, it was seldom that mounted troops could be led into action as a whole. We now, however, were all together brought into a systematically formed and hotly contested battle.

This, too, was the first of that memorable series of severe engagements between the Army of Virginia, under General Pope (John), and the rebel army of Northern Virginia, under General Lee (Robert E.). This particular and initial battle, however, was fought between the corps of General Banks (Nathaniel P.), and the advancing confederate forces under Generals "Stonewall" Jackson (Thomas J.) Ewell (Richard S.), and Hill (Ambrose P.). Our army was advancing to make a demonstration upon Richmond, by the way of Culpepper and Orange
Court Houses, to relieve the heavy pressure then on the heroic Army of the Potomac, under General McClellan (George B.), by drawing off from his front a portion of General Lee’s army. This last object we certainly accomplished, as we well knew when the challenged enemy poured down upon us from the banks of the Rapidan.

General Pope’s advance began on the first of August from his front, then extending from the Rappahannock, at Fredericksburg, to the gaps of the Blue Ridge mountains. His entire army, organized in three corps, numbered about 38,000 men, of whom 5,000 were cavalry. The mounted troops, as usual, were in the van and on the flanks. We were then in General Rickett’s (James B.) division of General McDowell’s (Irwin) corps, reporting directly to General McDowell, and were on the extreme left wing of the advancing front.

On the morning of August sixth we forded the Rappahannock below the newly erected bridge of the Orange and Alexandria railroad, having guarded the river and held back rebel raiders while the bridge was rebuilding. Advancing towards Cul-
pepper Court House, we threw out our advance guard and skirmish line and moved cautiously, ready to meet any attack. Reaching the suburbs of Culpepper, we made a short halt to allow a portion of our army to come up. On the arrival of General McDowell we were ordered to move nearly ten miles to the left, near Raccoon ford, on the north bank of the Rapidan. Reaching our destination, we chose our headquarters in bivouac on the famous flat lands, in an oak forest, on the Vaughn plantation, in full view of Poney mountain, about four miles from the ford. At once we threw out most of the command on picket along the river, both above and below the ford, holding a front of five or six miles,—not an easy matter, as the rebel scouts continued to dash across the stream for attack and plunder. The night before we reached the ford a party of about one hundred of the enemy’s cavalry had crossed and carried off a number of negroes.

Our pickets on the right joined those of General Bayard (George D.), stretching along near Rapidan station, at the south of Cedar Mountain. His pickets extended up the river and joined those of General
Buford (John) on his right. Thus the cavalry held the army van. We were now brigaded under General Bayard, whose command of horse consisted of the First Maine, First Rhode Island, First New Jersey, and First Pennsylvania cavalry regiments. Already the rebels began to appear in force upon the highlands on the south of the Rapidan, and we were aware that some real service was at hand.

On the seventh of August the enemy exchanged a little lead with us, and at the same time began to shell General Bayard's line up the river. Near midnight, on the night of the seventh, we were reinforced by the First Maine cavalry on our left. On the same day (seventh) the rebels in force crossed Barnett's ford, still further up the river, and advanced in two columns, one towards Madison Court House, and the other towards Culpepper Court House, the former being, as proved, only a feint. The force advancing towards Culpepper meant serious business, and so attacked General Bayard's line. General Pope's chief forces of infantry and artillery now lay between Culpepper Court House and Sperryville. The enemy meant to strike our left, and made the
feint upon our right to prevent it from coming to the support of the left. "Stonewall" Jackson understood tactics and strategy, as well as the face of the country.

Early in the afternoon of the eighth an aid reached us in hot haste, reporting the attack on General Bayard, which we only too well knew by the firing, and ordering us to move instantly to his support. Having anticipated the order, we were at once in our saddles, in line, and off for the point of attack, leaving our meagre train of supplies to follow us as best it might. Ready for action, we advanced through plantations and forests by a route of six or eight miles, and found General Bayard making a stand to the best of his ability near the northwestern base of Cedar Mountain. To this point he had been driven after gallant resistance by skirmishing during the previous twenty-four hours, losing many horses and some men, but capturing more than he lost. It was now near nightfall. The general at once ordered our regiment upon the front to face the foe, as his other regiments needed a little breathing spell. We put our second battalion on the front as picket and
skirmish line about dark. The rebels seemed to have ceased their advance for the day.

A word here of the situation of General Pope's forces at this time. General McDowell, with his corps of 18,000 men, and General Crawford's (Samuel W.) brigade of General Banks' corps, were at Culpepper Court House, where General Pope had just arrived. General Siegel (Franz), with his corps of 11,000, was at Sperryville, but hurrying forward to Culpepper. General Banks, with his corps (save General Crawford's brigade), was at Hazel run, but on quick march for Cedar Mountain, the point of attack. His entire corps numbered 8,000 men. General Buford, commanding the cavalry on the extreme right, was hotly pressed, and was fighting and gradually falling back from Madison Court House. We were now, with General Bayard, under General Banks, in the Second Army Corps, and unsupported on the front at the point menaced, which proved to be the battle-field.

To understand the battle at all, one must needs have some idea of the field on which the conflict occurred. It was an open valley, in main, of planta-
ion grounds and fields, about two miles in length and one and a half in width, running southeast and northwest, lying to the north and northwest of Cedar Mountain. The valley, particularly to the west, northwest and north, was surrounded by forests. Across its north end ran the Orange wagon road in a southwesterly direction to Robertson's river. Across its south end ran a winding road in a southerly direction, passing east of Cedar Mountain and branching to Mitchell's station, on the Orange and Alexandria railroad. Running through the valley southeasterly was the forked stream called Cedar run, the larger branch on the north, and the smaller on the south side, the two uniting on the east of the valley at Hudson's mill, and then winding away to the Rapidan. The valley contained parts of three plantations: the Crittenden estate at the north, the Slaughter estate at the south, and the Major estate at the west. The lands at this time were well fenced with rails, enclosing meadows, corn-fields, and grain lands recently reaped. Near the centre of the valley was a large rolling knoll, or undulating plateau, on which stood the Crittenden
mansion, and to the north of which stood the house of Mr. Newman, the plantation superintendent. South of this knoll, about half a mile, rose Cedar Mountain, a majestic and beautiful height, appearing like a sugar-loaf in shape. On the east face of this eminence stood the residence of Rev. D. F. Slaug- ter, from whom the height has sometimes been called "Slaughter Mountain." Southwest of the plateau, and to the west of the mountain, was a ridge of highlands, on the northern slope of which, and in full view from the plateau, stood the plantation house of William Major, and in front of this was a large corn-field.

On these highlands the Confederates first massed their forces. Our regiment was first put on duty upon the knoll, or plateau, the second battalion being a picket and skirmish line. Before dark (eighth) General Crawford's brigade of General Banks' corps reached the valley as reserves and took position in the edge of the forest on the north side. The force consisted of the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania, Twenty-eighth New York, Fifth Connecticut and Tenth Maine regiments of infantry, and ten pieces of artil-
lery. To us their presence was somewhat assuring. Yet we passed a night of great watchfulness. The confederates, under Generals Jackson and Ewell, soon to be joined by General Hill, were forming directly in our front, their right resting on the mountain, and their left extending to the Orange road, in the forest, to the southwest of the valley. They had the high and superior position, hoping to draw us to their ground. We aimed first to arrest their advance, and secondly to draw them into, and, if possible, across the valley upon the sloping lands to the north and east of the valley. Both armies in the end were disappointed, as the struggle came off in the valley, where we were then located. We held a line of front across the plateau on both sides, but chiefly to the west of the Crittenden house and well up to the large meadow, beyond which was the corn-field in front of the Major mansion. The fronts of the two armies ran about southeast and northwest, parallel with the valley.

We remained watching and waiting all night. Just before morning, on the ninth, our commander, Colonel Duffie (Alfred N.) and myself (I then acting,
as before and afterwards, both as chaplain and aide-de-camp), endeavored to secure a cat-nap by throwing ourselves in a cluster of blackberry bushes, in the rear of the regiment. The nap was short and fitful. At daylight, as we were about to remount for the front, Colonel Duffie said to me: “Chaplain, there is work to be done to-day. If any officers are killed, we must rescue their bodies. If you are shot, we will save your body and send it to Rhode Island. If I am killed, save my body and send it to my friends in New Jersey.” He then gave specific directions. Taking from my side coat-pocket pencil and paper, and raising my saddle skirt as a desk, asked him to write his order, lest I should forget it. That prized slip of paper is now found pasted in my journal. It reads: “To be sent to Staten Island: Factoryville: Mr. Pelton: New Jersey.” We were at once upon the front for full duty.

Our second battalion was now formed regularly as a body of skirmishers to hold the line that we plainly saw was to be the centre of an engagement. We stretched from the spur of forest on our right, west of the Crittenden house, down towards Cedar
THE BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN.

Mountain. The First Maine cavalry was on our left, near the base of the mountain. The First New Jersey and First Pennsylvania cavalry were also on our left. We watched Generals Jackson and Ewell bringing their forces into line on the highlands. General Hill, with his corps, arrived later in the day. It was not a very dull study for us to observe the rebel cavalry, artillery and infantry manoeuvring for positions, and steadily though slowly advancing their lines. They were so near that we needed no field-glasses to read them. Some of their artillery on the right was pushed nearly to the top of Cedar Mountain. Heavy forces of infantry on their left were advanced into the forests near the Orange road. These movements were not particularly soothing to our nerves, as they plainly augured some blood-letting. Their cavalry, not apparently numerous, manoeuvred around and in front of the Major mansion, but did not conclude to directly face our sabres and carbines. Thus slowly the enemy's line consolidated and moved cautiously toward the valley. The rebel front finally covered about two miles, and at last more, when General Ewell came up and led
his corps around to the east base of the mountain and met the New Jersey and Maine cavalry on our left.

Early in the day, General Banks, with the effective remainder of his corps, arrived upon the field and immediately drew his forces in line of battle, reaching from the woods on the north of the valley across the valley southeasterly, almost a mile and a quarter, to the northern front of Cedar Mountain, bringing our regiment almost exactly in the centre of his front. The chief part of the forenoon was spent on both sides in taking and changing positions.

The left wing of the confederates was led by General Jackson, the centre by General Hill, and the right by General Ewell—three corps against our one under General Banks. The division on our right wing was commanded by General Williams (A. S.), the division on our left by General Augur (Christopher C.) The brigades forming our line, counting from the right, were General Gordon's (George H.), General Crawford's, General Geary's (John W.), General Prince's (Henry), and General Green's (George S.). The batteries of our line were the
Fourth Maine, Sixth Maine, (Captain — — —) battery and Captain Best's (Clermont S.), regulars. The artillery was posted first between the cavalry and the infantry to support us in case of a sudden attack, and to open the action when the hour should come. Our position was nearly in front of Generals Crawford's and Geary's brigades. Between us and the rebel front was the strip of meadow land through which runs the south fork of Cedar run, quite an insignificant stream at this time of year. Beyond this meadow was the corn-field in front of the Major mansion. On our right was a spur of heavy forest, to which our skirmish line extended. Through the forenoon, despite the steady movement of troops, so far as weapons were concerned an ominous calm reigned, such as precedes a storm; neither army as yet had any powder to waste.

Early in the forenoon, while with our skirmish line, I had the surprise and pleasure of receiving from the base of Cedar Mountain one of General Bayard's officers who had been cut off two days before and had concealed himself and horse in the
forests and finally in the pines of the mountain, but now being pressed by the enemy, and recognizing the federal army by their colors, left his horse and slipped out of the mountain. I escorted him to General Bayard, who received him with delight, having counted him dead or a prisoner.

I had withal a little scene at the Crittenden mansion, where I found only the mistress and her colored female servants. Mrs. Crittenden, quite a high-blooded dame of the Virginia pattern, seeing that a battle was imminent and that her house was in the focus of what promised to be heavy firing, earnestly besought me to obtain permission for her to pass the lines on the front. On strategic grounds, I courteously negatived the proposition. She then entreated to be escorted to the rear of our army. I pleasantly informed her that the general had hardly time, in this stage of affairs, to make a detail for that polite purpose, and advised her, with her attendants, to stand by the castle, assuring her that she should fare as well as we did. Her superintendent, Mr. Newman, soon coming in, joined in the same counsel. Her theory of secession was impracticable. We left
her in great mental perturbation and nervous excitement.

About noon the calm was broken. The confederates began a vigorous probing of our line by their artillery from their centre and right. The shell were particularly addressed to our skirmish line and to our regiment, as we were nearest to them in full view on the plateau and its southern side. These addresses were loud, emphatic and direct, utterly removing all somnolency from our ranks. An artillery bugle in our rear, mingling with the cannon strains, was mistaken by our skirmishers for a recall, and they fell back to the regiment, but were immediately restored to their line. General Bayard, now with our command, rode out to the line and very kindly remarked, "Steady, boys; it is nothing but artillery fire. Shells are only thrown for moral effect."

The artillery posted in our rear promptly and handsomely replied to the enemy's annoying compliments. This demonstration was only a feeler to know what guns we had and where they were. The music, while it lasted, was particularly impressive upon
nerves that had been strained by expectation, and also from being re-enforced by fragments of iron that did effectual grooving in flesh and soil. It seemed as if the music might have been a cross-tune between the bellowings of an earthquake and the screeches of demons, but with a preponderance of the latter. It was the more disagreeable to us mounted troops, in that we had neither liberty nor power to respond. It is a natural impulse of human nature when struck to do a little striking back. Some of the shell struck among us, yet only one man lost his horse.

A sweet-toned shell passing near the head of Colonel Duffie, by whose side I was, and then doing a little extra plowing in the earth, he unconsciously winced a little, but, instantly straightening up in his saddle, exclaimed, "Oh! what a fool!" We never after saw him betrayed by his nerves, though he was an extremely nervous man. He had not before been under fire in this country, and for the moment forgot the military rule to never wince or bother yourself with sound or missile that you can hear. The play is over before the music is heard.

The artillery of both armies played largely over
the heads of our command, giving us a lively and splendid bow of iron and fire, which was not a bow of pleasing promise. The enemy's fire was chiefly from batteries that had been run up into Cedar mountain, and from one near the Major mansion. The fire from the mountain was particularly mischievous. Captain Best's battery, in rear of us, securing the right range, soon put a few shell exactly in the right spot and silenced the worst of the mountain barkers. In mind, I still distinctly see the puff of smoke raised by one of his shells that struck the most effective mountain battery dumb. By the way, Captain Best was one of the best of artillerists. Our guns soon persuaded the enemy to temporarily suspend his noisy discourse and the distribution of his metallic compliments.

Our skirmish line now covered about fifty or sixty rods. It was under command of Major Farrington (Preston M.), and consisted of Troops E, H, F and G, Troop E being on the right, Troop H on the left, while Troops F and G were held as a reserve line.

The body of the regiment stood in order about twenty rods in rear of the skirmish line, waiting
events and orders. By the way, that waiting was more vexatious than fighting. For much of the day General Bayard held his position with our regiment, as the position was central and from the plateau he had the best view of the whole field. For a time, in the morning, while he was electing his line of battle, General Banks was with us.

Near two o'clock in the afternoon, during the lull of action, I again rode up to the Crittenden mansion to inquire after the health of my patient, the lady of the house, and found her in agony, as secession shells were not as pleasing to her as the theory of secession upon paper and in conversation. Plainly enough, the guns of both armies jarred the mirrors of her mansion. I vainly exhorted her to be calm, with the reflection that no one wished to harm a defenceless woman. She thanked me and gave me a canteen of milk and four biscuits. This kindness moved me to prophecy to her that she would survive the battle. I divided the milk and biscuits with Colonel Duffie, that being the substance of what we had for the day, save water from the run and from Mr. Newman's well. The day was exceptionally hot even for
August, and being in this forest-hemmed valley, heated by the clear-shining sun and hardly fanned by the light summer breeze, not a few men in both armies were prostrated by sun-stroke. Unable to leave our position, our men suffered for the lack of water and regular rations. I recollect having filled my canteen with water, from the run and from wells, fifteen times during the day, taking in all twenty-one quarts, a part of which I gave to field and staff officers and to particular sufferers, while a large part of it I drank myself. It was a day for copious perspiration, as the human machines were run at a high rate of speed, though we seemed to be unconscious of the measure of the excitement at the time.

Indeed, some of our men were remarkably cool. They were such men as might be able to sleep under orthodox preaching, or to write poetry in a thunderstorm. During the battle lull Captain Bliss (George N.), was sitting on his horse waiting orders and reading a volume of Scott's novels, "Quentin Durward," that had somehow, somewhere been detailed for special service in his saddle bags. While thus husbanding his time in the pursuit of knowledge, Quar-
termaster Leonard (Charles A.), who always had an eye to physical welfare and was prompt to minister to us when he could, rode up to the captain and encouragingly remarked: "Read all you can; it may be the last chance you will have."

Soon after two o'clock we noticed some advance of the right of our infantry upon the Orange wagon road, and a portion of the force seemed to enter the forest and pass out of our sight. We supposed this force was sent to probe the woods to learn something of General Jackson's advance under cover of the forest. So thoroughly did we entertain this view, that when at last, at the real opening of the battle, the rebel infantry in the woods on the right of our skirmish line, in forming and counting off for action, were mistaken for our own troops.

About three o'clock the lull gave way to the storm; the battle began in earnest. Under cover of the high corn, the fences, stacks, bushes and woods, the rebels had pushed their infantry close down upon Major Farrington's line, within easy rifle range, particularly upon our right, which rested upon the spur of the forest. They did not advance their cavalry,
perhaps on account of its insufficiency, but more probably because we had chosen such a line near the south fork of Cedar run as to allow them no good ground and scope for their formation and action. Their first chief advance of infantry was on their left under General Jackson. They were at last so near to Captain Baker's (Allen), (Troop E), on the right of our line, that when they formed for attack our men could hear them counting off among the trees, and when they were in line our men heard the orders, “Ready-aim-fire!”

At the arranged signal the rebels along the most of their front rose simultaneously and poured upon us a tremendous fire. They fired too high and killed but one of our men and one of our horses. The bullets came over upon our regiment on the plateau and chipped up the dry ground in a very lively manner. A moment after this first shower of leaden hail came, one of our officers on my left—I think it was Captain Bliss—quietly remarked: “We now have a fine opportunity for laying in an extra stock of bullets.” Acting upon this economical suggestion, I shortly slipped from my stirrups and within a yard of my
horse's feet picked up six of the acorn-shaped rebel presents as evidence of the fruitfulness of the field, and remounted. Some of the bullets went singing and whistling over our heads upon our regular army line. Again the rebel batteries began to bellow, and there was a plenty of music all along the front.

It would be difficult to imagine a severer test to human nerves than that to which we were now subjected. Major Farrington coolly held his brave men to their skirmish line and to their duty under the heavy rain of the enemy's bullets till they had handsomely emptied their barrels, both carbines and pistols. The skirmishers remained unflinchingly till the recall brought them to the body of the regiment. Though a few men were nervous, the battalion fell back with as much order as upon parade. Being near them when the shock of battle broke on them, I desire to make special record of their calm and noble conduct, though they saw death doing its havoc in the line. Particularly conspicuous was the bravery of Major Farrington and his officers. But it almost seems wrong to mention particular names unless a large number is recorded, since all be-
haved gallantly. All doubts as to the metal of the command were now dismissed, and as we were in full view of our whole army, we received their compliments for our coolness. In fact, our nerves had become a little indurated from the metallic ring of the music of the mid-day performance.

Now, again, we were under a magnificent arch of fire, as the rebels opened their guns along their whole front from seven batteries, two of these being on the mountain and able to plunge their shot across the valley. Our army replied from four batteries, all that we then had. These were located almost directly in our rear, and were, as previously mentioned, the Fourth and Sixth Maine, (Captain ———) batteries, and Captain Best’s regulars. The regiments of infantry in our battle line at this time were, beginning on our right, Second Massachusetts, Third Wisconsin, Twenty-seventh Indiana, Fortieth Pennsylvania, Twenty-eighth New York, Fifth Connecticut, Twenty-ninth Ohio, Seventh Ohio, Sixty-sixth Ohio, Fifth Ohio, One Hundred and Eleventh Pennsylvania, Third Maryland, One Hundred and Ninth Pennsylvania and One Hundred and Second New
York. At first, early in the day, the batteries were in advance of the infantry and in our rear. Soon after the battle opened, the infantry advanced, leaving the artillery in its rear. General Banks made this movement to meet the rebels, who pushed their infantry forward along their whole line, moving up their artillery at the same time. The valley was now filled with the roar of arms, and clouds of smoke and dust from moving troops. The rebels were earnest and confident, as well they might be, since they numbered more than three to our one in men. General Banks held his little corps in hand heroically, and his corps was certainly a heroic one. As yet the troops of no other corps of General Pope's army came to his support. He was expected simply to prevent the enemy's advance, and not to bring on a full action. But as the enemy had advanced and opened the action, he understood that his orders allowed him no option but to meet stroke with stroke. The strokes on both sides were hot and heavy.

Still on the plateau, and exactly in the focus of this unpleasantness, our regiment had excellent opportunities for studying this action, albeit we had
more music than we really needed and more metal cards passed to us than we then cared to receive on such liberal terms. Like mad meteors the shell howled and screamed and burst above, around and beyond us, fragments often falling in our ranks. Most of these missiles were intended for the regular line of battle back of us. A person may read of a battle and obtain a dim idea of it; only those who share in it know of its awful magnificence, and they cannot formulate that awfulness and grandeur into speech. No word-painting, even when aided by the speaking canvas, can justly represent a battle.

On all sides now were heard the rattle of musketry, the roar of artillery and the blasts of bugles. Through smoke and dust waved standards and guidons. All this was trying to nerves, but we discovered no shrinking, though doubtless some trembling thoughts did wander back to home's calm. Yet we heard none of this sentimentality uttered. Here and there a horse went down under the missiles. Here and there a comrade was cut down. But the command was unmoved. The gaps were at once filled up. Of course we did a great deal of vigorous
thinking. It is hard work to be in a hot fight, receiving blows with no opportunity to strike back. By our side, on the left, stood a very beautiful pine tree, a full foot in diameter. A rebel shell screaming by struck this tree about six feet from the ground and cut it off as a scythe would fell a weed.

The two armies were now surging together, like the jaws of a monster vice, with our command between. As the enemy put forward no cavalry to meet us, and we had no opportunity to make a charge, we were ordered from the plateau into a small depression of the valley immediately to the west of the plateau, near the Newman house, in front of the spur of the forest. We moved with a cool and beautiful manœuvre of battalions that elicited praise from all. We stood in good order in the hollow still in front of our infantry, ready to make or repel a charge. More of our infantry now began to press up upon our right.

If an episode is allowable I should here like to introduce one. In the heat of the battle a company of infantry on our immediate right was ordered to probe the forest on our front to learn of General Jackson's
advance at that point. The captain’s colored servant soon followed with a canteen of water. He had scarcely entered the woods when the infantry met General Jackson’s van, and the bullets began to peel the trees. The negro turned back in alarm. We saw him emerge from the woods at full speed, hatless, and with expanded eyes and exposed teeth. He was short of breath and of time. In descending the slope into the hollow, as a shell screeched over his naked head, he stumbled, and, screeching at the top of his voice as if the day of doom had come, pitched head foremost down the descent. So great was his speed and such the velocity of his down-hill plunge that he bounded up about two feet, like an India rubber ball, and ricocheted some ten feet further down the slope. Thus for a moment the war-tragedy was relieved by this African comedy. We laughed till our sides ached. It was a passage from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Near this time, Captain Bliss’s Irish servant, riding his spare horse and knowing the captain’s good taste, rode up and handed to him a box of sardines and a couple of apples, with the appropriate observation,
“There, Cap'n, don’t you want suth-in to ate.” The captain did not refuse.

During the heat of the battle I rode up to General Bank’s position, a little in the rear of his right wing. The bullets of the rebel sharpshooters were dropping around him and his staff. They in no degree disconcerted or disturbed him. He was coolly watching the action and giving his orders, and finally moved his position only in deference to the urgent advice of his aids. During the battle one of his staff, Major Pelouze (Louis H.), was wounded. General Banks had a heavy task, indeed, with his 8,000 men to contend with 20,000, who held the superior ground. In fact, he afterwards stated that he met the brunt of the battle and fought the chief part of it with only 5,000 effective men. And we now know that the rebels numbered more than 20,000; the best authorities mention 25,000 as their force.

Repeatedly General Jackson deployed bodies of his infantry from the point of forest in our front to charge upon our line. No sooner were his men formed for the charge than our artillery opened upon
them with canister and drove them back. The enemy attempted this movement three times. Thrice the forces were thus driven back. Such daring and persistency were quite characteristic of General Jackson’s command. They were as brave fighters as ever shouldered guns, and General Jackson was their fitting leader. But on this occasion certainly "Greek met Greek." We were still on the front with the fire of both armies playing over us. One of our men, Frank Travers (Troop E), wounded on the advance line, failed to reach the regiment. Having been shot, he fell from his saddle to the ground, still holding to the bridle of his horse. I proposed to ride up and lift him into my saddle, and bring him off. Colonel Duffie checked the brotherly impulse by saying: "Do you not do it. When you advance you will be a target for the sharpshooters. They will pick you off." It was hard to remain quiet and witness the struggles of this wounded comrade. Military orders are made without nerves in them—of the sympathetic kind; and soldiers must be made the same way.

The infantry forces of the two armies were now
steadily surging together for the final hand to hand grapple. Both artillery and musketry were playing at full. The dense war-cloud well-nigh eclipsed the sun. The hours of the day seemed utterly deranged. Bullets whistled. Cannon bellowed. Shell screamed. Explosions reigned in earth and air. Bugles were heard with difficulty. Clouds of dust hung over the roads and the valley. Fences were gone. Fields were trodden to chaff. Horses and battalions were hurrying into new positions. The scene was awfully magnificent. It cannot be described in words. About five o'clock General Crawford’s brigade was ordered to charge an enfilading rebel battery on our right front. The charge was heroic and the slaughter was fearful.

While thus on the front of the fray we had three men killed, six wounded and two captured, and lost eleven horses. Major Whipple’s (John, Jr.), horse had a cut from a shell on the head. Lieutenant Barker’s (Hiram P.), was killed under him, but the lieutenant held his place with his troop through all the subsequent movements till he secured a spare beast. His remarkable coolness won for him no
small commendation. But for the protection of the ground, the command would have been decimated, if not annihilated. The hollow was the only sheltered spot between the armies, and that protection was meagre.

The battle had now been raging about three hours. General Geary’s brigade, in rear of us, lost very heavily, and he himself was wounded before the action closed. The loss was hardly less in General Prince’s brigade, on his left and near the centre. Our four batteries that stood the heavy shock of the conflict fought so desperately and continuously that they finally expended every pound of their ammunition. General Gordon, on our right, carried into action about 1,500 men, and in about thirty minutes of the hottest of the battle lost above 450 men. The battle was at its height about six o’clock and remained in all its terribleness for some time after. No forces had come to General Banks’ support, but the battle had been heard seven miles away, at Culpepper, and General Pope was advancing as speedily as possible.

The armies had fairly grappled. General Banks’
losses were terrible. He felt that he could ill afford to spare a man. But knowing that we had been in our saddles thirty hours, and on the front facing the foe twenty-four hours, and hence were exhausted by fatigue, hunger and thirst, while we could be of no further avail in a struggle that must now be fought out mainly by infantry, without our signifying a wish he ordered us to fall back. Calmly and on a walk, we wheeled to the right and brought our torn guidons in order through the storm of fire to the Orange road, and turned toward Culpepper, following the road except where it was blocked by troops and broken wagons. The enemy's shells screeched and broke far over us into the forest in the rear of our army to deter any troops that might be coming to our relief. Soon after leaving the field, and before reaching the Ward plantation, we met General Pope, with General McDowell and his corps hastening to General Banks' support. The general waved us his hand, as he recognized Colonel Duffie and our regiment.

On leaving the field we sent our report to General Banks by Lieutenant Taylor (James P.), one of our
aids. He brought from the general this reply: "The Rhode Island regiment behaved well." That was the lieutenant's last service. He had been smitten by a sun-stroke or by the wind of a cannon shot. The brave and beloved man died the next day, as Colonel Duffie said, "a martyr to his zeal."

What often happened to other regiments in hours of battle was here our lot, and is worthy of mention. Our position, strength of appearance and coolness of conduct had a strong moral effect upon the enemy, though we were not called to return blow for blow. Situated most of the time on a commanding knoll, in the centre of the front of the battle, maintaining an imposing line, calmly executing all movements, undaunted by the battle shock even when we were the enemy's mark, we gave to the foe such an impression of force and readiness as delayed the final onset, as some think, for perhaps an hour. This securing of time really saved the day to our army. Had the battle opened an hour sooner General Banks' troops would have been utterly destroyed.

The battle raged with unabating fury till quite nightfall. The two armies smote together like two
great opposing waves. Indeed, more or less fighting continued by moonlight till near the middle of the night. Weary as we were, lying on the ground just in rear of the field, we were not cavaliers enough to sleep well under such heavy music. We had too much anxiety. General Ricketts' division of General McDowell's corps, that passed us, reached the field just in time to save General Banks from being overwhelmed. As it was, the more than 20,000 Confederates pushed the war wave quite across the valley to the forest at the north. But they were unable to hold the advantage they had temporarily gained. In the early evening the Second and Fifth Maine batteries of General Ricketts' division did splendid service on our right. The final close of the battle came near midnight.

As General Pope correctly stated, "The slaughter on both sides was severe." Most of the fighting at last was "hand to hand." "The dead bodies of both armies were found mingled together in masses over the whole ground of the conflict."

At daylight, August tenth, the enemy fell back about two miles. It was called a drawn battle.
Both sides claimed a victory. But the field remained with us. On the night of August eleventh the rebels fell farther back towards the Rapidan, leaving many of their dead unburied. On the morning of August twelfth they crossed to the south bank of the Rapidan. These facts invalidate all their published claims to a victory at Cedar Mountain, though they met us with three to one.

Our army lost, in killed, wounded and missing, about 2,000. The rebels lost many more, and among their slain was General Winder (Charles S.). The two armies lost in all nearly 5,000 men, enough to make any field historic. It was justly called, "one of the hardest contested fields in Virginia." Generals Augur, Geary and Colonel Carroll (Samuel S.), were wounded. General Prince, losing his way in the darkness while passing from one flank of our army to the other, was captured. All our generals behaved with faultless gallantry. General Roberts (Benjamin S.), chief of cavalry, was in the front and distinguished himself for his cool valor. The conduct of General Bayard won emphatic praise. Of the corps as a whole and its commander, General
Pope testified: "The behavior of General Banks' corps during the action was very fine. No greater gallantry and daring could be exhibited by any troops. I cannot speak too highly of the ceaseless intrepidity of General Banks himself during the whole of the engagement. He was in the front, exposed as much as any man in the command."

A view of the valley after the battle, as I leisurely passed over it looking after our dead, left its vivid, ghastly, inerasable picture in my mind: a field one full mile in length, and nearly that in width—all the centre and northern part of the valley particularly—a horrible desolation; torn, trodden, cannon-plowed, bloody; fences and corn-fields entirely obliterated; trees peeled and splintered; dead men; dead horses; broken gun-carriages; demolished wagons; wrecked ambulances; remnants of arms and equipments; burial parties still engaged in their sad work; the smell of the valley in places insupportable, compelling me to resort to the knolls till the nerves of my stomach were calmed. So hasty had been the retreat of the rebels that they left some of their dead unburied, though we granted them a
flag of truce for burial purposes. The gallant dead of our command who fell on the front were buried with the brave men of New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio. Though the best possible under the circumstances was done, some of the trench graves contained sixty bodies each. In the woods at the west end of the valley, the rebels buried some of their dead in huge pit graves. Into one of these that I did not recognize, the ground everywhere being so torn, my horse sank to his body among the dead, over whom was but a thin coat of soil. On the western part of the field, a little east of the Orange road, sixty of the dead of the gallant Seventh Ohio infantry regiment were laid in one trench. A view of that grave can never fade from my memory. Dead horses lay everywhere. I counted thirteen splendid artillery beasts in one spot, cut down by one of the batteries of General Ricketts' division.

On visiting the Crittenden mansion I found it severely cut and splintered by bullets, canister and shell. Mrs. Crittenden was alive, as I had prophesied, but had not recovered from her fright and the awful noise and strokes of the battle. I endeavored
to prove to her that life was something to be thankful for, using the text, "Wherefore doth a living man complain?" But she insisted that she was already half dead. In fact, she looked so. Her mansion was riddled. Her premises were a ghastly spectacle. The floors were covered with blood where the confederate surgeons had operated on the wounded and dying, using her house as a field hospital. Near the front door, in what had been a front yard, a rebel lieutenant had just been buried. The battle-wave had rolled northerly over the house, and in the night had recoiled and surged back, thus giving the mansion a double portion of lead, iron and blood. The grounds around needed no plowing. Mrs. Crittenden during the battle, too chivalrous to huddle with her negresses in the cellar, crouched alone, as she told me, in a corner of her south parlor. While thus posed in awful suspense and anxiety, a rebel shell tore through the front of the house, and, striking a heavy timber on the north wall of the parlor, fell back at her feet without exploding. There lay the shell. Neither mistress nor servants dared touch it, thinking there
was still death in the black monster. What became of the superintendent, Mr. Newman, I did not learn. At any rate, we had relieved him of the necessity of gathering the crops of the plantation for the year 1862. They were harvested in a day.

After the battle, our commander issued a special order, from which we make extracts:

"Officers and Men of the First Rhode Island Cavalry:

"You have met the enemy bravely. You received the first shock of the battle of Cedar Mountain. Although no opportunity was afforded you for charging upon the enemy's lines, you as calmly and fearlessly awaited the order to charge, amidst that terrible tempest of shot and shell, as though upon an evening parade; until six o'clock, after having been three hours under fire, when you were ordered from the field to other duty. For this I thank you. Your country thanks you in the name of God and liberty."

"Soldiers, we have yet other work before us. Be ready. Strike hard and spare not." — A. M. Duffie."

The roll of our regiment suffered:—

Dead: Lieutenant James P. Taylor, Troop C; Private John Mulvey, Troop D; Private Frank Travers, Troop E; Private William Henry Woodward, Troop L.
THE BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN.

WOUNDED: Private Robert Durdeen, Troop F; Benjamin Potter, Troop H; Privates Asa A. Hall, L. Martin and Martin L. Parmenter, Troop K; William H. Caswell, Troop L.

CAPTURED: Two of our wounded men—Robert Durdeen, Troop F; and Benjamin Potter, Troop H.

As pilgrims, in thought, we revisit the plain,
War-trampled and wet with the blood of the slain.