SOLDIERS AND SAILORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF

RHODE ISLAND.

PERSONAL NARRATIVES.

3

THIRD SERIES,

Nos. 11 to 20.

1885-87.
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PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THIRD SERIES—NO. 11.

PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1885.
RECOLLECTIONS OF SERVICE

IN THE

TWELFTH REGIMENT,

R. I. VOLUNTEERS.

BY

OSCAR LAPHAM,

[Late First Lieutenant Co. B, Twelfth Rhode Island Volunteers.]

PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1885.
[Edition limited to two hundred and fifty copies.]
RECOLLECTIONS

of

SERVICE IN THE TWELFTH REGIMENT,

R. I. VOLUNTEERS.

[Read before the Society, November 18, 1884.]

This regiment was recruited in the summer of 1862 under the call of the President for volunteers for nine months. The disasters of the Peninsula, the defeat and scattering of Pope's army in Virginia, and the Union victory at Antietam, had followed each other in rapid succession, and it was evident that the veterans of the Army of the Potomac would all be required in the great struggle with Lee, about to take place somewhere in Northern Virginia.

It was, therefore, commonly supposed that the nine months' troops would be stationed in the defences about Washington, while the older troops,
with a few rapid and masterly movements, proceeded to capture Lee and his army, which had thus far, with singular perversity, refused to surrender, either in the Chickahominy swamps, in the valleys of the Blue Ridge, or among the hills of Maryland.

Instead, however, of luxuriating in comfortable quarters in sight of the dome of the Capitol, and dining on beefsteak and fried eggs, and going regularly to sleep every night in comfortable beds, surrounded by peaceable friends, our valiant regiment had, before Christmas of that year, crossed and recrossed Long Bridge, picketed miles of rough country in the neighborhood of Clouds Mills, marched in mud, rain and snow storms down through Maryland from Washington to Port Tobacco, crossed the Potomac river in transports in bitter cold from Liverpool Landing to Acquia Creek, marched thence to Falmouth on the Rappahannock, crossed that stream on pontoon bridges under an artillery fire, and participated in one of the most furious, disastrous and bloody battles of the war; it had covered the rear of the retreating army on a dark and rainy night in December, and, while the Christmas hearths at home
glowed with gladness and warmth, had begun the struggle with winter in the open field with salt pork and hard tack for food, and shelter tents, or huts of earth walls and a cloth roof for houses.

Taking leave of Virginia in the last days of March in the following year, we entered upon entirely different scenes and duties, and engaged for the next four months in ceaseless activity upon a new and most interesting field. Transported by rail from Newport News, Virginia, to Cincinnati, and thence to Lexington, Kentucky, we began a march southward, at first through a beautiful, fertile country, and later, entering a broken, barren and mountainous region and over precipitous roads, pausing at last on the bank of the Cumberland river, near the line of Tennessee.

The regiment was collected from various parts of the State and assembled on Dexter training ground, in Providence, where it was encamped several weeks to be organized and drilled. The weather was fine, and the camp was gay with visitors daily, the dress parade especially being extensively patronized. Here was the first taste of camp life and military discipline.
Late in the afternoon of October 21, 1862, under command of Colonel George H. Browne, we embarked on the train for New York, taking the cars at Olneyville. It was a scene of much excitement. I was ordered to take a detachment and establish a guard at the place of embarkation, to hold the crowd back from the cars and prevent their filling the train. Friends and relatives of the boys begged for one more farewell; mothers and sisters and wives were in tears. But the hour had struck, the die was cast; the solid ranks moved steadily down through the throng within the impassable line, and a thousand more lives were committed to the chances of war. There was too much of novelty in our new situation, and too much anticipation of what was before us, to give room for any prolonged regrets on our part. There was just enough of mystery and uncertainty in what we were going to, to make us anxious for its development. Later on there were times when our curiosity was more than satisfied. When we encountered the genuine reality we found occasions when our interest in the proceedings took a different turn, and we would willingly have left our share to
IN THE TWELFTH REGIMENT.

other hands, if we could have done so with equal honor.

The journey to Washington was long and tedious, and we were not permitted even the cheer and hospitality which greeted all troops passing through Philadelphia to the front. Our route took us by way of Harrisburg, with many long stops. Our boys even here did not forget their opportunities, as an occasional quack of a duck from the gloom of some car plainly attested. They took naturally to the situation with an alacrity quite astonishing for new recruits with so short a military experience.

We encamped for a night in Washington near the Capitol, and next day moved up Pennsylvania avenue and Fourteenth street, across Long Bridge, to Camp Chase, in the red dirt of Virginia, near Arlington Heights. Here exposure, cold rains, and lying on the ground in Sibley tents, began to tell on many constitutions, and the hollow and feeble coughs of the poor fellows all over the grounds in the dead silence of the night, told plainly of the presence of that invisible enemy that destroys more armies than shot and shell.
We soon moved from here southward to Fairfax Seminary, and encamped on a fine southern slope overlooking the city of Alexandria. We were now attached to the brigade commanded by Colonel D. R. Wright, of New Haven, Connecticut, in the first brigade of the division of General Casey. The brigade was composed, besides ourselves, of the Fifteenth Connecticut, Colonel Wright's regiment, the Thirteenth New Hampshire, Colonel Stevens, and the Twenty-seventh New Jersey, Colonel Mindil. This brigade was employed in picketing beyond Clouds Mills, one regiment being sent out at a time, and remaining on duty twenty-four hours.

At this camp, Colonel Browne began to give attention to sanitary regulations, which he vigorously enforced throughout our term of service, often overseeing in person the details of the work. The men entrusted to his care were not to be permitted to suffer in health or efficiency from their own ignorance or carelessness. This matter of cleanliness and good order in the company streets, tents, about the cook-house, and all around the various camps established from time to time, became somewhat
later the subject of the most assiduous attention and rivalry among the several companies, and one to which I may refer again.

We had been at Fairfax Seminary but a few days when I received orders from Colonel Browne to report at brigade headquarters to Colonel Wright, commanding the brigade, for duty as aide on his personal staff. I put on my best clothes and reported to what seemed to me a most tremendous and awe-inspiring presence; but I had learned one principle of military duty and etiquette, and that was, when in the presence of superior officers to stand erect and say nothing, take my orders in silence, salute and retire. And this I rigidly adhered to.

The brigade headquarters at Fairfax Seminary were in the house of Bishop Johns, of Virginia. The bishop had no use for the house at that time, and I suppose that was the reason Colonel Wright was able to obtain it. We also had secured some very comfortable furniture and good beds, and a splendid library adorned the walls. The grounds were elegant, and all the appointments first class. I often thought while luxuriating in this beautiful place that
the bishop must have been uncommonly patriotic to devote so much to make the soldiers comfortable, while it could not be supposed that he, in absenting himself on our account, could be as well provided for.

There was a capital set at headquarters. Lieutenant Penrose, of the regular army, was chief of staff,—a wiry, restless fellow, chafing for a battle, thoroughly acquainted with every detail of the service, for he was born in the army and knew nothing else. A tireless and fearless rider, he led me many a ride from morning till night without leaving the saddle, over bogs and corduroy roads, through swamps and brush and forest; but I had trained and rowed in the University boat crew, and was ready for any scramble, however rough.

There was Dr. Halcombe, of Connecticut,—tall and rugged, bluff and vigorous. One night, going through Maryland, the doctor and some more of us were looking about for a place to sleep. We got into a little cottage and occupied the parlor. By common consent we assigned the sofa for the doctor, while the rest stretched on the floor. This sofa hap-
pened to be very narrow, and rounded up resolutely in the middle, and it was covered with very slippery hair-cloth. The doctor got ready to be very comfortable after a tedious day’s march, and, wrapped in his blankets, stretched his long frame upon this little sofa. Presently came a grunt of displeasure, then he grew more restless, and as we were just settling down to sleep, the doctor bounded off the sofa with an oath, declaring he would rather sleep lengthwise on a bologna sausage than stay on that sofa.

There was the chaplain, who never turned his back on a good meal, and never came nearer profanity than to say “Condemn it;” the brigade quartermaster from Connecticut, a first-rate fellow; a little chap named Van Sann, from New Jersey, who was a clerk, had a great fancy for negro delineation, and informed me he had belonged to more than one minstrel troupe.

General Casey, commander of the division, occasionally came over from his headquarters in Washington, with a large and brilliant staff, to inspect the picket line, in which we joined, coming back to Colonel Wright’s quarters to dinner. There was a
handsome spread on the bishop's mahogany dining-table on those days, served in courses, and much high converse, for our Colonel Wright was an able lawyer, our chaplain had written for the magazines, and several of General Casey's staff were West Pointers.

This was transpiring in the beautiful November days,—the weather was fine, the rebels at a safe distance, the scenery picturesque. There stretched the noble and historic Potomac; the bluffs on the shores and eminences in all directions were covered with forts and flying the stars and stripes; the city of Alexandria lay below us; the pomp of war on every hand. It was all strangely new. The very color of the mud seemed for the time a characteristic of aristocratic Virginia, a coat of arms as it were, for it was none of your common gray stuff, but that rich brick color which is the crowning glory of all our new houses, and its staying qualities were simply wonderful. The November haze hung over river and fort and forest, and there was plenty of mildly exciting service to keep the blood active and the appetite keen.
On the first day of December I was returning from Washington, and met the brigade *en route* to join the Army of the Potomac at Fredericksburg. We passed over Long Bridge and down along the river by the navy yard, across the East Branch, and stopped for the night just outside Uniontown. Continuing down the left bank of the Potomac, the next night found us near Piscataway, which we passed the next morning, halting the third night near another Uniontown, which consisted of cross-roads and one small shanty.

Two days more brought us to our last bivouac before beginning to cross the river to Acquia Creek. It had snowed all the afternoon, covering the ground, and the men had to pass the night on that ground under their shelter tents, which they had carried on their backs. It seemed to me a most serious situation, and in the evening, as soon as my duties would permit, I went in the greatest anxiety to investigate their wretched plight. To my surprise all hands were gay and jolly, and as comfortable as need be. There was plenty of wood, and rousing fires burning all about; the snow was brushed away, and the little
tents set up around the fires; hot coffee and rations from the haversacks were passing around, and altogether it was a bright and lively scene, teeming with real comfort.

The next morning I was sent forward to find the landing. It was on a point of land made by a sharp bend of the river to the left, and was exposed to bleak winds. The brigade was moved down to this point and began to cross, as near as I can remember, about noon. It was a slow process, owing to lack of transportation, and night was upon us with two regiments still to cross. Meanwhile the cold had increased, and it became absolutely necessary to provide fires. All the way down through Maryland the most scrupulous attention had been paid to the protection of private property, and with the exception of some individual pilfering, nothing had been taken. Now, on this cold plain, there were some large piles of dry fence rails, which, as the cold increased and the night approached, became the subject of earnest consideration among the shivering officers. The thing was argued pro and con, the constitutional lawyers being still scrupulous, but
their compunctions decreasing in direct ratio to the increase of the cold. The result was in accordance with human nature under such circumstances—there were soon long lines of blazing fires upon the plain, and the boys were safe from further suffering. Night fell; our regiment had gone over, but there were still two other regiments of the brigade huddled around the fires, and it was uncertain whether the transport would return that night or not. Colonel Wright, who was still suffering from an injury he had received some weeks before, decided there was no need of his remaining longer, asked some one of his staff to volunteer to stay to look out for the remaining regiments, whether they crossed that night or slept on the hither shore. I said I would accept that duty, and as the evening wore away and no transport appearing, I called the officers together for a council as to where they would pass the night. There was a side hill near by sheltered from the wind and covered with evergreens, but also covered with snow. The choice was between that location and the present, which had the advantage of the blazing fires. They decided to remain where they
would be yoked up and made to do duty for Uncle Sam. I may say here that we left Atlanta with five thousand cattle on the hoof, and reached Savannah with ten thousand, and it wasn't a very good country for cattle either.

But to return to our muttons. After securing their transportation, these "professors of foraging" would have loaded up the wagons with these "lost sheep," and with anything else which the kind and generous planter seemed willing to contribute to the Union cause. Among these welcome contributions could be found chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, salt and fresh pork, hams, flour, meal, sweet potatoes, and sorghum or molasses. Loading these into the conveyances so cheerfully furnished by the aforesaid kind and generous planter, and borrowing from him his grandfather's dress coat or any other antiquated and outlandish article of dress, the "bummer," arrayed in the fashions of fifty years ago, would perch himself on top of his load and majestically drive into camp, saluted by the jests and jeers of the whole army, but yet welcomed by his comrades with warm hearts and hungry stomachs. What, I
ask, was the mere capture of a flock of sheep compared with such perfection of skinning? To tell the truth, as I looked back upon my exploit, the more I thought of it, the more sheepish I felt. A spirit of rollicking fun seemed to have taken possession of the whole army. With rare exceptions, nothing was, I think, willfully destroyed, but anything that would contribute to the general frolic was quickly seized upon. For this purpose odd and old-fashioned articles of dress were in great demand; but as a rule, private property, except such as the necessities of the army demanded, was by most of the troops respected. There were, of course, some men of no principle in every corps, or perhaps in every regiment, who would not have hesitated to appropriate any articles of value that came within their reach, but such men were few, and they were restrained by the better sentiment that prevailed among the majority.

It must not be supposed that foraging was always exempt from danger. In fact, it was seldom so. "Sherman's bummer," strange as it may seem, was a fighting "bummer." In small parties they would
make their way, by side roads, by paths, or across the fields, far in advance, or on either flank of the main body. In fact, they soon became the actual skirmish line of the army, hovering around it on every side like a cloud, hiding it from the observation of the enemy, and fighting many a lively skirmish in its behalf, as well as providing most of its food. As the "bummers," after the first few days out from Atlanta, were always mounted, their usual course of procedure when raiding a plantation was to picket the approaches in all directions, and if disturbed by the Home Guard or Wheeler's cavalry, they did not hesitate to show fight if strong enough. If not, they fell back toward the main body, fighting as they went, until, as was usually the case, they met other parties of foragers, and then, if sufficiently reinforced, they turned and became the pursuers. In this way many a sharp skirmish was fought and won without the presence of a single commissioned officer. Sometimes, however, the "bummer" would be surprised and taken prisoner, or pay for his rashness with his life. My first lieutenant and half a dozen of my men were thus captured on the march
from Savannah north, and compelled to spend a few months in southern prisons; and served them right, too, for they went just where I had cautioned them not to go, and where it was morally certain they would be "gobbled." Foraging is, of necessity, destructive and wasteful, and no doubt much hardship resulted to the inhabitants of Georgia from our visit, yet the damages done by our troops were not so great, according to the statements of their own newspapers, as those inflicted by Wheeler's cavalry.

About a week after leaving Atlanta we entered Milledgeville without resistance. Here we found copies of southern papers of recent date, and, to judge from their contents, Sherman and his army were certainly doomed to destruction. But with these confident predictions of our discomfiture, they also printed the most frantic appeals to the people, signed by Generals, Senators and others, to rise for the defense of their homes and property. Some of these pathetic calls for help are given in "Sherman's Memoirs," from which I copy them:

"Richmond, Nov. 18, 1864.

"To the People of Georgia:
"You have now the best opportunity ever yet presented to
destroy the enemy. Put everything at the disposal of our Generals; remove all provisions from the path of the invader, and put all obstructions in his path. Every citizen with his gun, and every negro with his spade and axe, can do the work of a soldier. You can destroy the enemy by retarding his march. Georgians be firm. Act promptly and fear not.

"B. H. Hill, Senator."

"I most cordially approve the above.

"James A. Seddon,
"Secretary of War."

"Corinth, Miss., Nov. 18, 1864.
"To the People of Georgia:
"Arise for the defense of your native soil! Rally around your patriotic Governor and gallant soldiers! Obstruct and destroy all the roads in Sherman's front, flank, and rear, and his army will soon starve in your midst. Be confident. Be resolute. Trust in an overruling Providence, and success will soon crown your efforts. I hasten to join you in the defense of your homes and firesides.

"G. T. Beauregard."

"Richmond, Nov. 19, 1864.
"To the People of Georgia:
"We have had a special conference with President Davis and the Secretary of War, and are able to assure you that they have done and are still doing all that can be done to meet the emergency that presses upon you. Let every man fly to arms! Remove your negroes, horses, cattle and provisions from Sherman's army, and burn what you cannot carry. Burn all bridges, and block up the
THE MARCH TO THE SEA.

roads in his route. Assail the invader in front, flank, and rear, by night and by day. Let him have no rest.

"Julian Hartridge, Mark Blauford,
J. H. Reynolds, General N. Lester,
John I. Shoemaker, Joseph M. Smith,
"Members of Congress."

These impotent prayers for aid clearly demonstrated the weakness of our opponents, and served but to excite the ridicule of all our men.

The legislature of Georgia, which had been in session at Milledgeville, had, on our approach, hastily adjourned and fled. The town was also largely deserted by its residents, although the inhabitants of other places through which we passed mostly remained at home. Taking possession of the State House, some of our officers organized a mock Senate and House of Representatives, and after much discussion passed an act repealing the ordinance of secession. Whether the Governor signed it or not we never heard, but it was approved by the logic of events.

Our march until we neared the sea was hardly interrupted by the force opposed to us. Kilpatrick and the "bummers" were almost constantly skir-
ming, but as Sherman pushed out in advance first one column and then another, the "rebs," fearing capture, seldom waited to engage our infantry. Near the village of Sandersville, however, we had a little skirmish with a portion of Wheeler's cavalry. Our regiment, the Thirteenth New Jersey, had the advance, and I was ordered with my company (the largest in the regiment) to deploy as skirmishers on the left of the road and drive out Wheeler's men, who had dismounted, and sheltering themselves behind stumps and rocks were keeping up a dropping fire at long range. My men were so full of ardor and confidence in themselves that, hardly waiting to fire a single shot, they started on a keen run for the sheltered rebels and drove them pell-mell out of the field and back to their horses, which they mounted in hot haste. The movement was so quickly executed, and my men were so widely deployed, that fortunately not one of them was killed or wounded. It was rather a novel sight, to see a skirmish line make a charge.

The next day I received orders to report with my company at corps headquarters, where I was detailed
as assistant provost marshal of the corps, and my company as provost and headquarters guard. This position I was fortunate enough to retain until the close of the war, despite the efforts of my regimental commander to secure my return. A pleasanter position, both for men and officers, could hardly be imagined. It brought me into close personal contact with general and staff officers at army, corps and division headquarters, and introduced me to many pleasant acquaintances. My men were on almost constant duty, but as their knapsacks were carried in the headquarters wagons, they were content. They had a constantly increasing number of rebel prisoners to watch day and night, besides pitching and striking tents, doing guard duty, etc. We usually made camp by three o'clock each day, giving us a good opportunity for visiting, reading, writing, card playing and, "tell it not in Gath," cock fighting. The South seemed filled with game cocks, and each regiment, and for that matter each brigade, division and corps headquarters, had its special champion. The birds fought only with the weapons nature had provided them, and seemed to enjoy it as much as the spectators.
Very early in the march, the negroes began to join our columns, and their numbers swelled at every town and plantation. Their intense longing for freedom had become more than a passion; it seemed like an uncontrollable frenzy. Of all ages, and both sexes, some in health, but many bent with age or feeble with disease, they struggled on, burning to be free. A few were in wagons of various descriptions, some on mules or broken-down horses, but most of them were on foot. How they managed to subsist is a great mystery. Their privations must have been very great, yet, patient and uncomplaining, they plodded on, one great hope, the hope of their race for two centuries, animating their hearts and lending strength to their weary limbs. So vast an army of refugees seriously embarrassed the movement of the columns, and every effort was made by our commanding officers to prevent their joining us, but without avail. General Cox, in "The March to the Sea," one of the "Scribner series," says: "Losing patience at the failure of all orders and exhortations to these poor people to stay at home, General Davis (commanding the Fourteenth Corps) ordered
the pontoon bridge at Ebenezer Creek to be taken up before the refugees who were following that corps had crossed, so as to leave them on the further bank of the unfordable stream, and thus disembar- rass the marching troops. It would be unjust to that officer to believe that the order would have been given if the effect had been foreseen. The poor refugees had their hearts so set on liberation, and the fear of falling into the hands of the Confederate cavalry was so great, that, with wild wailings and cries, the great crowd rushed, like a stampeded drove of cattle into the water, those who could not swim as well as those who could, and many were drowned in spite of the earnest efforts of the soldiers to help them. As soon as the character of the unthinking rush and panic was seen, all was done that could be done to save them from the water; but the loss of life was still great enough to prove that there were many ignorant, simple souls to whom it was literally preferable to die freemen rather than live slaves.”

As we approached the coast there was a decided change in the characteristics of the country. The
rich, rolling uplands of the interior were left behind and we descended into the low, flat, sandy country that borders, for perhaps a hundred miles, upon the sea. Here the rivers widen out, sometimes for miles, on either side of their channels, flowing through great forests of cypress trees, from whose limbs, long, pendent masses of the mournful southern moss sway gently in the breeze. Back from the rivers the country is largely filled with a magnificent growth of stately pines; their trunks free, for sixty or seventy feet, from all branches. Camping in these beautiful forests, on the thick carpet of pine needles, the air filled with the peculiar and delightful fragrance of the pine woods, had about it a charm and fascination which the dweller in ceiled houses never knew. But these pine woods, though beautiful, were not fertile, and rations, particularly of breadstuffs, began to fail and had to be eked out by rice, of which we found large quantities, but also found it, with our lack of appliances, very difficult to hull.

The various corps began to close in upon Savannah on the tenth of December, and by the twelfth
the city was completely invested. Savannah is situated on the right bank of the river of that name, and is surrounded on the land side by cypress and rice swamps. Parallel to the Savannah and distant from it some ten or twelve miles to the south and west flows the Great Ogeechee river. Coming down the peninsular formed by these two rivers we found our progress to the sea barred by Savannah on the left, and Fort McAllister, on the Ogeechee, on the right, while between them were impassable swamps. There were, however, several narrow causeways running out from Savannah in different directions, and one of these crossed the Ogeechee several miles above Fort McAllister, at King's Bridge. The bridge, a thousand feet long, had been destroyed, but the piles on which it rested were still standing, and on these a new bridge was soon laid, and at daybreak of the thirteenth, Hazen's Division of the Fifteenth Corps crossed to the right bank, and passing down the river stormed and carried Fort McAllister, opening up communication with our naval forces under Admiral Dahlgren, and enabling transports to come up to King's Bridge with supplies, of which we stood in great need.
I have previously spoken of the great number of refugees that followed us on our march. They could be counted almost by the tens of thousands, and the feeding of such a vast body of non-combatants was an impossibility. As soon, therefore, as communication with the fleet had been established, I was ordered to collect all those that had followed the left wing and march them, with about two hundred and fifty rebel prisoners, to Fort McAllister for transportation to Hilton Head. As our route from the north of the city to King's Bridge brought us within easy range and open view of the rebel lines, we had to make the first part of our march by night and in perfect stillness. The darkeys had the situation explained to them before starting, and although dreadfully frightened, and expecting every moment that the rebel batteries would open on them, they behaved very well. Among the prisoners were many officers, to one of whom, a bright, intelligent young man of about my own age, I became somewhat attracted. On the night in question, after passing the danger point, I called this officer to me, and dismounting walked arm in arm with him till we
halted near daybreak. Years afterwards I met this gentleman while crossing the North River on a Jersey City ferry-boat, and he immediately referred to the incident and asked for an explanation of my attentions that evening. I then learned for the first time that he was familiar with all the country around about Savannah, had hunted through the swamps and knew all their paths, and that his plans were all laid for a dash for liberty, which in the darkness and probable confusion he thought he could safely make. Probably his conclusion was a correct one, but luckily his plan miscarried, and I was saved the mortification of ever losing a prisoner.

I dare not impose further upon your patience by an attempt to describe the operations that resulted in the evacuation of Savannah. My paper was intended to portray only some of the incidents of the march through Georgia, and I will bring it to what I feel must be a welcome conclusion, by merely saying that on the night of December twentieth, General (then Colonel) H. A. Barnum, one of the most popular and efficient officers in the service, and one whom many of you must have met at army
reunions, was in command of the picket line, and about midnight crept out to reconnoiter. Hearing and seeing no one, he quietly pushed on until the sight of the rebel camp fires, with no one moving about them, convinced him that the enemy had fled. Returning to his own picket line he selected a few soldiers, and rapidly passing the outer rebel works pressed on to the main line, frowning with the heavy sixty-four pounders, but silent and deserted. From here he sent back for an additional force with which to enter the city, and at the same time dispatched a messenger with information of his discovery to corps headquarters, where we were all soon awakened to rejoice over the glad news of the capture of Savannah.
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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PROVIDENCE:
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1885.
REMINISCENCES OF SERVICE
WITH
COLORED TROOPS
IN THE
ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND,
1863-65.

BY
THOMAS J. MORGAN,
[Late Colonel 14th U. S. Colored Infantry, Brevet Brigadier General U. S. V.]

PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1885.
[Edition limited to two hundred and fifty copies.]
REMINISCENCES OF SERVICE WITH COLORED TROOPS.

The American civil war, 1861-5, marks an epoch not only in the history of America, but in that of democracy and of civilization. Its issue has vitally affected the course of human progress. To the student of history it ranks in interest along with the conquests of Alexander, the incursions of the Barbarians, the Crusades, the discovery of America, and the American Revolution. It settled the question of our national unity with all the consequences attaching thereto, the power and perpetuity of a republic, and not only enfranchised four millions of American slaves of African descent, but made slavery forever impossible in the great republic, and gave a new impulse to the cause of human freedom. Its influence upon American slaves was immediate and startlingly revolutionary, lifting them from the con-
dition of despised chattels, bought and sold like sheep in the market, with no rights which the white man was bound to respect, to the exalted plane of American citizenship, making them free men, the peers in every civil and political right of their late masters. Within about a decade after the close of the war, negroes—lately slaves—were legislators, State officers, members of Congress, and for a brief time one presided over the Senate of the United States, where only a few years before Toombs had boasted that he would yet call the roll of his slaves in the shade of Bunker Hill.

To-day slavery finds no advocate, and the colored race in America is making steady progress in all the elements of civilization. The conduct of the American slave, during and since the war, has wrought an extraordinary change in public sentiment regarding the capabilities of the race. The manly qualities of the negro soldiers evinced in camp, on the march and in battle, won for them golden opinions and made their freedom a necessity, and their citizenship a certainty. Those of us who assisted in organizing, disciplining and leading negro troops in battle, may be
pardoned for feeling a good degree of pride in our share of the thrilling events of the great war.

When Sumter was fired upon, April, 1861, I was a boy of twenty-one, a member of the senior class in Franklin College, Indiana. I enlisted in the Seventh Indiana Volunteer Infantry, and served as a private soldier for three months in West Virginia under General McClellan—"the young Napoleon," as he was even then known. I participated in the battle of Carrick's Ford, where General Garnett was killed and his army defeated. In August, 1862, I reënlisted as a first lieutenant in the Seventieth Indiana (Colonel Benjamin Harrison), and saw service in Kentucky and Tennessee.

In January, 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued the proclamation of emancipation, and incorporated in it the policy of arming the negro for special service in the Union army. Thus the question was fairly up, and I entered into its discussion with the deepest interest, as I saw that upon its settlement hung great issues.

On the one hand, the opponents of the policy maintained that to make soldiers of the negroes
would be to put them on the same level with white soldiers, and so be an insult to every man who wore the blue. It was contended, too, that the negro was not fit for a soldier because he belonged to a degraded, inferior race, wanting in soldierly qualities; that his long bondage had crushed out whatever of manliness he might naturally possess; that he was too grossly ignorant to perform intelligently the duties of the soldier; that his provocation had been so great as a slave that when once armed and conscious of his power as a soldier, he would abuse it by acts of revenge and wanton cruelty.

On the other hand, it was urged that in its fearful struggle for existence, the republic needed the help of the able-bodied negroes; that with their natural instincts of self-preservation, desire for liberty, habit of obedience, power of imitation, love of pomp and parade, acquaintance with the southern country and adaptation to its climate, they had elements which peculiarly fitted them for soldiers. It was further urged that the negro had more at stake than the white man, and that he should have a chance to strike a blow for himself. It was particularly in-
sisted upon that he needed just the opportunity which army service afforded to develop and exhibit whatever of manliness he possessed.

As the war progressed, and each great battle-field was piled with heaps of the killed and wounded of our best citizens, men looked at each other seriously, and asked if a black man would not stop a bullet as well as a white man? Miles O'Reilly at length voiced a popular sentiment when he said:

"The right to be killed, I'll divide with the nayger,  
And give him the largest half."

With the strong conviction that the negro was a man worthy of freedom, and possessed of all the essential qualities of a good soldier, I early advocated the organization of colored regiments,—not for fatigue or garrison duty, but for field service. In October, 1863, having applied for a position in the colored service, I was ordered before the Board of Examiners at Nashville, where I spent five rather anxious hours. When I entered the army, I knew absolutely nothing of the details of army life, had never even drilled with a fire company. During the
first three months I gathered little except a somewhat rough miscellaneous experience. As a lieutenant and staff officer I learned something, but as I never had at any time systematic instruction from anybody, I appeared before the Board with little else than vigorous health, a college education, a little experience as a soldier, a good reputation as an officer, a fair amount of common sense, and a good supply of zeal. The Board averaged me, and recommended me for a Major.

A few days after the examination I received an order to report to Major George L. Stearns, who had charge of the organization of colored troops in that department. He assigned me to duty temporarily in a camp at Nashville. Major Stearns was a merchant in Boston who had been for years an ardent abolitionist, and who, among other good deeds, had befriended John Brown. He was a large-hearted, broad-minded, genial gentleman. When the policy of organizing colored troops was adopted, he offered his services to the government, received an appointment as Assistant Adjutant General, and was ordered to Nashville to organize colored regiments. He
acted directly under the Secretary of War, and independently of the Department Commander. To his zeal, good judgment and efficient labor, was largely due the success of the work in the West.

November 1, 1863, by order of Major Stearns, I went to Gallatin, Tennessee, to organize the Fourteenth United States Colored Infantry. General E. A. Paine was then in command of the post at Gallatin, having under him a small detachment of white troops. There were at that time several hundred negro men in camp, in charge of, I think, a lieutenant. They were a motley crowd—old, young, middle-aged. Some wore the United States uniform, but most of them had on the clothes in which they had left the plantations, or had worn during periods of hard service as laborers in the army. Gallatin at that time was threatened with an attack by the guerrilla bands then prowling over that part of the State. General Paine had issued a hundred old muskets and rifles to the negroes in camp. They had not passed a medical examination, had no company organization, and had had no drill. Almost immediately upon my arrival, as an attack was immi-
nent, I was ordered to distribute another hundred muskets, and to "prepare every available man for fight." I did the best I could under the circumstances, but am free to say that I regard it as a fortunate circumstance that we had no fighting to do at that time. But the men, raw and untutored as they were, did guard and picket duty, went foraging, guarded wagon trains, scouted after guerrillas, and so learned to soldier by soldiering.

As soon and as fast as practicable I set about organizing the regiment. I was a complete novice in that kind of work, and all the young officers who reported to me for service had been promoted from the ranks, and were without experience except as soldiers. The colored men knew nothing of the duties of a soldier, except the little they had picked up as camp followers. Fortunately there was one man, a Mr. A. H. Dunlap, who had had some clerical experience with Colonel Birney, in Baltimore, in organizing the Third United States Colored Infantry. He was an intelligent, methodical gentleman, and rendered me invaluable service. I had no quartermaster, no surgeon, no adjutant. We had no tents,
and the men were sheltered in an old, filthy tobacco warehouse, where they fiddled, danced, sang, swore or prayed, according to their mood.

How to meet the daily demands made upon us for military duty, and at the same time to evoke order out of this chaos, was no easy problem. The first thing to be done was to examine the men. A room was prepared, and I and my clerk took our stations at a table. One by one the recruits came before us a la Eden, sans the fig leaves, and were subjected to a careful medical examination, those who were in any way physically disqualified being rejected. Many bore the wounds and bruises of the slave-driver's lash, and many were unfit for duty by reason of some form of disease to which human flesh is heir. In the course of a few weeks, however, we had a thousand able-bodied, stalwart men.

I was quite as solicitous about their mental condition as about their physical status, so I plied them with questions as to their history, their experience with the army, their motives for becoming soldiers, their ideas of army life, their hopes for the future, etc., etc. I found that a considerable number of
them had been teamsters, cooks, officers' servants, etc., and had thus seen a good deal of hard service in both armies, in camp, on the march, and in battle, and so knew pretty well what to expect. In this respect they had the advantage of most raw recruits from the North, who were wholly "unused to war's alarms." Some of them had very noble ideas of manliness. I remember picturing to one bright-eyed fellow the hardships of camp life and campaigning, and receiving from him the cheerful answer: "I know all about that." I then said: "You may be killed in battle." He instantly replied: "Many a better man than me has been killed in this war." When I told another one who wanted to "fight for freedom," that he might lose his life, he replied: "But my people will be free."

The result of this careful examination convinced me that these men, though black in skin, had men's hearts, and only needed right handling to develop into magnificent soldiers. Among them were the same varieties of physique, temperament, mental and moral endowments and experiences as would be found among the same number of white men. Some
of them were finely formed and powerful, some were almost white, a large number had in their veins white blood of the F. F. V. quality, some were men of intelligence, and many of them deeply religious.

Acting upon my clerk's suggestion, I assigned them to companies according to height, putting men of nearly the same height together. When the regiment was full, the four centre companies were all composed of tall men, the flanking companies of men of medium size, while the little men were sandwiched between. The effect was excellent in every way, and made the regiment quite unique. It was not uncommon to have strangers, who saw it on parade for the first time, declare that the men were all of one size.

In six weeks three companies were filled, uniformed, armed, and had been taught many soldierly ways. They had been drilled in the facings, in the manual of arms, and in some company movements.

November twentieth, General George H. Thomas, commanding the Department of the Cumberland, ordered six companies to Bridgeport, Alabama, under command of Major H. C. Corbin. I was left
at Gallatin to complete the organization of the other four companies. When the six companies were full, I was mustered in as Lieutenant Colonel. The complete organization of the regiment occupied about two months, being finished by January 1, 1864. The field, staff and company officers were all white men. All the non-commissioned officers, hospital steward, quartermaster sergeant, sergeant major, orderlies, sergeants and corporals were colored. They proved very efficient, and had the war continued two years longer, many of them would have been competent as commissioned officers.

When General Paine left Gallatin, I was senior officer and had command of the post and garrison, which included a few white soldiers, besides my own troops. Colored soldiers acted as pickets, and no citizen was allowed to pass our lines, either into the village or out, without a proper permit. Those presenting themselves without a pass were sent to headquarters under guard. Thus many proud southern slaveholders found themselves marched through the streets guarded by those who three months before had been slaves. The negroes often laughed over
these changed relations as they sat around their camp fires, or chatted together while off duty, but it was very rare that any southerner had reason to complain of any unkind or uncivil treatment from a colored soldier.

About the first of January occurred a few days of extreme cold weather, which tried the men sorely. One morning, after one of the most bitter cold nights, the officers coming in from picket marched the men to headquarters and called attention to their condition—their feet were frosted, and their hands frozen. In some instances the skin on their fingers had broken from the effects of the cold. It was sad to see their suffering. Some of them never recovered from the effects of that night, yet they bore it patiently, uncomplainingly.

An incident occurred while I was still an officer in a white regiment that illustrates the curious transition through which the negroes were passing. I had charge of a company detailed to guard a wagon train out foraging. Early one morning, just as we were about to resume our march, a Kentucky lieutenant rode up to me, saluted, and said he had some run-
away negroes whom he had arrested to send back to their masters, but as he was ordered away, he would turn them over to me. (At that time a reward could be claimed for returning fugitive slaves.) I took charge of them, and assuming a stern look and manner inquired: "Where are you going?" "Going to the Yankee army." "What for?" "We wants to be free, sir." "All right, you are free; go where you wish." The satisfaction that came to me from their heartfelt "Thankee, sir; thankee, sir," gave me some faint insight into the sublime joy that the great Emancipator must have felt when he penned the immortal proclamation that set free four millions of human beings. These men afterward enlisted in my regiment and did good service. One day, as we were on the march, they, through their lieutenant, reminded me of the circumstance, which they seemed to remember with lively gratitude.

The six companies at Bridgeport were kept very busily at work, and had but little opportunity for drill. Notwithstanding these difficulties, however, considerable progress was made in both drill and discipline. I made earnest efforts to get the regi-
ment united and relieved from so much labor, in order that they might be prepared for efficient field service as soldiers.

In January I had a personal interview with General Thomas, and secured an order uniting the regiment at Chattanooga. We entered camp there under the shadow of Lookout Mountain, and in full view of Mission Ridge, in February, 1864. During the same month, Adjutant General Lorenzo Thomas, from Washington, then on a tour of inspection, visited my regiment and authorized me to substitute the eagle for the silver leaf.

Chattanooga was at that time the headquarters of the Department of the Cumberland. General Thomas and staff, and a considerable part of the army, were there. Our camp was laid out with great regularity, our quarters were substantial, comfortable, and well kept. The regiment numbered a thousand men, with a full complement of field, staff, line and non-commissioned officers. We had a good drum corps, and a band provided with a set of expensive silver instruments. We were also fully equipped, the men were armed with rifled muskets, and well clothed.
They were well drilled in the manual of arms, and took great pride in appearing on parade with arms burnished, belts polished, shoes blacked, clothes brushed, in full regulation uniform, including white gloves. On every pleasant day our parades were witnessed by officers, soldiers and citizens from the North. It was not unusual to have two thousand spectators. Some came to make sport, some from curiosity, some because it was the fashion, and others from a genuine desire to see for themselves what sort of looking soldiers negroes would make.

At the time that the work of organizing colored troops began in the West, there was a great deal of bitter prejudice against the movement. White troops threatened to desert if the plan should be really carried out. Those who entered the service were stigmatized as "nigger officers," and negro soldiers were hooted at and mistreated by white troops.

Apropos of the prejudice against so-called "nigger officers," I may mention the following incident: While an officer in the Seventieth Indiana, I had met and formed a passing acquaintance with Lieutenant Colonel ——, of an Ohio regiment. On New
WITH COLORED TROOPS.

Year's day, 1864, I chanced to meet him at a social gathering at General Ward's headquarters in Nashville. I spoke to him as usual, at the same time offering my hand, which apparently he did not see. Receiving only a cool bow from him, I at once turned away. As I did so he remarked to those standing near him that he "did not recognize these nigger officers." A report of the occurrence in some way, I know not how, came to the ears of Lorenzo Thomas, the Adjutant General of the army, then in Nashville, who investigated the case, and promptly dismissed Colonel—— from the United States service.

Very few West Point officers had any faith in the success of the enterprise, and most northern people, perhaps, regarded it as at best a dubious experiment. A college classmate of mine, a young man of intelligence, and earnestly loyal, although a Kentuckian and a slaveholder, pleaded with me to abandon my plan of entering this service, saying: "I shudder to think of the remorse you may suffer from deeds done by barbarians under your command."

General George H. Thomas, though a southerner
and a West Point graduate, was a singularly fair-minded, candid man. He asked me one day, soon after my regiment was organized, if I thought my men would fight. I replied that they would. He said he thought "they might behind breastworks." I said they would fight in the open field. He thought not. "Give me a chance, General," I answered, "and I will prove it." Our evening parades converted thousands to a belief in colored troops. It was almost a daily experience to hear the remark from visitors: "Men who can handle their arms as these do, will fight." General Thomas paid us the compliment of saying that he "never saw a regiment go through the manual as well as this one."

We remained in "Camp Whipple" from February, 1864, till August, 1865, a period of eighteen months, and during a large part of that time the regiment was an object lesson to the army, and helped to revolutionize public opinion on the subject of colored soldiers.

My Lieutenant Colonel and I rode over one evening to call on General Joe Hooker, commanding the
Twentieth Army Corps. He occupied a small log hut in the Wauhatchie valley, near Lookout Mountain, and not far from the Tennessee river. He received us with great courtesy, and when he learned that we were officers in a colored regiment congratulated us on our good fortune, saying that he believed they would make the best troops in the world. He predicted that after the rebellion was subdued, it would be necessary for the United States to send an army into Mexico. This army would be composed largely of colored men, and those of us now holding high command would have a chance to win great renown. He lamented that he had made a great mistake in not accepting a military command and going to Nicaragua with General Walker. "Why," said he, "young gentlemen, I might have founded an empire!"

While at Chattanooga I organized two other regiments, the Forty-second and the Forty-fifth United States Colored Infantry. In addition to ordinary instruction in the duties required of the soldier, we established in every company a regular school, teaching the men to read and write, and taking great pains
to cultivate in them self-respect and all manly qualities. Our success in this respect was ample compensation for our labor. The men who went on picket or guard duty took their books, as quite as indispensable as their coffee pots.

It must not be supposed that we had only plain sailing. Soon after reaching Chattanooga heavy details began to be made upon us for men to work upon the fortifications then in process of construction around the town. This incessant labor interfered sadly with our drill, and at one time all drill was suspended by orders from headquarters. There seemed little prospect of our being ordered to the field, and as time wore on and arrangements began in earnest for the new campaign against Atlanta, we began to grow impatient of work and anxious for opportunity for drill and preparations for field service.

I used every means to bring about a change, for I believed that the ultimate status of the negro was to be determined by his conduct on the battle-field. Nobody doubted that he would work, while many did doubt that he had the courage to stand up and fight
like a man. If he could take his place side by side with the white soldier, endure the same hardships on the campaign, face the same enemy, storm the same works, resist the same assaults, evince the same soldierly qualities, he would compel that respect which the world has always accorded to heroism, and win for himself the same laurels which brave soldiers have ever worn.

Personally I shrink from danger, and most decidedly prefer a safe corner at my own fireside to an exposed place in the face of an enemy on the battlefield, but so strongly was I persuaded of the importance of giving colored troops a fair field and full opportunity to show of what mettle they were made, that I lost no chance of insisting upon our right to be ordered into the field. At one time I was threatened with dismissal from the service for my persistency, but that did not deter me, for though I had no yearning for martyrdom, I was determined, if possible, to put my regiment into battle at whatever cost to myself. As I look back upon the matter, after twenty-one years, I see no reason to regret my action, unless it be that I was not even more per-
sistent in claiming for these men the rights of soldiers.

I was grievously disappointed when the first of May, 1864, came, and the army was to start south, leaving us behind to hold the forts we had helped to build. I asked General Thomas to allow me at least to go along. He readily consented, and directed me to report to General O. O. Howard, commanding the Fourth Army Corps, as volunteer aide. I did so, and remained with him thirty days, participating in the battles of Buzzards Roost, Resaca, Adairsville and Dallas. At the end of that time, having gained invaluable experience, and feeling that my place was with my regiment, I returned to Chattanooga determined to again make every possible effort to get it into active service.

A few days after I had taken my place on General Howard's staff an incident occurred, showing how narrowly one may escape death. General Stanley and a staff officer, and General Howard and myself were making a little reconnoissance at Buzzards Roost. We stopped to observe the movements of the enemy, Stanley standing on the right, Howard
next on his left, and I next. The fourth officer, Captain Flint, stood immediately in rear of General Howard. A sharpshooter paid us a compliment in the shape of a rifle ball, which struck the ground in front of General Howard, ricocheted, passed through the skirt of his coat, through Captain Flint’s cap, and buried itself in a tree behind.

At Adairsville a group of about a dozen mounted officers were in an open field, when the enemy exploded a shell just in front and over us, wounding two officers and five horses. A piece of the shell passed through the right fore leg of my horse, a kind, docile, fearless animal, that I was greatly attached to. I lost a friend and faithful servant.

On asking leave to return to my command, I was delighted to receive from General Howard the following pleasant note:

_J. EADQUTERS FOURTH ARMY CORPS,_
_ON ACKWORTH AND DALLAS ROAD,_
8 miles from Dallas, Ga., May 31, 1864._

_COLONEL:— This is to express my thanks for your services upon my staff during the past month, since starting on this campaign. You have given me always full satisfaction, and more, by your assiduous devotion to duty._
You have been active and untiring on the march, and fearless in battle.

Believe me your friend,

O. O. Howard,

Major Gen. Com’d’g Fourth Corps.

To Col. T. J. Morgan, Com’d’g U. S. C. T.

General James B. Steadman, who won such imperishable renown at Chickamauga, was then in command of the District of Etowah, with headquarters at Chattanooga. I laid my case before him; he listened with interest to my plea, and assured me that if there was any fighting to be done in his district, we should have a hand in it.

August 15, 1864, we had our first fight at Dalton, Georgia. General Wheeler, with a considerable force of rebel cavalry, attacked Dalton, which was occupied by a small detachment of Union troops belonging to the Second Missouri, under command of Colonel Laibold. General Steadman went to Laibold's aid, and forming line of battle, attacked and routed the southern force. My regiment formed on the left of the Fifty-first Indiana Infantry, under command of Colonel A. D. Streight. The fight was short, and not at all severe. The regiment was all
exposed to fire. One private was killed, one lost a leg, and one was wounded in the right hand. Company B, on the skirmish line, killed five of the enemy and wounded others. To us it was a great battle, and a glorious victory. The regiment had been recognized as soldiers. It had taken its place side by side with a white regiment. It had been under fire. The men had behaved gallantly. A colored soldier had died for liberty. Others had shed their blood in the great cause. Two or three incidents will indicate the significance of the day. Just before going into the fight, Lieutenant Keinborts said to his men: "Boys, some of you may be killed, but remember you are fighting for liberty." Henry Prince replied: "I am ready to die for liberty." In fifteen minutes he lay dead, a rifle ball through his heart, a willing martyr. During the engagement, General Steadman asked his aide, Captain Davis, to look especially after the Fourteenth Colored, as he did not know how they would stand fire. Captain Davis rode up just as I was quietly rectifying my line, which in a charge had been disarranged. Davis, putting spurs to his horse, dashed back to the Gen-
oral, and reassured him by reporting that "the regiment was holding dress parade over there under fire." After the fight, as we marched into town through a drenching rain, a white regiment, standing at rest, swung their hats and gave three rousing cheers for the Fourteenth Colored. Colonel Streight's command were so pleased with the gallantry of our men that many of them afterward, on being asked: "What regiment?" frequently replied: "Fifty-first Colored."

During the month of August we had some very hard marching in a vain effort to have another brush with Wheeler's cavalry.

The corn in East Tennessee was in good plight for roasting, and our men showed great facility in cooking, and marvellous capacity in devouring it. Ten large ears were not too much for many of them. On resuming our march one day after the noon halt, one of the soldiers declared himself unable to walk, and asked permission to ride in an ambulance. His comrades said that having already eaten twelve ears of corn, and finding himself unable to finish the thirteenth, he concluded that he must be sick and unfit for duty.
September 27, 1864, I reported to Major General Rousseau, commanding a force of cavalry at Pulaski, Tennessee. As we approached the town by rail from Nashville, we heard artillery, then musketry, and as we left the cars we saw the smoke of guns. Forest, with a large force of cavalry, had been steadily driving Rousseau before him all day, and was destroying the railroad. Finding the General, I said: "I am ordered to report to you, sir." "What have you?" "Two regiments of colored troops." Rousseau was a Kentuckian, and had not much faith in negro soldiers. By his direction I threw out a strong line of skirmishers, and posted the regiments on a ridge, in good supporting distance. Rousseau's men retired behind my line, and Forest's men pressed forward until they met our fire, and recognizing the sound of the minie ball stopped to reflect.

The massacre of colored troops at Fort Pillow was well known to us, and had been fully discussed by our men. It was rumored, and thoroughly credited by them, that General Forest had offered a thousand dollars for the head of any commander of a "nigger" regiment. Here, then, was just such an opportunity
as those spoiling for a fight might desire. Negro troops stood face to face with Forest’s veteran cavalry. The firing was growing hotter, and balls were uncomfortably thick. At length the enemy, in strong force, with banners flying, bore down toward us in full sight, apparently bent on mischief. Pointing to the advancing column I said, as I passed along the line: “Boys, it looks very much like fight. Keep cool; do your duty.” They seemed full of glee, and replied with great enthusiasm: “Col’nel, dey can’t whip us; dey nebben git de ole Fourteenth out of heah, nebben.” “Nebber drives us away widout a mighty lot of dead men,” etc., etc. When Forest learned that Rousseau was reinforced by infantry, he did not stop to ask about the color of the skin, but after testing our line, and finding it unyielding, turned to the east, and struck over toward Murfreesboro.

An incident occurred here illustrating the humor of the colored soldier. A spent ball struck one of the men on the side of the head, passed under the scalp, and making nearly a circuit of the skull, came out on the other side. His comrades merrily
declared that when the ball struck him, it sang out "too thick," and passed on.

As I was walking with my adjutant down toward the picket line, a ball struck the ground immediately in front of us, about four feet away, but was so far spent as to be harmless. We picked it up and carried it along.

Our casualties consisted of a few men slightly wounded. We had not had a battle, but it was for us a victory, for our troops had stood face to face with a triumphant troop of southern cavalry, and stopped their progress. They saw that they had done what Rousseau's veterans could not do. Having travelled four hundred and sixty-two miles, we returned to Chattanooga, feeling that we had gained valuable experience, and we eagerly awaited the next opportunity for battle, which was not long deferred.

Our next active service was at Decatur, Alabama. Hood, with his veteran army that had fought Sherman so gallantly from Chattanooga to Atlanta, finding that his great antagonist had started southward and seaward, struck out boldly himself for Nashville. October twenty-seventh I reported to General R. S.
Granger, commanding at Decatur, Alabama. His little force was closely besieged by Hood's army, whose right rested on the Tennessee river, below the town, and whose left extended far beyond our lines, on the other side of the town. Two companies of my regiment were stationed on the opposite side of the river from Hood's right, and kept up an annoying musketry fire. Lieutenant Gillet, of Company G, was mortally wounded by a cannon ball, and some of the enlisted men were hurt. One private soldier in Company B, who had taken position in a tree as a sharpshooter, had his right arm broken by a ball. Captain Romeyn said to him: "You would better come down from there, go to the rear and find the surgeon." "Oh, no, Captain," was his reply, "I can fire with my left arm," and so he did.

Another soldier of Company B was walking along the road, when, hearing an approaching cannon ball, he dropped flat upon the ground and was almost instantly well nigh covered with the dirt ploughed up by it, as it struck the ground near by. Captain Romeyn, who witnessed the incident, and who was greatly amused by the fellow's trepidation, asked
him if he was frightened. His reply was: "Fore, God, Captain, I thought I was a dead man, sure."

Friday, October 28, 1864, at twelve o'clock, at the head of three hundred and fifty-five men, in obedience to orders from General Granger, I charged and took a rebel battery with a loss of sixty officers and men killed and wounded. After capturing the battery and spiking the guns, which we were unable to remove, we retired to our former place on the line of defense. The conduct of the men on this occasion was most admirable, and drew forth high praise from Generals Granger and Thomas. Hood having decided to push on to Nashville without assaulting Decatur, withdrew. As soon as I missed his troops from my front, I notified the General commanding, and was ordered to pursue with the view of finding where he was. About ten o'clock the next morning, my skirmishers came up with his rear guard, which opened upon us a brisk infantry fire. Lieutenant Woodworth, standing at my side, fell dead, pierced through the face. General Granger ordered me to retire inside the works. The regiment, although exposed to a sharp fire, came off in splendid order.
As we marched inside the works, the white troops who had watched the manœuvre, gave us three rousing cheers. I have heard the Pope's famous choir at St. Peter's, and the great organ at Freiburg, but the music was not so sweet as the hearty plaudits of our brave comrades.

As indicating the change in public sentiment relative to colored troops, it may be mentioned that the Lieutenant Colonel commanding the Sixty-eighth Indiana Volunteer Infantry, requested me as a personal favor to ask for the assignment of his regiment to my command, giving as a reason that his soldiers would rather fight alongside of the Fourteenth Colored, than with any white regiment. He was ordered to report to me.

After Hood had gone, I returned to Chattanooga, but not to remain. (We had travelled two hundred and forty-four miles.)

November twenty-ninth, in command of the Fourteenth, Sixteenth and Forty-fourth Regiments, United States Colored Infantry, I embarked on a railroad train at Chattanooga for Nashville. On December first, with the Sixteenth and most of the
Fourteenth, I reached my destination and was assigned to a place on the extreme left of General Thomas's army, then concentrating for the defense of Nashville against Hood's threatened attack.

The train that contained the Forty-fourth Colored Regiment, and two companies of the Fourteenth, under command of Colonel Johnson, was delayed near Murfreesboro until December second, when it started for Nashville, but when crossing a bridge not far from the city its progress was suddenly checked by a cross fire of cannon belonging to Forest's command. I had become very anxious over the delay in the arrival of these troops, and when I heard the roar of cannon, thought it must be aimed at them. I never shall forget the intensity of my suffering as hour after hour passed by bringing me no tidings. Were they all captured? Had they been massacred? Who could answer? No one. What was to be done? Nothing; I could only wait and suffer.

The next day, Colonel Johnson reached Nashville, reporting that when stopped, he and his men were forced under heavy fire to abandon the train, clamber down from the bridge and run to a block house near
by, which had been erected for the defense of the bridge, and was still in possession of Union soldiers. After maintaining a stubborn fight until far into the night, he withdrew his troops, and making a detour to the east, came into our lines, having lost in killed, wounded and missing two officers and eighty men of the Forty-fourth, and twenty-five men of the Fourteenth.

Just as Captain C. W. Baker, the senior officer of the Fourteenth, was leaving the car, a piece of shell carried away the top of his cap, and thus added immensely to its value—as a souvenir. Some of the soldiers that escaped lost everything except the clothes they had on, including knapsacks, blankets and arms. In some cases they lay in the water hiding for hours, until they could escape their pursuers.

Soon after taking our position in line at Nashville, we were closely besieged by Hood's army, and thus we lay facing each other for two weeks. Hood had suffered so terribly by his defeat under Schofield at Franklin, that he was in no mood to assault us in our works, and Thomas needed more time to concentrate and reorganize his army before he could safely
take the offensive. That fortnight interval was memorable indeed. Hood's army was desperate. It had been thwarted by Sherman, and thus far baffled by Thomas, and Hood felt that he must strike a bold blow to compensate for the dreadful loss of prestige occasioned by Sherman's "march to the sea." His men were scantily clothed and poorly fed; if he could gain Nashville, our great depot of supplies, he could furnish his troops with abundance of food, clothing and war material, encourage the Confederacy, terrify the people of the North, regain a vast territory taken from the South at such great cost to us, recruit his army from Kentucky, and perhaps invade the North.

Thomas well knew the gravity of the situation, and was unwilling to hazard all by a premature battle. I think that neither he, nor any of his army, ever doubted the issue of the battle when it should come, whichever force should take the initiative. The authorities at Washington grew restive, and the people at the North nervous. Thomas was ordered to fight; Logan was dispatched to relieve him if he did not, and Grant himself started West to take com-
mand. Thomas was too good a soldier to be forced to offer battle until he was sure of victory. He knew that time was his best ally, every day adding to his strength and weakening his enemy. In the meantime the weather became intensely cold, and a heavy sleet covered the ground, rendering it almost impossible for either army to move at all. For a few days our sufferings were quite severe. We had only shelter tents for the troops, with very little fuel, and many of our men who had lost their blankets keenly felt their need.

On December fifth, before the storm, by order of General Steadman, I made a little reconnoissance, capturing with slight loss Lieutenant Gardner and six men from the Fifth Mississippi Regiment. December seventh we made another, in which Colonel Johnson and three or four men were wounded. On one of these occasions, while my men were advancing in face of a sharp fire, a rabbit started up in front of them. With shouts of laughter several of them gave chase, showing that even battle could not obliterate the negro's love of sport.

But the great day drew near. The weather grew
warmer, the ice gave way, Thomas was ready, and calling together his chiefs, laid before them his plan of battle.

About nine o'clock at night, December 14, 1864, I was summoned to General Steadman's headquarters. He told me what the plan of battle was, and said he wished me to open the fight by making a vigorous assault upon Hood's right flank. This, he explained, was to be a feint, intended to betray Hood into the belief that it was the real attack, and lead him to support his right by weakening his left, where Thomas intended to assault him in very deed. The General gave me the Fourteenth United States Colored Infantry, under Colonel H. C. Corbin; the Seventeenth United States Colored Infantry, under the gallant Colonel W. R. Shafter; a detachment of the Eighteenth United States Colored Infantry, under Major L. D. Joy; the Forty-fourth United States Colored Infantry, under Colonel L. Johnson; a provisional brigade of white troops under Colonel C. H. Grosvenor, and a section of artillery under Captain Osborn, of the Twentieth Indiana Battery. The largest force I had ever handled was two regiments,
and as I rather wanted to open the battle in proper style, I asked General Steadman what suggestions he had to make. He replied: "Colonel, to-morrow morning, at daylight, I want you to open the battle." "All right, General. Do you not think it would be a good plan for me to —," and I outlined a little plan of attack. With a twinkle in his kindly eye he replied: "To-morrow morning, Colonel, just as soon as you can see how to put your troops in motion, I wish you to begin the fight." "All right, General; good night." With these explicit instructions I left his headquarters, returned to camp, gave the requisite orders for the soldiers to have an early breakfast and be ready for serious work at daybreak. Then taking Adjutant Clelland I reconnoitered the enemy's position, tracing the line of his camp fires, and decided on my plan of assault. The morning dawned with a dense fog, which held us in check for some time after we were ready to march.

During our stay at Nashville, I was the guest of Major W. B. Lewis, through whose yard ran our line. He had been a warm personal friend of Andrew Jackson, occupying a place in the Treasury
Department during his administration. He gave me the room formerly occupied by the hero of New Orleans, and entertained me with many anecdotes of him. I remember in particular one which I especially appreciated, because of the scarcity of fuel in our own camp. At one time General Jackson ordered certain troops to rendezvous for a few days at Nashville. Major Lewis, acting as quartermaster, laid in a supply of several hundred cords of wood, which he supposed would be ample to last during their entire stay in the city. The troops arrived on a "raw and gusty day," and being accustomed to comfortable fires at home, they burned up every stick the first night, to the Quartermaster's great consternation.

To return. On the morning of December fifteenth, Major Lewis said he would have a servant bring me my breakfast, which was not ready, however, when I started. The boy, with an eye to safety, followed me afar off, so far that he only reached me, I think, about two o'clock in the afternoon. But I really believe the delay improved the flavor of the breakfast.
As soon as the fog lifted, the battle began in good earnest. Hood mistook my assault for an attack in force upon his right flank, and weakening his left in order to meet it, gave the coveted opportunity to Thomas, who improved it by assailing Hood's left flank, doubling it up, and capturing a large number of prisoners.

Thus the first day's fight wore away. It had been for us a severe but glorious day. Over three hundred of my command had fallen, but everywhere our army was successful. Victory perched upon our banners. Hood had stubbornly resisted, but had been gallantly driven back with severe loss. The left had done its duty. General Steadman congratulated us, saying his only fear had been that we might fight too hard. We had done all he desired, and more. Colored soldiers had fought side by side with white troops. They had mingled together in the charge. They had supported each other. They had assisted each other from the field when wounded, and they lay side by side in death. The survivors rejoiced together over a hard-fought field, won by a common valor. All who witnessed their conduct
gave them equal praise. The day that we had longed to see had come and gone, and the sun went down upon a record of coolness, bravery, manliness, never to be unmade. A new chapter in the history of liberty had been written. It had been shown that marching under a flag of freedom, animated by a love of liberty, even the slave becomes a man and a hero.

At one time during the day, while the battle was in progress, I sat in an exposed place on a piece of ground sloping down toward the enemy, and being the only horseman on that part of the field, soon became a target for the balls that whistled and sang their threatening songs as they hurried by. At length a shot aimed at me struck my horse in the face just above the nostril, and passing up under the skin emerged near the eye, doing the horse only temporary harm, and letting me off scot free, much to my delight, as may be supposed. Captain Baker, lying on the ground near by, heard the thud of the ball as it struck the horse, and seeing me land on the ground, cried out: "The Colonel's shot," and sprang to my side, glad enough to find that the poor
horse's face had been a shield to save my life. I was sorry that the animal could not appreciate the gratitude I felt to it for my deliverance.

During that night Hood withdrew his army some two miles, and took up a new line along the crest of some low hills, which he strongly fortified with some improvised breastworks and abattis. Soon after our early breakfast we moved forward over the intervening space. My position was still on the extreme left of our line, and I was especially charged to look well to our flank to avoid surprise.

The Second Colored Brigade, under Col. Thompson, of the Twelfth United States Colored Infantry, was on my right and participated in the first charge upon Overton's Hill, which was repulsed. I stood where the whole movement was in full view. It was a grand and terrible sight to see those men climb that hill over rocks and fallen trees, in the face of a murderous fire of cannon and musketry, and often reaching the enemy's works only to be driven back. White and black mingled together in the charge and on the retreat.

When the Second Colored Brigade retired behind
my line to reform, one of the regimental color-bearers stopped in the open space between the two armies, where, although exposed to a dangerous fire, he planted his flag firmly in the ground, and began deliberately and coolly to return the enemy's fire; and, greatly to our amusement, kept up for some little time his independent warfare.

When the second and final assault was made, the right of my line took part. It was with breathless interest I watched that noble army climb that hill with a steady resolve which nothing but death itself could check. When at length the assaulting column sprang upon the earthworks, and the enemy seeing that further resistance was madness, gave way and began a precipitous retreat, our hearts swelled as only the hearts of soldiers can, and scarcely stopping to cheer, or to await orders, we pushed forward and joined in the pursuit until the darkness and the rain forced a halt.

The battle of Nashville did not compare in numbers engaged, in severity of fighting, or in the losses sustained, with some other western battles. But in the issues at stake, the magnificent generalship of
Thomas, the completeness of our triumph, and the immediate and far-reaching consequences, it was unique, and deservedly ranks along with Gettysburg as one of the decisive battles of the war.

When General Thomas rode over the battle-field and saw the bodies of colored men side by side with the foremost on the very works of the enemy, he turned to his staff, saying: "Gentlemen, the question is settled; negroes will fight." He did me the honor to recommend me for promotion, and told me that he intended to give me the best brigade he could form. This he afterward did.

After the great victory we joined in the chase after the fleeing foe. Hood's army was whipped, demoralized, and pretty badly scattered. A good many stragglers were picked up. A story circulated to this effect: Some of our boys, on making a sharp turn in the road, came upon a forlorn southern soldier who had lost his arms, thrown away his accouterments, and was sitting on a log by the roadside, waiting to give himself up. He was saluted with: "Well, Johnny, how goes it?" "Well, Yanks, I'll tell ye. I confess I'm horribly whipped and badly demoralized, but blamed if I'm scattered."
After we had passed through Franklin, we had orders to turn about and return to that city. I was riding at the head of the column, followed by my own regiment. The men were swinging along, "arms at will," when they spied General Thomas and staff approaching. Without orders they brought their arms to "right shoulder shift," took the step, and striking up their favorite tune of "John Brown," whistled it with admirable effect while passing the General, greatly to his amusement.

We had a very memorable march from Franklin to Murfreesboro over miserable dirt roads. About December nineteenth or twentieth, we were on the march at an early hour, but the rain was there before us, and stuck by us closer than a brother. We were drenched through and through, and few had on a dry thread. We waded streams of water nearly waist deep, we pulled through mud that seemed to have no bottom, and where many a soldier left his shoes seeking for it. The open woods pasture where we went into camp that night, was surrounded with a high fence made of cedar rails. That fence was left standing, and not a rail was touched—until—well!
I do believe that the owner's bitterness at his loss was fully balanced by the comfort and good cheer which those magnificent rail fires afforded us that December night. They did seem providentially provided for us.

During the night the weather turned cold, and when we resumed our march the ground was frozen, and the roads were simply dreadful, especially for those of our men who had lost their shoes the day before, and were now compelled to walk barefoot, tracking their way with blood. Such experiences take away something of the romance sometimes suggested to the inexperienced by the phrase, "soldiering in the sunny south;" but, then, a touch of it is worth having for the light it throws over such historical scenes as those at Valley Forge.

We continued in the pursuit of Hood as far as Huntsville, Alabama, when he disappeared to return no more, and we were allowed to go back to Chattanooga, glad enough of an opportunity to rest. Distance travelled, four hundred and twenty miles.

We had no more fighting. There were many interesting experiences, which, however, I will not
take time to relate. In August, 1865, being in command of the post at Knoxville, Tennessee, after forty months of service, grateful to have escaped without imprisonment, wounds, or even a day of severe illness, I resigned my commission to resume my studies, which the foolish firing on Fort Sumter had so rudely interrupted.

Colonels Shafter, Johnson, Corbin, and a number of line officers who were with me in the colored service, entered the regular army, where some are still on duty. I was strongly urged to do the same, but my tastes were not military. So long as the Union was imperilled, and there were blows to be struck for freedom, I could endure the hardships and enjoy the service of the army. But when peace came, I felt that my place was in the ranks of those who seek in some humble way to assist in promoting education and moral and social reforms.

I cannot close this paper without expressing the conviction that history has not yet done justice to the share borne by colored soldiers in the war for the Union. Their conduct during the war has been a silent, but most potent factor in influencing public
sentiment, shaping legislation, and fixing the status of colored people in America. If the records of their achievements could be put into such shape that they could be accessible to the thousands of colored youth in the South, they would kindle in their young minds an enthusiastic devotion to liberty and manhood.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

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1885.
FRONTIER SERVICE DURING THE REBELLION;

OR, A

HISTORY OF COMPANY K,

FIRST INFANTRY, CALIFORNIA VOLUNTEERS.

BY

GEORGE H. PETTIS,

[Brevet Captain United States Volunteers; Late First Lieutenant Company K, First California Infantry, and First Lieutenant and Adjutant First New Mexico Infantry.]

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FRONTIER SERVICE DURING THE REBELLION.

The first battle of Bull Run had been fought. The government had become satisfied that the slaveholder's rebellion was not to be put down with seventy-five thousand men. The Union people of the United States now fully realized that the rebels were to use every effort on their part towards the establishment of the Confederacy, and the men of the north, on their part, were ready to "mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor" to preserve the government as their fathers before them had pledged themselves to establish it. The loyal States were ready to respond to any demand made upon them by the government, and there were none more anxious to do their duty to the old flag than the Union men of California.

The people of that far distant part of our country were, in the early days of our "late unpleasantness,"
stirred to their very depths. A large portion of the inhabitants had emigrated from the southern States, and were, therefore, in sympathy with their brethren at home. General Joe Johnston was in command of the military department, and a majority of the regular officers under him were sympathizers with the rebellion, as were a majority of the State officers. The United States gunboat "Wyoming," lying in the harbor of San Francisco in the early part of '61, was officered by open advocates of secession, and only by the secret coming of General E. V. Sumner, who arrived by steamer one fine morning in the early part of '61, totally unknown and unannounced, and presenting himself at the army headquarters on Washington street, San Francisco, without delay, with, "Is this Gen. Johnston?" "Yes, sir." "I am General E. V. Sumner, United States Army, and do now relieve you of the command of this department," at the same time delivering the orders to this effect from the War Department at Washington, were the people of the Pacific States saved from a contest which would have been more bitter, more fierce, and more unrelenting than was exhibited in
ERRATUM.

any part of the United States during all those long
four years of the war.

As I have said before, the prompt and secret
action of the government and that gallant old soldier,
General E. V. Sumner (for you all will remember
that California had no railroads and telegraphs in
those days), prevented civil war there. The seces-
sionists, who were preparing to take possession of
the property of the government in that department
and turn the guns of Alcatraz, Fort Point and the
Presidio upon the loyalists, were taken completely
aback; they delayed action. General Sumner took
all precautions against surprise, and the Union men
of the Pacific States breathed free again, for civil
war had been driven from their doors. Many of the
secession leaders, with General Joe Johnston, seeing
their plans miscarry, left the State shortly after, and
did service in the Confederate armies.

On the steamer from the States that brought the
news to California of the disaster at Bull Run, came
orders from President Lincoln for that State to fur-
ish its quota of men for the Union army. The same
afternoon, the Franklin Light Infantry, a militia
company, composed of printers only, held a meeting at its armory on Sacramento street, and voted unanimously to offer their services to the government, which was accordingly done, and they were the first company that was mustered into the United States service in California, and was afterwards known as Company B, First Infantry, California Volunteers, and were officered as follows: Captain, Valentine Drescher; First Lieutenant, Francis S. Mitchell; Second Lieutenant, George H. Pettis. Other companies were soon formed, and the regiment, with nine companies, went into camp of instruction at Camp Downey, near Oakland.

The regiment had been in camp but a few days when it was ordered to proceed by steamer to Los Angeles, in Southern California. The transfer was made, and the regiment went into camp about nine miles from Los Angeles, on the seashore, where the town of Santa Monica now is. The First Battalion Cavalry, California Volunteers, consisting of five companies, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Davis, who was afterwards killed before Richmond, also accompanied us. In a few days after the estab-
The establishment of this camp, Lieutenant Pettis, of Company B, was sent on detached duty as recruiting officer to San Francisco, in order that the nine companies now in camp should be filled to the maximum standard. The tenth company had not been admitted to the regiment as yet, although several had made application for the position.

Lieutenant Pettis arrived in San Francisco about the fifteenth of October, and immediately commenced business by opening his recruiting office on the corner of Montgomery and Clay streets, in the same building with the Morning Call. He was successful, as by the fifteenth of January he had recruited and sent to the regiment one hundred and two men, and was ordered by General George Wright, then commanding the department of California (and who was afterwards lost on the steamer "Brother Jonathan" on his way to Oregon), to close his office and join his regiment at Camp Latham. In the meantime, four companies of the regiment, under Major E. A. Rigg, had proceeded to Fort Yuma, on the Colorado river, and relieved the regulars who were there. Captain Winfield Scott Hancock, Assistant
Quartermaster United States Army, had also been relieved and ordered to the States. He had been on duty at Los Angeles. Three companies of the regiment had been ordered to Warner's Ranch, about half way between Los Angeles and Fort Yuma, and established Camp Wright. On the twelfth of February, orders had been received by Colonel J. H. Carleton, commanding the regiment, to form the tenth company of his regiment from the recruits enlisted in San Francisco by Lieutenant Pettis. Company K, First Infantry, California Volunteers, was thus formed, and was officered as follows: Captain, Nicholas S. Davis, promoted from First Lieutenant of Company A; First Lieutenant, George H. Pettis, promoted from Second Lieutenant of Company B; Second Lieutenant, Jeremiah Phelan, appointed from Hospital Steward of the regular army.

In the meantime, the government at Washington had received information that General H. H. Sibley had left San Antonio, Texas, with about three thousand seven hundred rebel soldiers for New Mexico, and as the government had immense stores of clothing, camp and garrison equipage, and commissary
stores in different posts in that Territory and Arizona, with but few troops to defend them, and a majority of the officers avowed secessionists, the rebels expected an easy conquest. Accordingly, Colonel Carleton had orders to organize what was known as the "California Column," which consisted of the First and Fifth Infantry, California Volunteers, (George W. Bowie was Colonel of the Fifth Infantry, California Volunteers); First Battalion Cavalry, California Volunteers; Company B, Captain John C. Cremoney, Second Cavalry, California Volunteers, and Light Battery A, Third United States Artillery, Captain John B. Shinn.

That an idea may be obtained of the difficulties of this enterprise, I will say that it is about nine hundred miles from Los Angeles to the Rio Grande, not a pound of food or of forage was to be obtained on the route, and everything to be consumed had to be brought from California. Neither was there, as we afterwards ascertained, a single resident in all that long march, except at Fort Yuma. The country through which the "Column" passed was without water, and the Colorado and Gila Deserts to be
crossed before we should come in sight of the green cottonwoods of the Rio Grande. The Apache Indians supposed that they had driven all the whites out of the Territory of Arizona, and the former required constant watching and attention. In consequence of the scarcity of water on the route, the "Column" could only be moved in detachments.

Companies K and C, First Infantry, and Company G, Fifth Infantry, Captain Hugh L. Hinds, left Captain Latham about the first of March, 1862, under command of Captain William McMullen, of Company C, and arrived at Camp Wright in due season, it being about one hundred and forty miles. The only incident on this march worthy of mention was, that when the battalion marched through the town of Los Angeles the American flag had been hauled down from the court house. As it was well known that the people of Los Angeles at that time were nearly all strong in their sympathies with the rebellion, it was thought that the hauling down of the flag was to insult the command. Consequently, on the arrival of the battalion on the banks of the Los Angeles river, which flows on the eastern side of the
DURING THE REBELLION.

town, it was halted and Captain McMullen returned, and, finding some of the town officials, insisted that the flag should be hoisted immediately. The citizens denied any intended insult to the flag, and proceeded to replace it, which being seen by the men of the battalion, they gave three cheers, and continued on their way.

A delay of a couple of weeks at Camp Wright, when orders were received by Lieutenant Colonel J. R. West, of the First Infantry, commanding at Camp Wright, to organize the advance detachment of the "Column," to consist of Companies K and C, First Infantry, California Volunteers, and Companies B and G, Fifth Infantry, California Volunteers, and proceed without delay to Fort Yuma. The command as above constituted left camp at a late hour in the afternoon, and after a short march made camp beside a laguna, or pond. It rained during the night, and daylight found us at breakfast, which was quickly dispatched, and we were soon on our march, the road continually ascending. At nine o'clock in the forenoon we had reached the line of snow, where
it was snowing heavily. At noon we had reached the summit, and found the snow about two feet in depth, and as cold as Greenland. A short halt was made, when great fires were built to warm the men, and then the command moved down the mountain. At three o'clock in the afternoon we passed through the line of snow, shortly after through the precipitous cañon of San Felipe, and towards evening went into camp, the grass being more than knee high, the air redolent with the perfume of flowers and the sweet melody of the birds.

A short march the next day brought us to Las Dos Palmas, or the "Two Palms," so called from the fact that two luxuriant palm trees formerly flourished here, the stumps of which were then to be seen. Thence to Carizo Creek, nine miles, where the command rested one day. Here commences the then much-dreaded Colorado Desert. For more than a hundred miles we were at the mercy of its sands and storms and burning sun. Such another scene of desolation does not exist on the American continent; treeless mountains on either side, brown and sombre to their very tops; no signs of life were to be seen
anywhere. Although it was in the first days of April, still the sun poured down with an intensity that I had never before experienced, no shade could be found, and the very water in the creek could not be bathed in—being more fit for cooking than bathing, it being so hot. Such was the Colorado Desert as we approached it. What will it be further on? We shall see.

The command left camp at Carizo Creek in the middle of the afternoon, and continued the march until midnight, when we arrived at Sackett's Wells. Here it was supposed a ration of water for the men would be found, but upon examination it was ascertained that somebody had knocked the bottom out of the well, and no water was to be obtained, except such as could be caught in cups as it trickled drop by drop from the strata of clay that had heretofore formed the bottom of the well. No camp could be made here, and the command moved on, marching until about ten o'clock in the morning, when we arrived at the Indian Wells, having made thirty-two miles. A large number of the men were now suffering for the want of water, and the animals, upon
discovering the green bushes in the distance, near these wells, pricked their ears, and every exertion was required by riders and drivers to prevent a stampede, so much were they in want of water. Upon our arrival it was found that but a few buckets of water was in the well, as a detachment of cavalry had made camp there the day before, and had only left upon seeing our command approach, using all the water in the well for their animals before leaving. However, guards were placed over the well, men sent down to pass the water up as it collected, and in the course of a few hours the men had each received his pint of water; then the animals were furnished.

Before the water had all been distributed, one of those terrible sand storms for which this desert is renowned began, and as the sun went down it was at its very height. Neither man nor animal could face this shower of stones and gravel, and the sand and dust penetrated everything. The only thing that was to be done was to throw oneself down upon his face, draw his blankets around him, and ride it out, sleeping. The storm continued through the
night, and before dawn approached it had ceased, and upon crawling out of my sand bank, I saw in all directions what appeared to be graves, but they were only mounds of sand that had been formed by the storm over the bodies of the soldiers. Imagine, if you can, near four hundred of these mounds becoming animate and dissolving in the desert, as reveille sounded.

At about noon the command moved on, and after marching twenty-five miles arrived at Alamo Mucho at about two o'clock in the morning. Here was found a well that would have furnished water for an army corps—sweet, cold water. It was a pleasure to look at this, to hold it in a tin cup, look at it, take a mouthful, holding it there a time before swallowing it; it seemed a sin to drink it. This water was not taken on the point of the bayonet, as water had been taken for the past four days, and we had marched sixty-six miles from Los Dos Palmos since we had our fill of water. After the men had satisfied their thirst they spread their blankets wherever they pleased, and there was no person in that command, except the guard, that was not soon in the arms of Morpheus.
Before daylight another sand storm commenced, and when reveille was beat off, not a dozen men were in line, and they were only brought out of their sand hills by beating the long roll. The storm subsided in the early afternoon, when the command moved on, making Gardiner's Wells, twelve miles, before sunset, where was found a fine well with plenty of water, but none of the command wanted any, the only objection being, and that a slight one, that there was standing above the level of the water in the well, a pair of boots—and a dead man in them. Seven Wells was soon reached, and, as the name implies, there were plenty of wells, but there was no water. Thence to Cook's Well, twelve miles, with plenty of good water, thence fourteen miles to the Colorado river, at Algodones. The next day, before noon, the command arrived at Fort Yuma and went into camp. Here we met Don Pascual, a head chief of the Yumas, Don Diego Jaeger, and the "Great Western," three of the most celebrated characters in the annals of Fort Yuma.

It was supposed that our command was to constitute the advance of the "Column" from Fort Yuma.
But upon our arrival at that point, we found that a reconnoitering party, consisting of Company I, First California Infantry, Captain W. P. Calloway; Company A, First California Cavalry, Captain William McLeave, and Lieutenant Phelan, with detachments for two mountain howitzers, had been sent up the Gila river, as the Indians had reported that a large body of rebels were advancing on Fort Yuma from Tucson. On the third day after our arrival we crossed over the Colorado river and continued our march. We passed the divide between the Colorado and Gila rivers, and arrived at Gila City that afternoon, eighteen miles. Our route was the old overland stage route on the south side of the Gila. Here we first saw that peculiar and picturesque cactus, so characteristic of the country, called by the Indians "petayah," but more generally known as the "suaro," and recognized by botanists as the "Cereus grandiflorus."

Our next march was to Filibuster camp, eleven miles; thence to Antelope Peak, fifteen; Mohawk, twelve; Texas Hill, eleven; Stanwix, seventeen; Burke's, twelve miles. Here we found the reconnoitering party, under Captain Calloway, that had
left Fort Yuma a few days before our arrival there. They had had a brush with the rebels at Picacho, a point about forty-five miles west of Tucson. Lieutenant Barrett, Company A, First Cavalry, California Volunteers, and three men of the same company, had been killed. They had secured three rebel prisoners. The poor devils were under guard beneath some cottonwoods in their camp. They were now on their return to Fort Yuma.

The next morning our command moved out with more alacrity than usual, for we felt that we were now the advance of the "Column," and we would meet the rebels, too. A short march of twelve miles brought us to Oatman Flat. We had come down from the high mesa lands into this valley, and as we passed through near the middle of it, saw upon the right side of the road a small enclosure of rails, on one end of which was inscribed "The Oatman Family." We had all heard of this tragedy years before, and now we were upon the spot where the terrible massacre had been perpetrated. No one of us could look upon this humble monument without awakening a feeling of revenge, and many were the
silent pledges given that day that when the opportunity should offer, that at least one shot would be given for these silent victims to Indian treachery. One officer was so affected that he approached Colonel J. R. West, our commanding officer, with the interrogatory: "Colonel, if we should at any time meet any of these Indians, what course should be pursued towards them?" "Tell your men when they see a head, hit it if they can!" was the Colonel's quick rejoinder. You may think this to have been rather harsh, but remember we were standing above the remains of the innocent victims of a most terrible tragedy.

A few miles after leaving Oatman's Flat we came to a pile of immense boulders in the centre of a pleasant valley. These were the famous "Pedras Pintados," or painted rocks. A march of fourteen miles brought the command to Kenyon's. The next day, after sixteen miles marching, we arrived at Gila Bend. Here we lay over a day, as our next march was to be to the Maricopa Wells, forty miles distant, the dreaded Gila Desert. After marching all night and all of the next day, we approached the
Maricopa Wells at about twelve o'clock on the second night. When within a mile of this point, a small reconnoitering party that had been sent ahead of our command, met us and reported that a large force of the rebels had possession of the wells, and from appearances intended to prevent our command from reaching there. This report served to put new life into everybody, notwithstanding that the whole command had now been without sleep for over forty hours, had marched forty miles and was somewhat fatigued. One company was thrown out as skirmishers, the rest of the command in line of battle. We approached the watering place, and when we arrived there, instead of finding a formidable enemy, we found a half a dozen of our own cavalry that had been scouting ahead of the command. We found the water strongly impregnated with alkali, but it served to assuage our thirst.

A short march of ten miles then brought us to the Casa Blanca, the largest village of the Pimo Indians. Our command remained here for several weeks, until at least a large part of the "Column" had arrived, and large stores of commissaries and forage
had been collected. Our Indian scouts and spies brought every few days extravagant reports of the force of rebels at Tucson, and they all agreed that when our troops should reach that point, we would meet with a warm reception, and that rifle-pits, sufficiently manned, extended a long ways on either side of the town. These Indians were on the best of terms with us, as they had sold large amounts of their produce to our command, for which they had been promptly and abundantly paid—a different experience when the rebels were there. They had been employed by our quartermaster's department as herders of our beef cattle, and were paid to their own satisfaction for all services they had rendered, but no inducement that our commander offered them, no amount of pay, could influence any one of them to accompany us towards Tucson, so assured were they that we were to be "wiped out" before we should reach there.

On or about the twelfth day of May, 1862, the advance, constituted as before stated, with B Company, California Cavalry, Captain Emil Fritz, added, left the peaceful and hospitable homes of the Pimos,
and arrived at the Sacatone, twelve miles. Here we left the overland mail road, which we had followed since leaving Los Angeles, and keeping up the south bank of the Gila to White's Ranch; thence to the celebrated ruins of the Casa Blanca, so graphically described by Mr. John R. Bartlett in his "Personal Narratives" of the Boundary Commission; thence to Rattlesnake Spring; thence to old Fort Breckenridge, which had been so cowardly deserted the year before by our regular troops; thence to Cañon de Oro. As we now approached Tucson, everything was in fighting trim. A short halt was made near the town, and the cavalry company, in two divisions, approached the place from the north and west. The infantry marched in by the main street from the west, with the field music playing "Yankee Doodle," and instead of being received by shot and shell, we found neither friend nor enemy, only a village without population, if we except some hundreds of dogs and cats.

When we were at the Pimos, Governor Pesquira, of Sonora, Mexico, arrived there from California on his way home; he was allowed to pass our lines; he
and his party arrived in Tucson a few days before our command, and found the place nearly deserted. Captain Hunter, with his rebel soldiers, were far on their way to the Rio Grande, and as they had assured the native population — wholly Mexican — that when the "Abs" — meaning the Union troops — arrived they would massacre all the men and abuse all the women, they stood not upon the order of going, but went at once for Sonora. Governor Pesquira hurried forward, overtaking parties of the fugitives each day, and assuring them of different treatment from the Union soldiers than they had been told by the rebels, induced many to return to their homes, and within a week Tucson was again alive; stores and gambling saloons were numerous, the military had taken possession of the best buildings in the town for quarters, and the stars and stripes again waved over the Capital of the Territory of Arizona.

The advance of the "Column" entered Tucson on the twentieth day of May, 1862. Several Americans, among them Sylvester Mowry, formerly of
Rhode Island, returned, and being violent in their sympathies with the rebellion, were arrested. Some were sent out of the Territory, while Mowry was sent to Fort Yuma, where he remained incarcerated a long time. About the fifteenth of June, Captain N. S. Davis was relieved from the command of Company K by Lieutenant Pettis, who remained in command, with a short interval, until its final muster out. Captain Davis was on duty in the quartermaster's department. By the first of July, a large part of the "Column" had arrived at Tucson, a large depot of army stores had been brought from California, and preparations were commenced for the movement again of the advance column. Several spies and scouts had been sent forward from Tucson, but as they had not returned, matters were rather uncertain. However, in the first week in July, Company E, First California Infantry, Captain Thomas L. Roberts, and Company B, Second California Cavalry, were ordered to proceed to Apache Pass and hold possession of the water at that point. On the twentieth of July the advance column left Tucson, and on the second day arrived at the San Pedro, twenty-five
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27 miles. Here a delay of one day was made to put the fording place in good order for the crossing of the "Column." Information was received here that Captain Roberts' advance into the Apache Pass had been attacked by a large force of the Apaches, under the renowned chief, "Cochise," and after fighting during an entire afternoon had succeeded in driving the Indians, with a loss on our side of several of our men killed and wounded.

Our next march was to Dragoon Springs, eighteen miles; thence to Sulphur Springs, twenty-two miles. The famous Apache Pass was reached by another march of twenty-five miles. Here was found the command of Captain Roberts, with evidences of the struggle of a few days before. On leaving Apache Pass the next day, we were again the advance of the "Column," which position was retained until our arrival on the Rio Grande. The next camping ground was at San Simon, eighteen miles. As we were assured by our guides that no water would be found until we reached Ojo de Vaca, or Cow Springs, a distance of sixty-seven miles, it was deemed advisable to leave the overland route at this point, and
proceed by another route. Accordingly, the next morning the command moved south, following up the San Simon Valley, a distance of twelve miles, and camped at the Cienega. Here was found water, the best and most abundant on the whole march. Imagine, if you can, a valley twenty miles in width, on either side a range of mountains; and to the north and south, up and down the valley, a level plain as far as the eye could reach. A trench three feet wide, by five or six in depth, filled nearly to the top with clear cold water, running with a velocity of at least six miles an hour, the bottom covered with white smooth pebbles. Two miles above this point no water was to be found. As you descended the valley and approached this water, you found at first the ground moist, then water appeared, a mere drop, then a small stream of running water, which increased in volume, until you found a stream as described above. Below this point the water gradually lessened, until, two miles below, this magnificent stream had entirely disappeared. There was no shade to be had here, except that found under the wagon bodies, still there was no fault found; the fine stream
of water that we were enjoying satisfied us for all other discomforts. It was with feelings of regret that we left this point late the next afternoon, with well filled canteens; and the uncertainty of finding water in advance, added to this feeling. We arrived at Leiteresdorffer's Wells soon after sunset, but no water was to be found. The march was continued during the night, and all of the next day, until we arrived at Soldier's Farewell, and no water. The command was strung out a distance of at least five miles; we had been marching thirty hours, with only a canteen each of water, with the thermometer at least 130. A large number of the men had given out and were scattered in parties of three or four, for a dozen miles in the rear. What was left of the command moved on, and after leaving the wagon road, we arrived in Burro Cañon, some time after dark, where plenty of water was found, when, after taking in a fill, turned into our blankets, entirely forgetting our hunger, in our weariness. Company K marched into Burro Cañon with less than ten men out of eighty, and it was long after daylight the next day before the whole command had arrived. A
short march of twelve miles brought us to Ojo de Baca; thence eighteen miles to the Miembros river.

Our next march, twenty-five miles, was to Cooke's Springs, passing through Cooke's Cañon. This location was known by Mexicans as *La Valle del Muerto*, or Valley of Death. It seemed to be rightly named, too, as for nearly two miles were to be seen, on either side, skulls and other portions of human remains who had fallen by Indian assassination. Mounds and crosses were met every few minutes. As we emerged from this *triste* locality, we encountered the remains of wagons and government stores, that had been destroyed the year before by the regular troops, who had deserted Forts Buchanan and Breckenridge, in Arizona. When they had arrived at this point, they were informed of the surrender of the regulars at Fort Fillmore; consequently, without further inquiry, they destroyed all the government property they had in charge, and made their way, on the west side of the Rio Grande, to Fort Craig.

The next march brought us near to Mule Springs, fifteen miles; and on the next afternoon could be
discovered, in the distance, the green, winding way of the Rio Grande, with the Sierras de Organos in the background. Camp was made that night on the banks of the Rio Bravo del Norte, near to old Fort Thorn. The next march was down the west bank of the river to the fording place, known as San Diego, which you will find set down on all maps as a town or village, but to my certain knowledge, up to the time mentioned, and for several years afterwards, there was but one house in the vicinity, and that contained but one room and no roof. As the river was now, the third of August, at its extreme height, caused by the melting of the snow in the upper Rocky Mountains, we experienced some difficulty in getting our wagons and stores across; still all was completed before sundown, and the next day we arrived at Roblado, near the town of Dona Ana. On the fifth of August, after passing through the villages of Dona Ana and Las Cruces, we arrived at the pleasant town of La Mesilla.

Here was to be our resting place. We found a well-built village, with a numerous population, mostly Mexican. The rebels, who had arrived in
the Territory, we learned, had, after the treacherous surrender of the regular troops at Fort Fillmore (directly opposite La Mesilla), marched north. They found Fort Craig too strong to be attacked, and, contrary to all military maxims, had continued on, leaving a fortified position in their rear. The desperate battle of Val Verde had taken place on the twenty-first and twenty-second of February, 1862, a short distance above Fort Craig. And as long as Major Benny Roberts had command of the Federal troops they were successful, but when General E. R. S. Canby came on the field and took command, the rebels soon had turned the tide of the battle in their favor. McRae's battery was taken, and our troops were returning, panic-stricken, across the river, and fleeing towards Fort Craig, about three miles down the river. The rebels then approached Albuquerque, where was stored a large amount of government stores, which were surrendered without a struggle. Thence they proceeded to Santa Fé, where, without opposition, they took possession. There was one other fort to be taken, about one hundred miles northwest—Fort Union. After some
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Delay at Santa Fé, the rebels, numbering some sixteen hundred, set out for Fort Union. At Apache Pass, or Pigeon's Ranch, they were met by a Colorado regiment, with what regulars and militia could be found, all under command of Colonel John P. Slough (afterwards chief justice of the Territory), and were defeated, their wagons, ammunition, and all their stores having been destroyed by a party of Union troops under Captain W. H. Lewis, Fifth United States Infantry, and Captain A. B. Cary, of the Third United States Infantry, who scaled a mountain and got into their rear. The rebels precipitately retreated from this point, to and down the Rio Grande, having passed La Mesilla a few weeks before our arrival, and left the Territory with about twelve hundred men out of thirty-seven hundred, that they had arrived with.

The different companies of the "Column," as they arrived, were now sent to different points in the department. Our Colonel, James H. Carleton, had been promoted to Brigadier General, and had relieved General E. R. S. Canby, in command of the department of New Mexico. The regular troops were all
relieved, except the Fifth Infantry, and sent east, and a protection was now assured to the population, by the California Volunteers. Lieutenant Colonel J. R. West was now promoted to Colonel of the regiment, and in command of the southern district of the department. Fine quarters were found for the command in the village of La Mesilla, and the district was under martial law. Duty was really pleasant here,—plenty of society, with frequent bailes, few drills, and plenty of everything to eat and drink. The white population were nearly all of secession proclivities, one in particular, Samuel L. Jones (better known as the pro-slavery Sheriff Jones, of Kansas), who resided here, was arrested usually about once a week, and incarcerated in the guard-house for treasonable utterances.

After a protracted season of this duty, or up to about the twentieth of November, came the most unpleasant part of the history of Company K. There had been several escapes from the guard-house of persons who had been imprisoned for treasonable utterances, until it seemed that there might exist a disposition among some of the command to be a
party to these frequent escapades. This state of affairs existed until one morning an escape was reported to the commanding officer, Colonel West, who immediately ordered the sergeant of the guard, with sentinels numbers one, two, three, four and five, who were on duty at the time, to be placed in the guard-house, in irons. It so happened that this sergeant and all the sentinels belonged to Company K, and at the morning drill, after guard mount, the company refused to do further duty, or until the irons were taken off of Sergeant Miller. The soldier most aggrieved appeared to be Corporal Charles Smith, or rather he acted as spokesman for the company. The company was immediately ordered into their quarters by Lieutenant Pettis, and put under guard, and the facts reported to the commanding officer. Orders were given for all prisoners to be placed in the guard-house; Company K was ordered to proceed to the plaza or parade without arms, when the long roll was beat. The other two companies of the garrison were soon on the plaza, fully equipped. Colonel West now made his appearance, mounted; he then marched Company A, Fifth Cali-
fornia Infantry, about five paces in front of and fac-
ing Company K, with pieces loaded, and at a “ready.” He then called Corporal Smith to the front, and asked him if he still persisted in refusing to do his duty? The Corporal respectfully, but firmly, announced that he would do no duty until the irons were removed from Sergeant Miller. Company D, First California Infantry, had been wheeled to the right out of line, and the Corporal was now ordered to place himself about six paces in front of this company. Upon his again refusing to do duty, Captain Mitchell, of Company D, was ordered to fire upon him. This order was unhesitatingly obeyed; and after the smoke had cleared away, it was seen that the Corporal was uninjured. Not so with some others. The position of Company D was such that it was facing the cathedral, which is situated on the west side of the plaza; on either side of the cathe-
dral were long straight streets, running from the plaza; the long roll and the other preparations had called all the inhabitants from their residences, and the result of the first volley was to wound two invalid soldiers, together with one Mexican woman and one
child, and the cathedral, which was built of adobes, was concealed for a few minutes by its own dust, caused by the minie balls penetrating its front. The Corporal was again questioned by Colonel West, who returned his former answer, and Company D again fired a volley, but the Corporal remained untouched. After another questioning by the Colonel, Company D was once more ordered to fire, when, between the commands "aim," "fire," Colonel West rode up behind the company with uplifted sabre, and gave the command to "lower those rifles," when the command was given by the Captain to "fire." At this discharge, the Corporal fell to the ground, a minie ball having passed directly through him, having entered his right breast. He was immediately placed upon a stretcher, and expired on his way to the hospital. The rest of the company was now questioned by Colonel West, and each man asserted his willingness to do his duty, when the command was dismissed to their quarters, and Company K immediately assumed their arms and accoutrements and appeared upon the plaza for drill. This was
the only evidence of insubordination ever shown in the "Column," and the prompt manner in which this one was met and punished, precluded any danger of another exhibition of this character.

A few days after these occurrences, some of our spies and scouts brought in the intelligence that another large party of rebels had left San Antonio, Texas, for New Mexico. Accordingly, Companies K and D were ordered to San Elizario, Texas, a town about twenty-five miles below El Paso, Mexico, and the last point of civilization towards San Antonio, on outpost duty. After remaining here about six weeks, and no rebels appearing, Company K was ordered to Fort Craig. A march of twenty-five miles brought us to Franklin or Fort Bliss, directly opposite El Paso; thence two marches, aggregating fifty miles, found us in our old quarters at La Mesilla, where the company was ordered to remain until the adjournment of a general court-martial which was then in session at that post. A week later, and Company K commenced its march for Fort Craig. A short march brought us again to Dona Ana. Three miles from that village brought
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us to the commencement of the much dreaded Jornada del Muerto (Journey of Death). The Jornada is a large desert, well supplied with fine gramma grass in some portions, but absolutely destitute of water or shade for seventy-five miles. Why it ever received its title, I never distinctly learned, but suppose it was on account of the very numerous massacres committed on it by the Apache Indians. On the east, in the far distance, are the Sierras Blancos, and is fringed on the west by the Sierra Caballo and Sierra de Frey Cristobal. From these heights, on either side, the Indians are enabled to distinctly perceive any party of travellers coming over the wide and unsheltered expanse of the Jornada del Muerto. When any such parties are seen, they come sweeping down upon the unsuspecting immigrant in more than usual numbers, and if successful, as they generally are, in their attack, invariably destroy all of the party, for there is no possible chance of escape; and the Apaches never take any prisoners but women and young children, and they become captives for life.

The first camp was a dry one, and as the com-
mand was accompanied by a tank of water, drawn by six mules, thus being prepared by a plentiful supply of water, I concluded to cross this desert at my leisure. The next forenoon we passed by the celebrated "Point of Rocks," the company being deployed as skirmishers, with the hope of finding Indians hiding between the huge boulders of which it was composed, but without results. Late in the afternoon we arrived at the Aleman, so called from the fact that a whole German immigrant family had been massacred at this point some years before by the Indians. The next night another dry camp, having passed during the day the Laguna del Muerto, where water is found in some seasons. While some three miles on our left was the Ojo del Muerto, a point where Fort McRae was established in 1863 by Captain Henry A. Greene, commanding Company G, First California Infantry, now a resident of this city, (Providence, R. I.) The next day's march brought us to the little village of El Paraje del Fra Cristobal. Near the spot on which the camp was made, was the peaceful flowing and muddy Rio Grande. A short march of five miles brought us to
our destination—Fort Craig. Our arrival was in January, 1863.

The company remained at this post during the year 1863, monotony of garrison life being relieved by furnishing escorts to wagon trains bound north and south, and an occasional scout after Indians. In July of that year, Assistant Surgeon Watson, who had been commissioned at Sacramento, California, more than a year before, and had been ordered to report to the headquarters of his regiment at Fort Craig, arrived at Fort McLane, without accident. On leaving that post, Captain Greene had furnished him with one government wagon and an escort of five or six men of his company. They set out with joyful anticipation; the Doctor was delighted to know that after a year's travel, he would soon be at his new home, and be doing duty with his own regiment, which he had never seen. The wagon, with its occupants, soon emerged from the cañon of the Ojo del Muerto, and came out on the hard, smooth, natural road of the Jornada. About the middle of the afternoon, they were proceeding leisurely along; twelve miles in advance could be plainly seen the buildings
of Fort Craig, with "Old Glory" on the flag-staff. The driver of the team, Johnson, a soldier of Greene's company, sat on his near wheel-mule chatting pleasantly with the Doctor, who occupied the front of the wagon, with his feet hanging down on the whistle-trees; the escort were all in the wagon, lying on their blankets, with their arms and equipments beneath them. Within five miles of them there was not a rock, tree, shrub, or bush, as large as a man's head—they felt a perfect security. Another moment, how changed! There arose from the sand of the desert, where they had buried themselves, some ten or twelve Apaches, within twenty feet of the moving wagon, and poured a volley of arrows into the doomed party, and closing in immediately, a part attacked the occupants of the wagon, while the rest disengaged the mules, and mounting their backs started for the mountains on the west, towards the river, and before the soldiers were out of the wagon were out of reach of their fire. Doctor Watson was shot with two arrows, one in his right arm, and the other on the inside of his right thigh, severing the femoral artery. He breathed his last in a few min-
utes; the driver was shot through the heart, and one or two of the escorts were slightly wounded. News of this affair reached the post before sunset, and in twenty minutes Company K was on its way down the west side of the river to intercept, if possible, these murderers. The company was kept in the field for thirty days, without other result than to find a hot trail of eighty-two Navajoes, who were on their way to their own country, with some eight thousand head of sheep and other stock that they had stolen in the upper counties of New Mexico. As the company were dismounted, it was impossible to take up the trail. The commander of the company, however, with five cavalrymen and two Mexican scouts, followed and overtook the Indians after a run of twenty-five miles, but accomplished nothing except exchanging some twenty or twenty-five shots on either side, as our animals were completely "blown," and eighty-two to eight was an unpleasant disparity of numbers. The lieutenant and his men arrived back at the river the next morning, having been in the saddle nearly twenty-four hours. The result of the short skirmish was that one of the cavalrymen's
horses was shot through the breast, and one Navajo was sent to his happy hunting-grounds and one was wounded.

January, 1864, Company K was ordered to Los Pinos, about one hundred miles further up the Rio Grande, and about twenty miles south of Albuquerque; marching through the towns of Socoreo, La Limitar, across the sand hills at the foot of the *Sierra de los Ladrones*, or Thieves Mountains; crossing the Rio Puerco, near its affluence with the Rio Grande; thence to Sabinal, La Belen, and Los Lunes. They remained here until the first of February, when Colonel Kit Carson arrived there from the Navajo country, with some two hundred and fifty-three Navajo Indians, whom he had taken prisoners in his operations against that nation. Orders were received from department headquarters for Company K to proceed with these Indians to the Bosque Redonde, some two hundred and fifty miles down on the Pecos river. Accordingly, after formally receiving these prisoners and receipting therefor, the command moved out, and on the second night arrived at Carnwell Cañon; thence to San Antonio, San Antoinette,
Los Placeres and Gallisteo. Thus far the command had moved across the country, but on the day of leaving Gallisteo, the company struck the military road leading from Fort Union to Santa Fé, near the old Pecos ruins. The command moved along this road to the village of Tecolote; from here they proceeded down the Pecos river, and arrived at Fort Sumner after eighteen days' marching. Fort Sumner was a new post, established for the purpose of a reservation for Indians, both Navajo and Apache, that should be taken prisoners by the troops, and Colonel Carson was on a campaign against the Navajos, in which he was successful, as there were finally some eight thousand of these Indians captured and placed on this reservation. Those brought in by Company K were the first large body that had arrived. I will say here, in parenthesis, that this is the only way to treat the Indian question; for this Indian nation (the Navajoes), after receiving a severe drubbing by Carson, and all had surrendered, were finally allowed to return to their own country, since which time they have continued on the best of terms with our people. This has always been the
experience on the frontiers — one effective campaign is better than all the treaties that were ever consummated.

Fort Sumner was at this time in command of Major Henry D. Wallen, United States Seventh Infantry, than whom there was no more excellent gentleman in the service of the government. His administration was marked by a sincere desire to do justice to all under him, a feature that was sadly deficient in too many officers of the time that is spoken of. He was a perfect example of sobriety, and his case certainly was a commendation of the excellence of education of the academy at West Point, of which he was an honored graduate.

Company K had been at Fort Sumner but a few days when it was ordered to report to the commanding officer at Fort Union, necessitating a march of one hundred and twenty-five miles. The command arrived at Fort Union on the eighteenth day of March, 1864, and remained there, doing camp duty, during the months of April, May and June. In July, the company proceeded, with a company of New Mexican cavalry, towards the east, by the
route known as the Cummarron route, passing on our way, Burgwin’s Spring, named after the gallant Captain Burgwin, First Regiment United States Dragoons, who fell while leading the attack upon the insurgents at Taos, 1847, and the Wagon Mound, a high landmark (so called from its shape). From this point to the “Point of Rocks,” forty miles, is the track of a bloody, brave and disastrous fight made by eight passengers in the stage against a band of sixty Apaches. They fought every inch of the long, dread struggle. Killed one by one, and dropped on the road, two survivors maintained their defense a long time, and when the sole contestant was left, his last dying effort was to strew the contents of his powder-horn in the sand, and stir it in with his foot, so that the Indians could not use it. Wilson’s Creek, some miles further on, is named after a Mr. Wilson, a merchant of Santa Fé, who was overtaken here by the Indians, and, with his wife and child—for he was alone with them— butchered with the usual savage outrage and cruelty.

The command returned to Fort Union in September, in which month the First Infantry, California
Volunteers, was mustered out of service, their term of three years having expired, with the exception of Company K, it being recollected that they were enlisted at San Francisco some time after the other companies had been formed. However, the members of that company began, in October, to be dropped out, and when orders arrived at Fort Union for the formation of the Commanche expedition, under Colonel Kit Carson, there remained of the First Infantry Regiment, California Volunteers, one officer (Lieutenant Pettis) and twenty-six enlisted men of Company K. This company accompanied Carson's expedition with two mountain howitzers, mounted on prairie carriages, and rendezvoused at Fort Bascom, on the Canadian river, near the line of Texas. This expedition consisted as follows: Colonel Christopher Carson, First New Mexico Cavalry, commanding; Colonel Francisco P. Abreu, First New Mexico Infantry; Major William McCleave, First California Cavalry; Captain Emil Fritz, Company B, First California Cavalry, one officer and forty enlisted men; Lieutenant Sullivan Heath, Company K, First California Cavalry, one officer and
forty men; Captain Meriam, Company M, First California Cavalry, one officer and thirty-four men; Lieutenant George H. Pettis, Company K, First California Infantry, one officer and twenty-six men; Captain Charles Deus, Company M, First New Mexico Cavalry, two officers and seventy men; Captain Joseph Berney, Company D, First New Mexico Cavalry, two officers and thirty-six men; Company A, First California Veteran Infantry, seventy-five men; Assistant Surgeon George S. Courtright, United States Volunteers, and an officer whose name escapes me, as Assistant Quartermaster and Commissary,—numbering in all, fourteen officers and three hundred and twenty-one enlisted men. In addition to the command, Colonel Carson had induced seventy-two friendly Indians (Utes and Apaches), and as big scoundrels as there were on the frontiers, by promising them all the plunder that they might acquire, to join the expedition.

On the sixth of November, the command left Fort Bascom, and proceeded down on the north bank of the Canadian, hoping to find the Commanche and
Kiowa Indians (who had been committing their atrocities during the whole of 1864) in their winter quarters. The Indians with our command, on every night, after making camp, being now on the war-path, indulged in the accustomed war dance, which, although new to most of us, became almost intolerable, it being kept up each night until nearly day-break; and until we became accustomed to their groans and howlings, incident to the dance, it was impossible to sleep. Each morning of our march, two of our Indians would be sent ahead several hours before we started, who would return to camp at night and report.

We had been on our march day after day without particular incident until our arrival at Mule Creek, when our scouts brought in the intelligence that they had seen signs of a large body of Indians that had moved that day, and that they could be overtaken without much effort. Immediately after supper, all of the Cavalry, with Company K, moved out of camp in light marching order, leaving the infantry, under command of Colonel Abreu, to protect the wagon train and proceed on our trail on the morrow. Col-
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onel Carson and command marched all night, except a short halt just before dawn, and struck an outpost of the enemy on the opposite side of the river, at about sunrise, who being mounted retreated, followed by our Indians and two companies of our Cavalry. The rest of the command moved down on the north side of the river, and a few miles below the cavalry struck a Kiowa rancheria of one hundred and seventy-six lodges, the Indians retreating down the river on their approach. Company K, escorted by Lieutenant Heath's command, and accompanied by Colonel Carson, could not advance with the rapidity of the cavalry, as the cannoneers were dismounted, and the wheels tracking very narrow, caused the utmost attention to prevent their being overturned. The Indians from the Kiowa encampment retreated until they were reinforced by a large force of Commanches from a Comanche rancheria of five hundred lodges, a short distance below the "Adobe Walls," a location well known by all frontiersmen. The cavalry made a stand here, and were engaged in skirmishing with the enemy, when Company K came on the field with the two mountain howitzers. An order from Colonel
Carson to Lieutenant Pettis to "fling a few shell over thar!" indicating with his hand a large body of Indians who appeared to be about to charge into our forces, that officer immediately ordered "Battery halt! action right, load with shell — load!" Before the fourth discharge of the howitzers, the Indians had retreated out of range, and it was supposed that there would be no more fighting; but we counted without our host, for our animals had scarcely been watered when the enemy returned to the conflict. The horses of the cavalry were again placed in the "Adobe Walls," which were elevated enough to protect them from the rifle balls of the enemy, and the fight was soon at its height.

About the middle of the afternoon, Carson concluded to return to the Kiowa village that we had passed through in the morning, contrary to the wishes of his officers, who were anxious to advance to the Commanche village, which was less than a mile in our front. The return column consisted of the cavalry horses, the number four of each set of fours leading the other three horses, with the howitzers in the rear, the dismounted cavalry acting as
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skirmishers on the front, rear and either flank. The firing was continued from each side until the village was reached, when our troops proceeded to destroy it, which was effectually done before dark.

A further march of about four miles, and the wagon train was reached, the safety of which had been the subject of much anxiety during the day. The gun carriages and ammunition carts of Company K were packed with the wounded on their return from the Kiowa village. A rest was had the next day, which was sadly needed, as the whole command had been marching and fighting about twenty-seven hours, on a few broken hard tack and a slice of salt pork each. The second day after the fight, Carson concluded to return to Fort Bascom, which post was reached in twenty-one days. Here the command remained until orders were received from General Carleton, commanding the department, and Company K was ordered to Fort Union, as the term of service of nearly all the men had expired. By the first of February, 1865, all the enlisted men of the company had been mustered out of service, and Lieutenant Pettis, the last man of his regiment, was ordered to
report to the mustering officer at Santa Fé, with all the records of his company; and on the fifteenth of February, he was mustered out of service, and Company K, First Infantry, California Volunteers, had ceased to exist, having marched on foot during its term of service four thousand two hundred and forty-five miles.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

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PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1885.
REMINISCENCES OF SERVICE
WITH THE
TWELFTH RHODE ISLAND VOLUNTEERS,
AND A
MEMORIAL OF COL. GEORGE H. BROWNE.

BY
PARDON E. TILLINGHAST,
[Late Quartermaster Sergeant of the Twelfth Rhode Island Volunteers.]

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REMINISCENCES OF SERVICE
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TWELFTH RHODE ISLAND VOLUNTEERS.

The months of July, August, September and October of 1862, were stirring times in Rhode Island,—and in fact throughout the entire North. The vigorous onward movement of our army towards Richmond, which had been long and frequently promised, was still deferred. The decisive victory won by the Union forces over Lee’s army at Malvern Hills at great cost, which, in the judgment of every officer in the Army of the Potomac save one, and he the chief, should have been immediately followed by a determined advance towards the rebel stronghold, which was only about a day’s march distant, was supplemented by the now somewhat stereotyped order to “fall back,” thus presenting the not altogether inspiring military spec-
tacle of a victorious army running away from its defeated and thoroughly demoralized enemy.

General Pope's campaign in Northern Virginia, inaugurated with a great flourish of trumpets, had resulted disastrously; the rebel army was greatly encouraged by the inactivity and the vacillating conduct of their opponents, and had commenced a vigorous aggressive movement. The National capital was again in imminent peril, causing a feverish excitement throughout the country; Baltimore and Cincinnati were seriously threatened, and a great crisis was evidently at hand. Vigorous measures must be adopted at once, or our boasted Republic would soon be a thing of the past.

The President, in view of the great emergency, had ordered drafts, amounting in the aggregate to six hundred thousand men, one-half thereof for three years, and the other half for nine months, the latter to be drawn from the enrolled militia; and the utmost activity everywhere prevailed in connection with the raising, equipping and forwarding of this vast army of recruits.

Rhode Island was thoroughly alive to the occasion,
determined not to be outdone by any of her sister States in meeting this new and pressing demand upon her loyalty and her resources; and meeting it too, if possible, without resort to a draft, which, of course, was obnoxious to the sentiments of the people. In order to promote enlistments, the stores in some places were closed at 3 p. m. each day; war meetings were held every evening, and the greatest enthusiasm was manifested. The whole State seemed to be one vast recruiting camp, and all the people, both male and female, to be engaged in the business. For it should ever be remembered, to the praise of the women of Rhode Island, that they were fully as loyal and as devoted to our country's cause during the rebellion, as were the men; and that in very many cases they suffered and sacrificed quite as much at home, though in different ways, as did their husbands and sons and brothers in the field.

In such a state of public feeling what could I, a young unmarried man, do consistent with a fair amount of self-respect but enlist? Evidently nothing; and so I left the teacher's desk and enlisted as a private in Company C, Eleventh Rhode Island Vol-
unteers, under Captain Charles W. Thrasher. I was detailed for service in the quartermaster's department under Lieutenant John L. Clark, and shortly after was transferred with him (I never knew why) to the Twelfth, and was appointed by Colonel Browne to the office of Quartermaster Sergeant.

Camp Stevens, in Providence, was a lively place during the latter part of September and the first part of October, 1862. The Eleventh and Twelfth regiments were both encamped there together during a part of this time, preparatory to their departure for the seat of war. The former left on Monday, October sixth, and the latter on Tuesday, October twenty-first.

The Twelfth Regiment was composed mainly of good Rhode Island material, and was officered by intelligent, patriotic and brave-hearted men. There were representatives from nearly all of the ordinary walks and callings of life, thus furnishing the command with facilities for almost any emergency; and it was proverbial that whatever could be done by anybody could be done by some one in this regi-
ment. The officers and the privates were well disposed towards each other; there was a prevalent spirit of prompt obedience to orders; and in general a manifest disposition on the part of all to make themselves useful and serviceable both to the Government and to each other.

A journey of seventy-seven hours from Providence, partly by rail, partly by water, and partly on foot, brought this newly-formed regiment to Camp Chase, which was situated across the Potomac from Washington, in the neighborhood of Arlington Heights. The work of pitching our tents was at once commenced and rapidly pushed forward. But before it was completed, a violent storm of wind and rain broke upon us which continued for nearly two days without intermission. And such a storm! I think I never saw the like before or since. It did not simply rain, but it came down in great broad sheets of water; it poured; it came in great gusts. And then the wind—it whirled, it roared, it got upon its giant legs, and fairly howled with rage as the weary hours of that first night in camp wore away.
And such a sorry sight as that camp presented the next morning was not calculated to promote one's military enthusiasm, to say the least. Many of the tents, all of which had been hastily erected, had been blown down during the night, and the drenched and shivering inmates were wandering about in search of shelter or assistance in again erecting their uncertain habitations. Baggage and camp equipage were scattered in all directions, and confusion held high carnival generally. As if this were not enough for beginners, we were also treated to our first installment of Virginia mud, which covered the entire surface of the ground to a depth of two or three inches. No description of this unique article, however, is necessary here. It is perhaps needless to say that our first impressions of a soldier's life in the "Sunny South" were not altogether favorable.

But this storm, like all others, came to an end, and the bright, warm sunshine, together with the diligence of many busy hands, soon repaired most of the damage; so that the regiment was able to appear on brigade review in gallant style, on Tuesday, the twenty-eighth of October, the fourth day
after our arrival, before the venerable General Casey, in whose division it had been brigaded.

One week was the length of our stay at Camp Chase, at the end of which brief period we folded our tents and made a "Sabbath day's journey," although somewhat longer than that permitted by the Jewish economy on that sacred day, to Fairfax Seminary. (I may remark in passing that perhaps not the most scrupulous regard was had by most of the commanders who conducted the operations of our armies, either to the Jewish or Christian economy concerning the Sabbath day). This proved to be a charming location, indeed. The land was high, overlooking the broad Potomac for a long distance; the city of Alexandria, situated two miles to the south, was in full view, while in the distance on our left was the magnificent dome of the capitol at Washington. The land sloped in a broad, undulating sweep towards the Potomac in front of us; the large and dignified brick buildings of Fairfax Seminary, then used as a hospital, were situated just to the north, in the rear, surrounded by a stately grove of trees (which, sad to say, speedily succumbed to the soldier's axe);
several fine country residences were scattered about in the immediate vicinity, evidently the recent homes of affluence and luxury, but now abandoned to the tender mercies of strangers in arms, being used mainly by general and field officers, with their staffs, for headquarters. And although their owners were rebels fighting against the Government, I must, nevertheless, confess to a strong feeling of sympathy which I then had for them, and thousands like them, in the untold and untellable distress, privation and suffering which they and their families must have experienced in being driven as exiles from their homes and firesides, their property appropriated to the use of their enemies, and what they, in the main, honestly considered their inalienable rights, taken from them. But such is and will continue to be the fate of war.

Regiments of soldiers were on every side of us. A few rods in front was the Fifteenth Connecticut, Colonel Wright; in the rear was the Thirteenth New Hampshire, Colonel Stevens; on the right the Twenty-seventh New Jersey, Colonel Mindil; and on the left a stalwart regiment of "six footers" from
Maine; while for a mile or more in all directions little else was visible but camps of soldiers. Truly this was a "tented field." Everything about our new camp, which was named Camp Casey, was soon put in the best of order, cleanliness and good order being prime virtues with Colonel Browne, and always being strenuously insisted on.

Our company was detailed each day at first for picket duty on the long line at the front near Cloud's Mills, which was about five miles distant; but subsequently the entire regiment performed this duty for twenty-four hours at a time, alternating with the other regiments of the brigade. The regiment was diligently perfecting itself in the manual of arms, and a military air and bearing were everywhere apparent. We had now commenced soldiering in good earnest. My principal duties, under the direction of the quartermaster, were to see that the commissary department was kept constantly supplied with everything in the way of subsistence which the army regulations allowed. Washington and Alexandria were the great reservoirs of these supplies, and to
one or the other of these places I went three or four times a week, accompanied by two or more four mule teams, with which to haul the stores to camp. The great army bakery was in the basement of the capitol building, whither we went for our supply of bread. And I think I do not exaggerate by saying that I have seen a line of army wagons half a mile or more in length, each awaiting its turn to be filled with the nice brown loaves. I need hardly say that after leaving the vicinity of Washington we bade an enforced good-bye to soft bread.

On one of my journeys to Alexandria, after getting my teams loaded with rations, I took a stroll about the somewhat antiquated city, visiting places of interest, amongst which was the Marshall House, where the brave Colonel Ellsworth met his terrible fate, and from which house the entire banisters of the stairs which he ascended in going to the roof to haul down a rebel flag, had been carried away piecemeal by visitors, as mementoes of the tragic event. Other parts of the building had also been sadly mutilated for the same purpose. But the stars and stripes had permanently supplanted the rebel flag hauled
down by the lamented Ellsworth, and were proudly floating from that now historic building.

I also visited another place of interest, but with what different feelings I will not attempt to relate. It was a large block which bore the following prominent sign: "Price, Birch & Co., Dealers in Slaves." Connected with it was a huge pen to hold the slaves, and an auction block from which thousands doubtless had been bought and sold. But for this establishment and what it represented, neither the tragic scene at the Marshall House nor the gigantic military operations then going on from one end of the country to the other, would ever have been witnessed.

I was also mail-carrier for the regiment to and from the post office in Alexandria, and was always cheerfully received on my return with a heavy mail; for amongst the chief delights of a soldier was a letter from home. As there was no salary attached to this branch of the mail service I was not accused of offensive partisanship, but permitted to hold the office to the end of my term of enlistment.

November 27, 1862, was recognized by us as
Thanksgiving day, although the turkey, without which no Yankee can properly observe the day, was conspicuous only by its absence. The usual amusements of the occasion, however, including a sack race between two men, each enveloped in a bed-sack drawn up and tied under his chin, were engaged in and greatly enjoyed. The governor's proclamation was read by Chaplain Field, and appropriate religious services were conducted by him in front of headquarters.

As it had been currently rumored for some time that Camp Casey was to be our winter quarters, the boys had taken great pains to make their habitations as snug and cozy as possible for the rapidly approaching cold weather. The non-commissioned staff, of which I was a member, appropriated to their use a roofless negro hut in the rear of the stately old mansion house which was occupied by the colonel and staff for headquarters, and by using the fly of a large tent for a roof, and otherwise improving it, we converted it into very comfortable quarters, anticipating quite a jolly time therein during the winter. The mess consisted of Sergeant Major Daniel R. Ballou,
subsequently promoted to the office of lieutenant for bravery at the battle of Fredericksburg; Commissary Sergeant Amasa F. Eddy; Quartermaster's Clerk Erastus Richardson; the Quartermaster Sergeant, and William, the colored boy.

But alas for all plans which have no firmer base than rumors in the army. For the regiment had no more than fully settled down to housekeeping for the winter, when, on Sunday, November thirtieth, orders were received that Colonel Wright's brigade, of which the Twelfth Rhode Island was a part, would move to the front the next day at twelve o'clock. As to their destination, no one knew save Colonel Browne, if indeed he did, and, as a matter of course, speculations and conjectures of all sorts were freely indulged in. "Shelter tents" were issued at once, the men were ordered to provide themselves with three days' cooked rations and have everything in readiness to move promptly at the appointed time. Truly, "there was hurrying to and fro, and gathering in hot haste," each one busily making ready for his unknown journey. There was but very little grumbling about leaving our nicely arranged camp and
beautiful situation, although we had but very recently received what seemed to be almost a positive promise that these should be our winter quarters.

The baggage was reduced to the lowest marching standard, and the men ordered to take nothing in their knapsacks except what they actually needed. The consequence was that a large portion of their “traps” had to be left behind, and judging from the number of officers’ trunks which I shipped to Rhode Island after the regiment left, I doubt not that more dress uniforms adorned the wardrobes at home than their owners in the field. Such things look exceedingly nice on dress parade or review, but they are not altogether useful on a forced march or in a fight.

The hour of departure having arrived, the companies marched from their several streets, the regimental line was formed, and all was in readiness for a move. I must confess to an almost overwhelming feeling of loneliness as I saw the long soldierly column moving off, led by the splendid band of the Thirteenth New Hampshire, for amongst other things I thought it quite probable that before I should again see them, their ranks might be thinned by the terrible
TWELFTH RHODE ISLAND.

shock of battle. And so, alas! they were. But having received orders from the colonel to remain in charge of the camp, which remained as before, except that its occupants were gone, the tents being all left standing, I had no alternative but to obey. About seventy men were left in the camp, all of whom, with the exception of the quartermaster's clerk and myself, were on the sick list. Truly this was "a sick house with no doctor," for the surgeon and each of his assistants had gone forward with the regiment. We were cheered, however, just at evening by the return of our kind-hearted assistant surgeon, Doctor Prosper K. Hutchinson, now long since gone to his reward, who was sent back to remain with the sick ones until they should be able to join their comrades. The clerk and myself now appropriated the colonel's somewhat luxurious quarters to our use, and as we had plenty of provisions and a good cook, there was no occasion for us to complain of our fate.

The fourth day after the regiment left, winter set in in good earnest. Snow fell to the depth of several inches, and the weather was bitterly cold and severe. I contrasted my comfortable quarters, as I
sat by a blazing wood fire at night, with those of my comrades huddled in shelter tents and shivering from cold, somewhere on their tedious march to the front, and heartily pitied, while I could not alleviate, their condition. With the aid of some of the convalescents I struck the tents, turned over the camp stores and equipage, except a small part which was to go forward to the quartermaster's department in Washington, settled my accounts with the Government, and, through the kindness of the quartermaster of the One Hundred and Eleventh New York, who loaned me the use of his teams, hauled the balance of the baggage to Alexandria, placed it on board a boat for Acquia Creek, and on the seventeenth of December took leave of Camp Casey, and with thirteen men went forward to join my regiment. It was found encamped near General Sumner's headquarters on the heights opposite Fredericksburg, which place I learned it reached after a week's march from Camp Casey, travelling upwards of sixty miles—part of the time through the mud, and part thereof through the snow and over the frozen ground. My friend, Captain Lapham, who experienced the hardships of
this never-to-be-forgotten march, has already vividly described it to you in his admirable paper on the Twelfth Rhode Island.

The terrible battle of Fredericksburg had been fought three days before my arrival at Falmouth, and I knew of it only from others and from the fearful havoc which it had made in the ranks of my comrades, upwards of one-fifth of the entire regiment having been either killed, wounded, or found missing at the close of that sanguinary contest. The part taken by the gallant Twelfth has also been graphically portrayed in the paper just referred to, by one who took an honorable part therein, and it would be presumption in me to attempt a word in addition.

The great Army of the Potomac, now upwards of one hundred thousand strong, was stretched along the eastern bank of the Rappahannock from Falmouth southward to, and including, General Franklin's division, and for miles there was but little space between the regimental camps of this mighty host. Our picket line was on the left bank of the river, while that of the enemy was on the right in plain sight, and for the most part the two lines were within
reach of each other's rifles. But there was little firing done, it seeming to be tacitly understood that their principal business was to mutually watch, instead of shoot, each other. Anxious to see how rebels in arms looked, I rode the length of our picket line and inspected them as best I could, from this tolerably safe distance, and became satisfied that a nearer approach was undesirable.

Our base of supplies was Aquia Creek, about fifteen miles in our rear, towards Washington, and thither I had to frequently go for our subsistence. The trains to this place were daily laden with the sick and wounded on their way to the great hospitals in and around Washington. And some of the sights that I saw in connection with the removal of our poor, maimed, sick and dying soldiers, shortly after the terrible battle, would be too painful to relate. I do not mean that they were not as well treated and as kindly cared for as was practicable under the circumstances, but that from their great numbers, the inadequate means for handling them, and the distance over which they had to be transported in crowded box cars and filthy steamboats before much
could be done for them, it was impossible but that their sufferings in many cases should be of the most aggravated character.

Our situation while in front of Fredericksburg was anything but comfortable. The men lived in all sorts of rudely constructed cabins, bough-houses and even subterranean huts, having no tents save the miserable misnamed shelter tents, which were used only as roofs for the conglomerate of structures which their ingenuity had devised. The fire-places were made of logs cemented and plastered with mud, and the chimneys mainly with empty barrels set on top of each other, (the heads being first knocked out,) and they also cemented together and plastered with mud. This Virginia mud, when thoroughly dried by the fire, is almost as hard as common brick. The water which we had to use and drink here was simply execrable. I don't think it was so bad as that in the Cove Basin, but it had a very similar appearance. Each little spring and rivulet were eagerly sought and constantly used by continual streams of soldiers, necessarily keeping them in a perturbed and more or less filthy condition; and besides, it was impossi-
ble that some portion of the vast amount of offal accumulating from this great army should not find its way into these sources of our water supply. This was specially so when, as frequently happened, several regiments were encamped on the same little stream. Much sickness was caused during our uncomfortable stay here by this detestable water.

On the sixteenth of January, 1863, we received marching orders, but were directed to remain in camp, simply holding ourselves in readiness to move at short notice. The line of march of the right grand division commenced on January nineteenth and was continued through the twentieth. Regiment after regiment, followed by long strings of batteries, continued to move directly past our camp all day long, going to the right. Another great battle was supposed to be imminent. But alas for human plans; whether made by great generals or by persons unknown to fame, they are exceedingly liable to be thwarted. On the afternoon of the twentieth a cold northeast storm of wind, snow, sleet and rain came on and continued with increasing force for more than thirty-six hours, which necessarily put an end to the
strategic movement of General Burnside, for the roads became utterly impassable for the artillery, and practically so for all military purposes. After floundering about in the clayey mire for three days, the brave fellows came tramping back, weary and thoroughly disgusted, and again took up their abode in their wretched old quarters. Our gallant General Burnside was now relieved of the command of the great Army of the Potomac, and General Hooker appointed to succeed him.

On the afternoon of February ninth, we broke camp and took the cars for Acquia Creek, en route for Fortress Monroe, as was supposed, but really for Newport News. There was hilarious rejoicing on all hands at the prospect of at last getting away from our abominable quarters. The huts were set on fire; bonfires were made from the great piles of combustible débris which had accumulated during the winter; the rude barns which had sheltered our horses and mules added to the conflagration, and for an hour or so before embarking we held high carnival amidst the smoking ruins of "Camp Misery." At Acquia Creek we went on board the transport
steamers Metamora and Juniata, and the next morning steamed down the broad Potomac.

The agreeable change of situation, together with the pleasant sail, were very invigorating, and the men seemed almost to forget that they were soldiers, and to imagine themselves on some holiday excursion. Arriving off Fortress Monroe at four A. M. of the second day out, we awaited orders from General Dix, which being received we proceeded to Newport News and disembarked. We had at last got beyond Virginia mud, though still in Virginia, the soil at this place being light and sandy, and the ground for miles almost as level as Dexter Training Ground.

The schooner Elizabeth and Helen from Providence, which we had long been expecting, arrived about the same time. She brought a little more than three hundred boxes from friends at home for our regiment, and our portion of the cargo of vegetables was about ninety barrels. So that, altogether, we had a "right smart heap" of the good things from home. The contents of the boxes being largely of a very perishable nature, were considerably dam-
aged on account of having been so long on the journey. But we made the best of it, and enjoyed the unpacking of those boxes quite as much, without doubt, as our friends at home did the packing. Nothing could have been more beneficial to us than the generous supply of vegetables which we received, having subsisted mainly on salt meats and hard-tack while at Fredericksburg.

"A" tents were here issued to the companies; everything was cheerful and tidy about the camp, and we seemed to be living in a new world. My duties called me to Fortress Monroe nearly every day, which gave me a delightful little sail, together with charming scenery and plenty of work. The scene of the exciting and unequal contest between the Merrimac and the Cumberland, in Hampton Roads in March, 1862, was immediately in front of us; and about a mile from the shore, in the direction of Norfolk, could be seen a portion of the masts of the latter, emerging from the water.

After a stay of precisely six weeks at Newport News, during which time nothing of very great importance transpired in the Ninth Army Corps,
all of which were encamped at this delightful place, the Second Brigade, of which the Twelfth was a part, was ordered to the far-off city of Lexington, Kentucky. Our regiment at once embarked on the steamer Long Island for Baltimore, whence we were to go by rail to the West. Some of the scenes on board that steamer at night were ludicrous in the extreme. I have heard of one's "hair standing seven ways for Sunday," of things being "at sixes and sevens," and "all heads and points," but I must aver that the packing of the men on that boat exceeded anything I had ever seen in the way of mixing up human beings. They bestowed themselves in every conceivable position. It was almost an impossibility to go three steps without causing some one to cry out, "Keep off from me!" or, "O, my fingers!" an oath generally preceding the expression, just for the sake of making it emphatic. The head of a soldier might frequently be seen mixed in with the feet of two or three of his immediate neighbors. And in one case I discovered two men lying directly under one of the horses, fast asleep. I soon ascertained, however, that they had been imbibing too freely of
poor whiskey, and that therefore there was probably little immediate danger from their situation.

A sail of sixteen hours brought us to Baltimore, and a ride of three hundred and forty miles over the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad took us to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where we arrived at twelve o'clock on Saturday night, March twenty-eighth, tired and hungry. To our great joy we were immediately invited into the large and beautifully decorated hall occupied by the Soldiers’ Relief Society, where we found a splendid supper awaiting us. There were twelve tables, each running the entire length of the hall, each arranged to accommodate one hundred men, and all richly laden with an abundance of delicious food and fruit. Compliments were few and exceedingly brief, but the rattle of crockery and knives and forks was long and continuous. The Seventh Rhode Island was in the hall at the same time, and you may be assured that Little Rhody showed an unbroken front here, as she had already done under more trying circumstances elsewhere. Suspended from the front of the platform was the following in large letters: "Pitts-
burgh Welcomes Her Country's Defenders;" while underneath this was "Roanoke, Newbern, Fredericksburg, Burnside, and the Ninth Army Corps."

After the sumptuous repast was ended, Colonel Browne stepped upon the platform, and in a few appropriate and feeling remarks returned his thanks to the citizens of Pittsburgh for their hospitality to the soldiers of Rhode Island, and closed by proposing three cheers for our benefactors, which were given with a roar that seemed almost to raise the roof. We then marched out to make-room for others that were waiting, the remainder of our brigade being near by. One of the waiters, who, I was informed, was the daughter of one of the first citizens of the city, told me that this hall had not been closed night or day for more than a week, and that every soldier who had passed through the city for a long time had partaken of their bounty if he chose to do so. Nearly five thousand had been fed during the past twelve hours, and still there was an abundance.

At ten A. M. we took the cars for Cincinnati, which we reached after a pleasant ride of about
four hundred miles through the most delightful section of country we had yet seen. We almost imagined ourselves making one of "Perham's Grand Excursions to the West." Everywhere along the route we met with tokens of welcome and encouragement. White handkerchiefs fluttered from ten thousand fair hands, while the stars and stripes were displayed "from cottage, hall and tower," in great profusion. At Steubenville, Ohio, I should judge the inhabitants were nearly all at the depot on our arrival, where they greeted us with cheer upon cheer, besides innumerable expressions of loyalty and good will. Five long trains of cars, containing the five regiments of our brigade, kept within a short distance of each other during this entire journey, and when the forward train stopped, the others would come up within a few rods of each other, thus constituting an almost unbroken train for about two miles. The impromptu foraging parties that emerged from each of those trains whenever they came to a brief halt, it is unnecessary to describe to veterans.

The brigade received a perfect ovation at Cincinnati. The streets were crowded with the enthusiasm-
tic populace, many buildings were brilliantly illuminated, and the entire conduct of the people proved most conclusively that the Union sentiment here was dominant. While passing along one of the streets our regiment was treated to a perfect shower of nice white handkerchiefs, which were thrown from the windows of a large brick block by a company of ladies. Each of these souvenirs was delicately perfumed and bore the name of the fair donor. We were also treated to another supper here, which, had we not fared so very sumptuously at Pittsburgh, would have been pronounced the ne plus ultra of feasts. After eating till we could eat no more, a fresh supply was brought on with which to fill our empty haversacks for the remainder of the journey.

I was busily occupied all night, in company with a squad of men, in transferring the baggage across the river to Covington in ferry-boats, and loading it on board the train which was to convey us to Lexington, which city we reached the following day, having been six days on the journey from Newport News. We encamped on the State Fair Grounds,
west of the city, a spacious and charming location, adorned with elegant shade trees, and surrounded with the stately suburban residences of some of the chivalry of Kentucky. You may perhaps infer that we were somewhat influenced by our aristocratic surroundings when I inform you that while here, our fire-wood consisted mainly of black-walnut, the ordinary fence-rails in that vicinity being composed of that material.

The Sunday following our arrival here, the regiment was visited and briefly addressed by the venerable General Leslie Coombs, of Kentuckey, that staunch and life-long enemy of secession, who was a friend and old acquaintance of Colonel Browne. His tall and manly form, his long, flowing white hair, and his stately bearing, together with his stirring and patriotic remarks in favor of the preservation of the Union and the vigorous prosecution of the war, made an impression upon my mind that I shall never forget.

After a week's sojourn here, our brigade turned its face southward and commenced what subsequently proved to be a long series of marches back
and forth across the State, protecting exposed points and preparing for a probable meeting with the rebels either under General Breckenridge or General Morgan, who were constantly menacing the southern borders of the State. And besides, the mountainous districts thereof were infested with marauding bands, mainly under the general direction of Morgan, who were carrying on a guerilla warfare both against the Unionists of the State, who constituted a majority of all the people, and also against the Union forces stationed there, thus keeping the citizens in a constant state of anxiety and trepidation. The pillaging and murdering of the peaceable and inoffensive citizens of that would-be loyal State by these organized bands of ruffians, constitute to my mind one of the darkest pictures of our civil war.

Twenty-two miles over a macadamized road, through the celebrated "Blue Grass" region, brought us to Winchester, a pleasant inland village in Clarke county, where we were allowed to remain for the full period of eight days. Our next stopping place was at Richmond, a very inviting post-village of about fifteen hundred inhabitants in Madison county,
twenty miles south of Winchester. This march, which occupied two days, took us through some of the most picturesque natural scenery to be found in the State, including Boonesboro, the scene of Daniel Boone's famous exploits with the Indians, at which place the entire brigade crossed the Kentucky river in a common scow which would hold only fifty men at a time. This delayed us for at least half a day, so that we had a good view of the wild surroundings.

I must here relate a personal incident. After arriving at Richmond, I was sent back to Winchester to bring forward some stores and supplies which had been necessarily left there. Our teams had not arrived from Covington, and I was detained for three days awaiting their appearance. I was stopping at the house of one Mr. Bush, a well-to-do planter, whose acquaintance I had made while the regiment was encamped there. On the third night of my stay with him I was suddenly aroused from a sound sleep at one o'clock by two soldiers who had entered my room, and who immediately confronted me, one with a drawn sword, and the other with a revolver, which he held in one hand, and a lighted candle in the
other. They said nothing, except to caution me that any attempt to move from my present position would be at the peril of my life. One of them commenced to search my clothes, while the other stood guard over me, holding his glistering revolver uncomfortably near my head. I thought my hour had probably come, taking it for granted that the men were rebel soldiers and had taken advantage of my isolated situation to first rob and then dispatch me. But I finally mustered courage enough to ask them their business as politely as I knew how, and was promptly informed, greatly to my surprise, that I was a rebel spy and their prisoner and that they were Union soldiers sent there to arrest me. I at once felt relieved, knowing that I could readily establish my identity, and furthermore that I was tolerably safe anyway in the hands of Union soldiers. Mr. Bush, who had followed them into the room in his night-clothes, immediately assured them that I was not a rebel spy, or even a rebel, but a member of the Twelfth Rhode Island Volunteers, and manifested considerable indignation that he should even be suspected of harboring rebel spies. Some papers and
letters in my pockets supported the testimony of my host, and after considerable time spent in examining them, my brave (?) captors concluded that I was not the man they were looking for, and left me without so much as an apology for their mistake, to ponder upon my deceitful appearance. I learned the next day that two rebel spies had in fact been prowling about the neighborhood for several days, and that these officers (for such they were) had been searching for them.

A week at Richmond, three days at Paint Lick Creek, a tributary of the Cumberland, a week at Lancaster, and on we go, still southward, till we reach Crab Orchard, a Kentucky watering place of considerable note, where we remained for ten days. It was not every brigade that was allowed to spend this length of time at a fashionable southern watering place during the sultry days of June, at the expense of the Government.

Instead of proceeding still further southward, as had been expected, we were here suddenly ordered to execute a "right about face," and retrace our steps to Nicholasville, a point twelve miles south of Lex-
ington, where it was understood we were to take the cars en route for the far-off city of Vicksburg, where we were to assist General Grant in the siege against that rebel stronghold. This was not encouraging news to soldiers whose term of enlistment would expire in a little more than thirty days. Back we went, however, through the dust and heat, making the distance in two long days, the boys frequently rallying each other on the march with the remarks: "It's all in the nine months, boys;" and, "Why did you come for a soldier?"

Just as we got in sight of Nicholasville another surprise awaited us. One of the General's aids came dashing up to Colonel Browne with orders detaching his regiment from the brigade and directing him to report to General Carter at Somerset, more than seventy miles away, without delay. Half of this distance lay directly back over the route we had just travelled. This was, indeed, provoking. But we were soldiers, and had learned that our first and principal duty was prompt and unquestioning obedience to orders. So we bade good-bye to the other regiments of our brigade by giving three hearty
cheers for each as they marched past us on their long journey to the West, and immediately turned our faces southward again and started for Somerset.

It then being nearly sunset, we bivouacked for the night as soon as we came to a convenient place, and resumed our backward march at daylight the next morning. The First Tennessee Battery and a regiment of mounted infantry soon joined us, and in company with them we reached Somerset, having gone by the way of Camp Dick Robinson and Hall's Gap, after a four days' march. In six successive days we had marched one hundred miles. And what was somewhat remarkable, we went into camp at the end of this time with not a man left behind.

After a stay of ten days at Somerset, during which time our base of supplies was at Stanford, thirty-three miles away, and could only be reached by our mule teams, we moved down to the Cumberland river, where we encamped on a high and precipitous bluff overlooking the river and the rugged mountainous scenery for a long distance. A brief rest and on, on we went again, bivouacking for a night on the battle-field of Mill Springs, where General
Zollicoffer met his fate; climbing the mountains with our heavily laden mule teams, building bridges, constructing roads, and making but slow progress over the roughest country that I ever saw. Several of my teams were capsized and rolled down a steep embankment, mules, drivers and all; others got mired in swamps, and it was with the greatest difficulty that they were ever extricated; but we pulled ourselves along in one way and another over a distance of thirty miles of this sort of country, and finally reached Jamestown (popularly known as "Jimtown"), on the southern border of Kentucky, on the twenty-third day of June, which place proved to be the end of our journey southward.

The Thirty-second Kentucky infantry, called the "thirty two-sters," Colonel Wolford's famous cavalry regiment, six hundred strong,—the most dare-devil set of fellows, probably, in the Union service,—together with two mounted regiments of infantry, here reported to Colonel Browne and were temporarily placed under his command, and everything made ready for a brush with the rebels, which was daily expected, General Morgan being reported just
in front of us with a large force. On the twenty-ninth of June our pickets were suddenly attacked and driven in by the enemy, causing the greatest excitement in camp. The long roll was instantly sounded; the men rushed to their companies with all possible speed; the regiment was formed in line of battle at a double-quick by Lieutenant Colonel Shaw, and all was ready for the fray. Company A, Captain Alexander, and Company C, Captain Allen, had been previously stationed about half a mile in front, on a road leading south towards the Cumberland river, where they had felled trees and erected a sort of rude barricade called Fort Alexander, in honor of the captain in command, which position they continued to hold.

The battery took a position on the Columbus road, on which the enemy was approaching; the other regiments were just in the rear, while Wolford’s cavalry went forward on a keen run, their famous commander being at least a hundred yards in front of his men when he passed our regiment, presenting, in connection with his headlong followers, a scene of the wildest excitement. He speedily came in con-
tact with the enemy,—whose particular object at this time was the capture of our battery,—drove them back without bringing on a general engagement, captured a score or more of prisoners, and so thoroughly routed and scattered the enemy by his bold and vigorous dash, that they made no further attempt to dispute the possession of this antiquated town with our forces until the morning of the fourth of July following.

Our quartermaster's train, however, was attacked two days later, on its way from Green river, whither it had been for supplies, by a guerrilla band of about fifty men; but as the train was guarded by a company of mounted infantry from the Seventh Ohio, the attack was repulsed after a vigorous contest, with some loss on both sides, and our provisions and quartermaster arrived in camp unharmed the next day, to the great joy of the regiment, who were nearly out of supplies.

On the third of July a battle was fought near Lebanon, which was a short distance to the north of us, between a portion of General Carter's forces and
those under General Morgan, in which quite a number were killed and several wounded.

We commenced the celebration of the glorious Fourth by forming in line of battle with alacrity at half-past three A.M., our pickets having been again driven in, and the rebels seeming determined to have a bout with us before we left Kentucky. And I think our men would as soon have fought as not on this occasion, being tired of the constant annoyance, and ready to prove to Kentucky bushwhackers what kind of stuff they were made of. But, fortunately for both sides doubtless, the rebels remained outside of "Jimtown," and our forces remained inside, resting on their arms all day, and momentarily expecting an attack, which, however, was not made. And on the fifth of July, General Carter, deciding doubtless that this part of the State was not worth fighting for any longer, abandoned it to the enemy and moved his forces northward; first to Somerset, and then to Stanford, our base of supplies, which he continued to hold. Somerset was again reached after three days of the most difficult marching we had ever experienced, a heavy rain storm being in progress
most of the time, rendering the movement of the artillery and heavy-laden army wagons well nigh impossible. With ten mules on one team, and two industrious swearers to drive them, I was only able to make a distance of two rods through the mire in the space of one whole hour, on one occasion during the first day of this march, which, by the way, was on Sunday.

Of course the army could move no faster than the wagon train on this march, as the rebels were immediately in our rear, ready to pounce upon us if a good opportunity was-offered.

Eight days of continuous marching, most of the time over the same route we had travelled twice, and some of it three times before, and we were again at Nicholasville, where our regiment took the cars for Cincinnati by the way of Lexington. Our term of service had expired, but at the request of our greatly beloved General Burnside, we remained at Cincinnati for a week to assist in protecting that much frightened city from the raids of the somewhat ubiquitous General Morgan, who had preceded us from "Jimtown" to that more populous and inviting
Another journey of a thousand miles — not, however, on foot — and the Twelfth Regiment was again at home.

MEMORIAL OF GEORGE H. BROWNE,

[Late Colonel of the Twelfth Regiment.]

Colonel George H. Browne departed this life at Providence on the twenty-seventh day of September, A. D. 1885, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, sincerely lamented by all who knew him. He was a Rhode Islander by birth and education; thoroughly imbued with the history and traditions of the State, and always identified himself with its best interests. Conservative, candid and outspoken, and an excellent judge of human nature, he was not easily deceived or led to do an unwise or even an injudicious act. To say that he was a wise, prudent and thoroughly conscientious man, is but to voice the common sentiment of all those who knew him.

Since September of 1862, I have known Colonel
Browne well, and been honored by his constant friendship. During the period of his service in the army, my duties brought me in almost daily contact with him; I was one of his mess during our Kentucky campaign, and had the opportunity to study his character and habits with deliberation; while since the war I have known him in the walks of private, professional and political life. And for stalwart manliness, transparent honesty and true nobility of character, I can unhesitatingly say that I have not known his superior.

As the commanding officer of the Twelfth Regiment, he at once inspired both the confidence and love of his men. His utmost energies were continually put forth for the efficiency and usefulness of his command, while his efforts for the personal welfare of each individual member thereof were proverbial. Indeed, in the latter respect he seemed more like a kind father watching over the welfare of his children, than a cold military commander issuing the stern edicts of war. It was his daily habit to go about the camp and personally inspect the same, frequently making his appearance in the tents and
huts of the privates as well as in the quarters of the officers, for the purpose of ascertaining their condition as to cleanliness and comfort; inquiring after the wants of the men; visiting the hospital and speaking words of hope and good cheer to those who were sick, and in many other ways seeking to minister to the welfare of his command. A single instance of his unselfish devotion to the good of his men illustrates this characteristic.

On Sunday, May 3, 1863, his regiment marched from Richmond, Kentucky, to Paint Lick Creek, a distance of twelve miles, through a drenching rain. Many of the men had become foot-sore or otherwise disabled by reason of the great amount of marching they had recently done, and some of these became unable to complete the journey; whereupon, Colonel Browne, Lieutenant Colonel Shaw, and other field officers, gave up their horses to the use of these disabled ones, and themselves tramped with the men through the mud and rain for a good part of this distance.

Colonel Browne was a brave man. He faced the guns of the enemy at Fredericksburg where the
battle waxed hottest, with as much apparent coolness as though simply facing his regiment on dress parade. A ball pierced his mantle; "the noise of battle hurtled in the air," and death-dealing missiles were flying thick about him, but he neither wavered nor blanched. Wherever his regiment was ordered to go, thither he promptly went in front of it, inspiring his followers with courage both by his genuine heroism and his manly words of cheer.

His bravery, however, was not of the ostentatious or noisy sort. It was more like the current of a still but deep-flowing river, which moves calmly but steadily onward, irresistibly drawing to itself, and unconsciously controlling all the lesser streams about it. He never paraded his virtues before his fellow-men, or posed as a hero or statesman for public applause. Indeed, he utterly scorned all attempts made by others for the sake of notoriety and position as vulgar and unworthy. He admired, however, and honestly won, the fame which follows generous and noble deeds, and not that which is sought after by the demagogue and the charlatan. He was notably considerate and courteous in his treatment of
his subordinates in office, never seeming to command, while in fact exercising the most perfect control.

Colonel Browne retained an abiding interest in the men of his regiment to the day of his death. His greetings to them on the street, in the marts of trade, and especially at their annual reunions, were always warm and hearty. A single incident will serve to illustrate his interest in their welfare. Meeting me one day last winter on Westminster street, he said: "Judge, I've got some good news to tell you," and invited me to step into a bookstore which he was then passing while he should reveal it. "Do you remember Sergeant ———, of Company ———?" said he, his face all aglow with that expression of happiness which was peculiar to him. "Yes, Colonel, I do; what about him?" "Why, he's been out West, and by diligence and skill in a profitable business which he there engaged in, first as clerk and subsequently as one of the firm, and now as the manager thereof, has actually made his fortune, and is to-day a rich and highly respected man. And he came to see me the other day and told me all about
it.” And then with much enthusiasm and honest pride in his manner, said: “Isn’t that good news from one of our boys?” Had this sergeant been his own son, he could hardly have manifested more joy in his prosperity.

His private benefactions to several of his men who had long been in indigent circumstances, are known and remembered by Him who said: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

There was no circumlocution or ambiguity in Colonel Browne’s methods. Whatever he had to do, he went about in a direct and business-like way, and prosecuted it to completion in the same straightforward manner. He had none of the arts or tricks of the demagogue, and was utterly incapable of double-dealing or hypocrisy. And no man whom I have ever known, more thoroughly detested these base qualities in others. He had no patience with shams or subterfuges of any sort whatsoever, and did not hesitate to frown upon them with indignation whenever and wherever they appeared. If diplomacy has been correctly defined as being the art of con-
cealing one's thoughts in his language, he never would have made a successful diplomat; for he always said just what he meant, and always meant just what he said.

Colonel Browne's abilities, both natural and acquired, were of a high order. He had a broad, vigorous and well-balanced mind, which had been thoroughly trained and disciplined to habits of logical and exact reasoning, and a power of analysis which led him to correct conclusions with almost mathematical certainty. He was not a superficial thinker, but always insisted on laying bare the very roots of the matter under consideration; and then gradually working upwards to natural and legitimate conclusions. His processes of reasoning were inductive rather than dogmatic. With such a mind, so constituted and developed, he was eminently fitted for positions of trust and responsibility, whether private or public, which fact the citizens both of his native town and State were not slow to learn and appreciate.

As a legislator he was diligent, prudent and conservative, possessing the courage of his convictions,
always exerting a large and salutary influence by his candor, integrity and good judgment, and readily won the confidence and esteem of his associates. Public office was with him a public trust, to be administered with strictest fidelity and care.

In his chosen profession, in which the strength of his vigorous manhood was spent, he attained eminence and preferment, being a recognized leader of the bar of this State for many years before his death. A safe and able counsellor, an ingenuous and convincing advocate and an honorable opponent, he brought to the practice of his profession those qualities which insure success. Quibbles and quirks and barren technicalities were an abomination to him as a foundation upon which to base an action or a defense. Like Solon, "who built his commonweal on equity's wide base," so he built his legal structures on the broad principles of justice, truth and right.

In 1874 he was elected to the high and honorable office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of this State by a legislature composed mainly of his political opponents, a monumental tribute to his integrity, learning and ability. He declined the office,
however, and remained in the profession which he had dignified and honored to the day of his death.

As a private citizen he was a man of unimpeachable character, generous impulses, and high and noble purposes. His life was pure and unostentatious, and his manner frank and undisguised. Let us ever cherish his memory, and strive to emulate his virtues.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE

War of the Rebellion,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
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BATTERY D,
FIRST RHODE ISLAND LIGHT ARTILLERY,

AT THE

BATTLE OF ANTIETAM,

SEPTEMBER 17, 1862.

BY

J. ALBERT MONROE,

[Late Lieutenant-Colonel of the First Rhode Island Light Artillery.]

PROVIDENCE:
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1886.
BATTERY D, AT THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM.

Although Battery D had a good and widespread army reputation, it was probably less known at home, here in Rhode Island, than any other of the eight batteries that formed the First Regiment Rhode Island Light Artillery, for the reason that the men composing it, having been recruited mainly from the towns of Warwick, Coventry, West Greenwich and Foster, had fewer friends in the thickly settled cities and towns, to take pride in narrating their exploits in the newspapers of the day, or to call the attention of editors to their deeds. In common with many other officers of the army, though exercising no rudeness, the commanding officer gave no encouragement to newspaper men to make notes in his camp, preferring to succeed or fail through the official record made by his superior officers, rather than to depend for reputation upon
the reports of irresponsible civilians whose kisses, it was well understood, more often were rewards for favors than otherwise.

Nearly every other battery, too, had among its members some one who acted as regular or occasional correspondent of at least one of the Providence daily papers, and who kept the doings of his particular battery before the public, while in Battery D there was not a single newspaper letter-writer. In a thorough search of the files of the *Providence Daily Journal* and the *Evening Press*, I have been unable to find a single letter from that organization, except one or two of my own, giving the names of men killed and wounded in action — nothing more.

However limited was its reputation at home, it was known in the corps of which it was a part, as one of the best of fighting batteries, and how well it merited such distinction it is the purpose of this paper to show.

While preparing the paper, I have come across the following in the *Providence Daily Journal* of September 23, 1862. The correspondent alluded to was a little mixed in his account, for there can be
no question but that Battery D was entitled to at least a part of the credit given in his story, and it is by no means strange that a mistake should be made; in fact, it is a wonder that war correspondents, particularly at this period of the war, got their accounts so nearly accurate as they did, for during and immediately after a battle one could not tell in the confusion one division, brigade or battery from another, unless personally acquainted with the officers connected with them, for the system of flags and badges by which different commands could be designated, had not then been adopted. It will be noticed that he falls into the natural error of connecting the battery with General Green’s command, or rather that he leads one to infer that it was a part of it, whereas there was no Rhode Island battery whatever attached to that division.

The article, under the head “A Rhode Island Battery in the Battle,” reads:

“The correspondent of the New York Herald says that the Third Rhode Island Battery was in General Green’s Division, better known as General Augur’s. We do not know which battery is meant. It was supported by General Geary’s old brigade, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Tyndale, of the Twenty-eighth
Pennsylvania Regiment, and by General Prince's old brigade, commanded by Colonel Steinrook, of the One Hundred and Ninth Pennsylvania Regiment. The letter says: 'The two brigades were at first posted as supports to the Third Rhode Island Battery. The battery was placed in position in front of a small Dunkard church. The guns, apparently without much infantry support at first, presented a tempting offer as trophies to the enemy, and consequently a large force soon advanced in splendid style, firing on the gunners, apparently determined to capture. But as they came within convenient distance, they found to their sorrow that these two brigades of General Green's had been in the meantime getting into position and had formed on a line on the right and left of the Rhode Island battery. As the rebels came from the woods in splendid style, as mentioned, they were met, not only by the galling fire of the artillery itself, but by a simultaneous fire of the infantry, which until then, was unperceived by the enemy. It is a comparatively easy undertaking for a large body of soldiers to capture a battery of artillery, however quick its fire, if undefended by infantry, because the advancing line soon shoots down the horses and the gunners, but it is quite another thing to capture guns and carry them from the field when they are well supported by infantry. And so in the present instance were those Rhode Island guns defended. The audacious rebels were driven back into the timber, where our infantry then advanced upon them, drove them out of it and occupied the woods themselves.

'The battery then wheeled to the left and poured a most destructive fire upon those retreating rebels and upon other rebel troops appearing on the left. The Twenty-seventh Indiana Regiment, which had been sent to participate in the last mentioned operation, fought fast and was compelled to retire before some of the other regiments, because the men had expended all their ammunition.
‘The Thirteenth New Jersey Regiment, which was present on a similar service, did excellent execution and remained in the woods until the command retired.

‘The rebel battery had been compelled to retire, the gunners leaving their limbers behind, and this position was held for a full hour, until, at nearly noon, the enemy came out in tremendous force in front of General Howard’s command of Sumner’s Corps, which had already got into action further to the left, and General Green’s Division being partially outflanked and subjected to a disastrous enfilading fire, was compelled to withdraw from the woods about a quarter of a mile, and did not actively participate in the battle during the remainder of the afternoon.’”

With this as a sort of preface, I will try to tell the story of Battery D at the battle of Antietam, which will describe, in its recital, more in detail what took place, so far as the artillery was concerned, at the time the correspondent speaks of.

September 13, 1862, the Army of the Potomac passed through the city of Frederick, Maryland. Lee’s army had but just left there, and we had understood that its presence had been warmly welcomed by the citizens generally. If I remember correctly, Frederick was then looked upon as a sort of hot-bed of secession in that section, the stronghold of the copperheads, and we looked forward to
our march through the city with considerable feeling of curiosity. I did not observe any special manifestations, either of joy or of disappointment, on the part of the people as we passed through, but there was displayed, on every hand, intense interest in our movement. The sidewalks of the street through which we marched were well filled with people, though by no means crowded, but the windows of the houses were thronged with eager observers.

The next day, the fourteenth, occurred the battle of South Mountain. During this action, Battery D was ordered to take position where it would be available in case of necessity. Although we were so situated as to be constantly under fire, the battery was not actually engaged at any time during the day, though firing an occasional shot; but our position was such that we had an excellent view of General Reno's movements, and we witnessed with intense satisfaction his charging lines of infantry as they made their assaults through the timber upon the enemy, who, under its protection, felt secure in his position on the mountain side.
The afternoon of the sixteenth found us in the vicinity of the field where was to take place the great battle of Antietam. The division of which Battery D formed a part, Doubleday’s Division, Hooker’s Corps, crossed the Antietam just before dark, and it was quite dark when we halted for the night. We struck off to the left from the road soon after crossing the stream, and marching quite a distance went into park at reduced intervals, with a number of other batteries. Our position was on cleared ground and on the summit of a commanding ridge, as we discovered the next morning. To our left and front was a heavy growth of timber, and as our infantry advanced into it to establish a picket line, a heavy skirmish took place. It had grown very dark then, and the flashes from the discharges of the small arms presented a beautiful sight. This took place but a few yards from us, and we knew that we were in the immediate presence of the enemy in force, and that by early dawn we would be struggling with him in battle on that very field. As a matter of fact, our lines were only a few yards apart, and during the night we made prisoners of
several rebel pickets who, in the darkness, stumbled upon our pickets.

The caissons, battery-wagon and forge of the battery were disposed of under cover of the hill, and quite a long distance to the rear of our bivouac. The officers' cook was directed to stay with the caissons and to bring up breakfast before daylight in the morning. The teams were not unhitched from the carriages, but the bridles of the horses were slipped, so as to give the animals a chance to feed. It was late when the horses were fed and the men had eaten their suppers. The officers contented themselves with a hasty bite that the cook brought up from the rear.

At length we were all stretched upon the ground, wrapped in our blankets, and everything was quiet except the snoring of the heavy sleepers, the munching of the horses as they ground the grain with their teeth, and the occasional firing of the pickets. At this period of the war, picket firing was very unpopular with both sides, and though the two lines might be only a little distance apart, it was not much indulged in. In the spring and early summer
of 1864, when the army marched through the Wilderness and entered upon the campaign that ended with the investment of Petersburg, the pickets made lively music whenever the lines were in close proximity, and it was seldom that the picket line was established or relieved without a number of casualties.

We were awakened before daylight by the cook, who had brought up a pail of steaming coffee, some johnny-cakes and "fixins," together with cups, plates and other table ware. A blanket was spread on the ground for a table-cloth, on which was placed the breakfast, and the officers gathered around it on their haunches. It was the early gray light that appeared just before the sun rises above the horizon, and we could little more than distinguish each other. We had not half finished our meal, but it had grown considerably lighter, and we could see the first rays of the sun lighting up the distant hilltops, when there was a sudden flash, and the air around us appeared to be alive with shot and shell from the enemy's artillery. The opposite hill seemed suddenly
to have become an active volcano, belching forth flame, smoke and scoriae.

The first shot apparently passed directly through our little breakfast party, not more than a foot or two above the blanket, and it struck the ground only a few feet from us. Every one dropped whatever he had in his hands, and looked around the group to see whose head was missing. So suddenly did the firing commence and so rapidly did shot follow shot, I felt lost for an instant.—I never knew how the others felt,—but I at once ordered Hugh Rider, my groom, to give me my mare, who was hitched only about ten feet distant, and by the time he got her to me I had fully recovered from my surprise.

At the first flash of the rebel guns the men sprang to their posts, the drivers adjusted the horses' bridles, the cannoneers took their equipments, and the only order necessary to give was "Action front!" which was quickly executed. Gibbons' Battery, Company B, Fourth United States Artillery, was on our left; Battery L, First New York Artillery, Captain J. A. Reynolds, was on our right, as was also
Gerrish's Battery, the First New Hampshire, under command of First Lieutenant F. M. Edgell. As quickly as possible every gun, twenty-four in number, fired in reply to the enemy.

I have always thought that but one battery opened upon us, though others believe there were two or three opposed to us. Whatever number there was, they must have found their position a warm one, for the gunners of three of these (our batteries) could not be excelled for marksmanship, estimation of distances, and all the good qualities that go to make a skillful gunner. The winter previous they had been exercised by Captain Gibbon in firing at target, sighting, etc., and they had acquired great proficiency in these points, as stated in my paper, "Incidents of the War." The fuses of the shell and case were accurately timed, and the projectiles burst where it was intended that they should—among the guns and limbers of the enemy, who had stirred up a hornets' nest, and the hornets proved too many for him, for after an hour or so he ceased firing and withdrew his guns.

Soon after the firing commenced, Gibbon's battery
was ordered by General Hooker to a position in some ploughed ground in front of the wood at our left, where it was supported by General Gibbon’s brigade, and before the enemy’s guns in our front were silenced, Captain Reynolds’ battery was ordered to take position very near to it, but two other batteries advanced to the ground that Captain Reynolds had left, so that our fire was not diminished in the least.

Being on the extreme right of our line and somewhat to the rear of it, we were not very much exposed after the artillery ceased firing, for the enemy’s centre and the right of his left wing were so hotly pressed that he had neither the time nor the force to attempt the advance of his extreme left. He tried only to hold the ground that he already had possession of, and right manfully he resisted the assaults made upon him.

After the cessation of the artillery fire we had an easy time until about ten o’clock, when General Gibbon rode up to me and said: “Here, Captain; your men are good and fresh; General Hooker wants to see you.” I thought it pretty cool, this reference to the fresh condition of the men, for they had had
but little sleep for several nights, and they had been hard at work since early daylight, for after working the guns they were kept busy replenishing the ammunition chests and at other necessary work; besides, we were very short-handed, owing to heavy losses in previous actions. First directing Lieutenant Fisk to limber the pieces, I reported to General Hooker, whom I found at the point where a little while after he received the severe wound that incapacitated him for further service that day. Said he:

"Captain, you see that cornfield; the second one, I mean?"

"Yes, sir."

"You see the one beyond that?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I want you to go through the second one into the ploughed ground, and into the cornfield beyond, if you can get there. Now go and look out for your support; you will find some infantry there to support you."

The bullets were right thick where he gave me the order, for the position was an exposed one, just such as one would expect to find General Hooker in.
On the right was the Hagerstown turnpike, leading to Sharpsburg, running southerly and parallel with the line of vision. The ground was elevated and gave a fine view of a long stretch of open land that lay between two irregular lines of timber, the easterly one on the left, fringing the hills at the base of the South Mountain range, where the Antietam coursed along on its way to the Potomac; the other at the right, on the further side of the turnpike and to the westward, more clear and more open than the other. The trunks of the trees on the right were bare of branches and foliage from ten to twenty feet or more above the ground, and the rebels were distinctly seen in all the various regular and irregular formations of a battlefield. The Dunker church was in plain sight, and down to that point our troops, apparently, had driven the enemy into or across the turnpike. As far as the church the ground appeared to be a descending plain of cultivated land, beyond which it seemed undulating and uncertain in character.

There lay before the eye two-thirds of the distance to the bridge where General Burnside had then
already commenced his heavy assaults, for the purpose of carrying the bridge and effecting a lodgement of his corps on the west of the Antietam, so as to make a junction with our centre. Over this space the two lines had been putting forth all their energies since early light, and the ground was strewn with dead and wounded horses and men, clothing, knapsacks, canteens, muskets and side arms broken and twisted in every imaginable manner. The blue and the gray were indiscriminately mingled, either motionless and lifeless, or dragging their bleeding forms along in search of some less exposed situation. And there were those whose life-blood was fast or slowly ebbing away, with only strength sufficient to raise a supplicating arm for assistance or relief. The stretcher-bearers were straining every nerve to succor the helpless wounded, but it would have required a force in itself equal to a small army to have immediately removed them all; nor would their situation have been materially improved by removal, except that they would have been carried from the midst of the noise and excitement of the field, for the hospitals were crowded to repletion, and hundreds were
waiting their turns for the care of the surgeons. Down through this field of confusion went Battery D, closely followed by Lieutenant Edgell with the First New Hampshire battery.

Unless under great excitement horses will not step on the bodies of men, either alive or dead, but when attached to a battery they may go so close as to cause further injury to the wounded or mutilation to the dead by passing the wheels over them; so we picked our way carefully, avoiding running over the bodies strewn around on every hand, and looking out for the wounded. At one point we were moving along quite briskly, when a poor wounded fellow, clad in the dingy yellow, the "butternut," as we called it, so common to the uniforms of the rebel soldiers, with a countenance expressive of all the terror of one who expected no consideration, raised himself on one elbow and cried out, "O, don't run over me!" I said, as some of the men quickly but carefully removed him aside, "You shan't be hurt, my man," and an expression of relief and gratitude overspread his face that spoke more plainly and loudly than would have a thousand words of thanks.
We finally entered the cornfield designated by General Hooker, pushed through it and reached our advanced line. A little distance to our left and front was a brigade or division of infantry lying on the ground as if awaiting an attack. As the battery halted, a rifled projectile came tumbling through the air, which indicated that the rebel artillery was watching our movement. From the position the infantry were in, I judged there must be a strong force of the enemy in our immediate front, and questioned within myself the judiciousness of going into battery in so advanced a position. Riding to the infantry, I asked whose brigade it was, and was answered General Greene's. Looking around I saw the General approaching, and I asked him if he could support my battery. He answered in a low tone of voice that he was out of ammunition. I remember the thought coming into my mind that it was a mighty funny place for men without ammunition to be in, and that if they could hold their position with nothing in their cartridge-boxes, artillery surely ought to be able to hold theirs with limber chests
well packed and good men to work the guns, so I gave the order, "In battery."

What happened here may be best told in general terms by an extract from my official report of the part the division artillery took in the action. Captain Campbell, of Gibbon's battery, was the ranking artillery officer in the division, but he was severely wounded in the shoulder in the early part of the day, and his injury was so severe that it necessitated his removal to the hospital, and the command of the artillery consequently devolved upon me, and the report of its doings. Giving in detail the part taken by the batteries as the day progressed, the report says relative to Battery D:

"General Hooker directed the Rhode Island battery to move forward beyond the second cornfield, if practicable, and to take position as near to the woods as possible. The battery advanced, followed by Lieutenant Edgell's New Hampshire battery, to the position indicated, and went into battery about *— yards from the wood, the New Hampshire battery taking position at the left and about one hundred yards in rear. A battery of the enemy here opened on the Rhode Island battery, but no attention was paid to it, as their fire was perfectly ineffective. The Rhode Islanders

* This space is not filled in the original draft, which I retained. Probably it was so left in the draft and filled in the report after further consideration.
opened with one section upon a body of the enemy that was seen retreating just to the left of their front, and about an hundred and twenty-five yards distant, throwing them into great confusion. The other four guns opened with canister and case upon a large force advancing through the wood, which was very open, and with the assistance of the other two guns, which in a short time had accomplished their object, and the New Hampshire battery, checked the enemy, and he retired out of sight. While the Rhode Island battery was engaged in forcing back the enemy in the wood a body of sharpshooters had crept unobserved along a little ridge that ran diagonally to the battery front, and they opened a most deadly fire, killing and disabling many horses and men.

"As soon as possible a section was directed to open upon them with canister. Though this caused them no injury, as they lay down under cover of the ridge, it kept them almost silent, they firing only an occasional shot without effect. While this section was keeping the sharpshooters silent, the other four guns and the New Hampshire battery opened upon the enemy's battery that was still firing, and they soon silenced it. The Rhode Island battery was then ordered to limber to the rear. The sharpshooters took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded and opened upon the battery most briskly, killing and disabling a large number of horses.

"My own horse was pierced by six bullets, and Lieutenant Fiske's horse was also shot. On one piece all the horses but one lead horse were either killed or disabled, and the piece was drawn away by hand, by means of the prolonge. We were obliged to leave the limber, but it was subsequently recovered.

"The New Hampshire battery left at the same time, and went back to its original position. After securing to a caisson the piece belonging to the lost limber, the Rhode Island battery moved into the plot of ground between the second cornfield and the ploughed
land beyond the first cornfield, and went into battery with five guns, shelling the woods in front. After firing a short time it retired to its original position."

As soon as I found what a difficult and dangerous position we were in, I sent to General Greene a request to keep the sharpshooters down, so that we could get our guns away, but the answer came back that he could not, for want of ammunition. The cannoneers were rapidly leaving their posts on account of wounds, and the drivers were constantly employed in relieving their disabled horses.

I realized that we must get our guns away then, or leave them where they were. Not the slightest doubt arose in my mind but that the men would stick to their pieces, for at the Second Bull Run battle their nerve and steadiness were tested in a severer trial than I had ever expected to see artillery-men subjected to. Twice the enemy tried to wrest their guns from them, and in one of the attempts they got in among the cannoneers, but with a pluck that excited the highest enthusiasm among the infantry and several general officers who witnessed it, they took their guns away in safety, although
batteries both on their left and their right were abandoned on the field by the men serving with them. I knew my men, and I felt that we were making a needless sacrifice.

When the order "Limber to the rear" was given it was executed almost in the twinkling of an eye, but the men behind the ridge then had us at their mercy, and right well did they improve the time in showing the temper of it. They rose up in an unbroken line and poured their lead into us a perfect storm.

Lieutenant Parker took away four pieces with few losses, considering the fire we were under. One of Lieutenant Fiske's pieces had similar good fortune, but the other was less fortunate. As the horses made the turn to bring the limber to the trail of the piece, they seemed to melt like wax before a fire. Before a disabled horse could be disengaged from the team, another would fall. A pang of intense pain rushed over me as the thought forced itself upon my mind that the piece must be left, and the closing paragraph of a letter that I received from Governor Sprague the previous winter stood out before me as in letters of fire. He wrote:
"I am glad you speak so well for your command. We must rub out Bull Run, you know, in any action that takes place, and remember those guns must never be given up alive."

It is astonishing how much one can remember, of how much he can think and resolve upon in an incredibly short space of time. I said hurriedly: "Mr. Fiske, get some infantry, quick—I'll fix the prolonge," and away he went on his wounded horse like the wind. I turned to the piece and there were only "number eight" of the caisson, who had taken the place of the wounded gunner, and one cannoneer who had his head ducked beside the rim of one of the wheels of the carriage, supposing that he was shielding it from the bullets, but in fact he was doing nothing of the sort, for he was on the side of the wheel exposed to the enemy.

There was not a man in the company who was not perfectly familiar with every implement connected with the battery, their uses and with the prompt adjustment of them to their proper places. "Fix prolonge," I ordered. The gunner leaned over the trail to disengage the rope, but the cannoneer, hugging closer to the wheel, turned up his face and cried out, "We don't know how, sir." Spang—
spang—the bullets were hitting my mare, and as they struck her side they seemed to explode directly beneath me. Quick as thought my sword was raised over his head, and with all the energy of desperation I ordered, "Fix that prolonge, you!" It may seem to have been a strange place for the use of profanity: death on every side, the black fiend harvesting his victims by thousands, but the most appropriate language on such urgent occasions is that which will produce the desired effect. Many lives have been lost by the supercilious choice of polite language, when, if a little of the right kind of emphasis had been thrown in, they would have been saved.

Like lightning the cannoneer sprang to the trail, recovering in an instant his lost energies, and assisted the gunner in inserting the toggle of the prolonge. Just then Lieutenant Fiske returned with fifteen or twenty infantrymen, and the piece went to the rear amid the cheers of both friend and foe. Even our enemies arose in an unbroken line and gave us their cheers.

This was a severe ordeal for men to go through,
but from the humblest private to the commissioned officers there was no flinching. The poor private who crouched by the wheel never for a moment thought of leaving his piece without orders, and his momentary self-forgetfulness was only what may happen to the stoutest heart at the very point of some sudden emergency.

My first officer, Lieutenant George C. Harkness, was absent on sick leave on account of injuries received during the Second Bull Run battle; my second officer was off duty and took no part in the action. I had but two commissioned officers for duty, both second lieutenants—Lieutenant Stephen W. Fiske and Lieutenant Ezra K. Parker. I had the utmost confidence in Lieutenant Fiske. He had ably seconded my efforts from the day that I assumed command of the company, and in every emergency I had found him to be self-sacrificing, prompt and true as steel. As he came up with those infantrymen and relieved us from our perilous position, he seemed to me for the moment to be endowed with more than human qualities, and I could have embraced him there and then in gratitude and admiration.
My junior officer, Lieutenant Parker, and I had never understood each other, and our relations had not been of mutual confidence. He had always executed his prescribed duties, but it seemed to me he did so simply because he was so ordered by his superior officer. His position when all the officers were present for duty was a trying one to a man possessing pluck, grit and ambition. As chief of caissons his duty kept him in the immediate vicinity of the caissons, out of the way of direct harm in time of action, and his only responsibility was to keep within communicating distance and to see that the proper kind and quality of ammunition were sent forward as requisitions were made upon him from the front. A laggard would have enjoyed the position and congratulated himself upon having a soft thing, and I was uncertain as to whether or no Lieutenant Parker so considered it.

At Groveton he had executed a difficult order to blow up a disabled caisson, to prevent its falling into the hands of the enemy, under circumstances of great danger and personal peril, and at the second Bull Run he had handled his caissons with great
skill as the battery changed position from one portion of the field to another. During the march through Maryland he filled Lieutenant Harkness' place, and he had become more cheerful, apparently taking a decided interest in everything pertaining to the welfare of the command, but I was not prepared to see such consummate gallantry as he displayed on this occasion. I had always had a doubt as to what his conduct would be should we get into close quarters, but here, in one of the greatest of emergencies, he stood up to the scratch without flinching, and proved beyond question that he was thoroughly reliable. All his latent energies seemed suddenly to have awakened, and he handled the four pieces with a skill that would have put to blush many an old veteran, and he inspired the men with the same enthusiasm that he evidently felt himself. From that moment forward, I cherished for him the kindest of feelings, and had the deepest admiration for his pluck and grit.

Lieutenant Parker had halted the five pieces some distance to the rear of the position that we had been driven from, and thither we repaired with the
rescued piece, and halted to straighten out matters. My poor mare had kept on her feet through all the excitement, and she had borne me on her back thus far, but she could go no farther. Changing the saddle and bridle to the horse of one of the buglers, the bugler went to the rear with the equipments of his horse on his back.

Corporal Gray (Charles C.) who heartily enjoyed the excitement of a fight, here entered into the action on his own account. Four of his "number ones" had been picked off by the sharpshooters, and he had got thoroughly mad. Picking up a musket and stripping a nearly full cartridge-box from a dead body, he lay down and commenced firing back at the men who had inflicted so great loss upon us. His position getting rather warm, he rolled up a couple of bodies near him for breastworks, and continued his fire until his ammunition was exhausted, when he rejoined his piece.

Whipple (Benjamin N.), the artificer, came to the front here and assumed the duties of a cannoneer, acting as "number one." He might have remained at the rear with his forge, and there performed all
the duty that could have been expected of him, but he was not the man to let his comrades be sorely pressed and not lend a helping hand. His bravery cost him a severe wound across the back of one hand, and the loss of one or two fingers.

We arranged five pieces in fighting trim and went into position. Our line near the turnpike had just wavered, the field was filled with stragglers, and the utmost confusion prevailed. Men were fleeing to the rear in every direction, batteries were hastily moving in one direction and another, officers were riding hither and thither, endeavoring to check the fugitives, swearing and yelling like all possessed. I remember seeing Generals Gibbon and Griffin tearing about like mad men, though there seemed to be purpose in their madness. Our line had weakened, and if that human tide was not stayed, the day was lost. General Gibbon was one of the most accomplished artillery officers in the army, and he saw at a glance the crippled condition of Battery D. He said: "I see you are badly crippled, Captain, but you must help us out. Go into battery with four pieces," but we put in all five. Steadily the men
went at their work, and one not aware of the fact would never have supposed that they had but just emerged from a fire that could be compared only to hell itself. Discipline asserted its supremacy, however, order was established in a few minutes, and the rebels were held to the turnpike.

As soon as confidence appeared to be restored, I deemed it prudent to retire, that the men might get a breathing spell, so we returned to the position that we first occupied in the morning. During the short sleep that I had the night before, I dreamed that the action had come on, and that I lost my left leg. I was not in the least superstitious, and did not think of it until after we returned to the rear, when it struck me as a little singular that most of the bullets that had hit my mare had passed in front and rear of my left leg and close to it.

While the men were changing horses, regulating harnesses and refilling the boxes with ammunition, I sat down on the ground, under and against a good-sized tree, resting my head and back against its trunk. 'Twas then that I thought of the peculiarity of this circumstance, and instinctively drew my left
leg around farther behind the tree. I had got into a little doze, when I was awakened suddenly by a shot that must have been sent with a peculiar twist, for it dodged behind the tree I was under and struck the ground close to that apparently ill-fated left leg.

I gave up my attempt at dozing, but did not lose much, for in a little while the enemy’s artillery opened from the same hill that we had driven it from in the morning, and we had the most furious cannonade that had taken place up to that time since the commencement of the rebellion. A number of batteries, either by chance or by orders, had taken position both to the right and left of Battery D, and every gun belched forth its thunder until the enemy ceased his fire, long after dark. When hungry and weary we lay down that night, our aching frames were too tired to admit of sleep, and we had but a fitful rest. The morning dawned at last, and we lay there all day, expecting to renew the attack any moment, or to be called upon to repel an attack upon us. The first thing done was to send for our limber that was still on the field where we had left it.
While waiting and talking with my officers over the occurrences of the day before, an officer came up with two or three rebel prisoners under a proper guard. The officer halted his charge and saluting, said, "Captain, do you know either of the prisoners?" I scanned their features carefully, in the endeavor to recognize the face of some old acquaintance or friend, thinking that perhaps some old chum of my boyhood days or college companion had embraced the Southern cause, and having been taken a prisoner, desired to make himself and his situation known to me, in order to secure gentler treatment than he expected; but I failed to find a lineament in either countenance with which I had ever been familiar.

I told the officer that I did not know either of them, and he was about to move on, when one of them stooped over and after fumbling a moment or so about his trousers' legs, fished from beneath the lining of his boot leg a folded piece of paper which he held towards me, saying as he did so, "Perhaps, Cap'n, you will know this." I unfolded the paper, and sure enough I did know it. When we lay at
Fredericksburg a man by the name of ———, who had been detailed from the Seventh Wisconsin Volunteers to serve with Battery D, came to me one day and asked if I would object if he could manage to get detailed upon special duty as a spy. I tried to dissuade him from the notion, but he appeared to feel that in such service he would be in his true sphere and better fulfill his mission. A few days after, I received an order from "Division Headquarters" detailing ——— upon special duty, and immediately after he presented himself with a pass which read

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Head Quarters King's Division.
August 9th, 1862.

PASS John Cole

to Fredericksburg and through all lines, on duty for
these Head Quarters and return.

BY ORDER GEN. KING,

R. CHANDLER,

A. A. G.
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I had supposed that I would never hear from the man again, but here was the identical pass that he
AT THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM.

had shown me before leaving, and I then recognized him. The kind of uniform a man is dressed in, has a great effect upon his countenance.

I learned from him that he had either joined or was pressed into the rebel army after getting into the Confederacy, that he was able to send valuable information into our lines several times, and that he had contrived to be taken prisoner in order to rejoin his command, for he had become heartily sick of playing rebel soldier. In consideration of the perilous duty that he had performed, he was granted a furlough and allowed to go home to visit his friends.

There was considerable speculation among the men of the battery as to our execution upon the batteries opposed to us the morning and evening of the day previous, so some of them asked leave to go over to the position those batteries had occupied to see what had been the result of our fire upon them. On their return they reported that the effect of our shot had been all that was intended, for the ground was strewn with dead horses, and that a number of dead artillerymen were lying there.

Private Ross (David), accompanied by a number
of men who had been with him to the place, brought me a letter that he found protruding from the knapsack of a dead artillerist, which had been sent to him by his wife. It was expressive of love, trust and confidence, and she was longing for the time to arrive when he would return home. A babe was born after he entered the army, and when she finished the letter in which she had told of the baby's cunning ways with all of a young mother's pride, she traced the baby's hand on the paper, by laying it on the portion unwritten upon and running a pencil around it, afterwards inking the lines with her pen. Within the hand was written: "Marthy Verginia, her hand sent to her paw," and in another place: "If you want to kiss the baby you must kiss this hand." The situation, the circumstances, the surroundings, all served to awaken emotions in the strongest and roughest hearts, even though unused to tender impulses, and this little hand so lovingly traced, reached way down into the stout soldier breasts and touched the wellsprings of pity and sympathy there, making fountains of the eyes that the trembling lids vainly endeavored to conceal,
while the quivering lips, more plainly than had they spoken in language, revealed the depth of the feeling that had been excited in their hearts.

What a subject for a painter — what a theme for a poet. The dead soldier lying there on the bare ground amid the desolation and havoc of a battlefield; the rent knapsack containing all that had contributed to his comfort, his pleasure, and solace for sacrifice of home; the letter, upon which was rudely traced his infant’s hand, bearing in its tiny palm, as it were, all that it could of the strong affection cherished for and centered in him.

A group of soldiers gathered around their commanding officer — men accustomed only to the rough usages and associations of camp, inured to the privations, toils and hardships of the march; men whose finer qualities of nature, whose tenderest impulses, had long since become blunted, dulled or almost altogether obliterated by the very nature of their duties; with the wreck of battle, the results of bloody carnage surrounding them; on every side and all about them nothing but the evidences of hate, revenge and the base qualities of human
nature, made to overflow with emotion as tender, pure and sweet as ever displayed by sensitive woman. And why? None better than they knew

![Fac-simile of the tracing.]

that this was the most precious of the dead soldier's keepsakes; none better than they knew that by the camp-fire's dim and flickering light, when all others, save the watchful sentries, were supposed to be
wrapped in slumber, the poor fellow often had taken this letter from the knapsack that pillowed his head and imprinted a loving kiss upon its page, more for the sake of the mother than the child. To them it was a symbol of a priceless and holy affection such as each knew somebody had for him. They each had something just as precious, just as dear, to them just as sacred.

I threw away the letter after cutting out the tracing. It must be borne in mind that throughout the South the common pronunciation of the contraction “pa” for papa, is “paw.”

Thus the day was passed, loitering and lagging about; the hospitals were visited to administer comfort and to sympathize with friends and acquaintances who had had the misfortune to receive injuries.

Cornie Welles (Cornelius Montague Welles), of Hartford, Connecticut, an old friend of mine, came upon the field and supplied us with some delicacies from the stores of the Christian Commission with which he was connected, and he also took pains to search in the hospitals for the wounded men of Battery D, to see that they had good care and
received every comfort that the circumstances would admit of.

On the nineteenth we were ordered to move, and our march was over the turnpike that the rebels had so persistently held to on the seventeenth. The slaughter there had been fearful. The turnpike was very broad, and it must have been literally covered with dead men. They had been drawn aside from the travelled way, but only so as to leave sufficient space for the baggage wagons and the artillery to pass along. The entire space on either side of the column, between the carriages and the fences, or where the fences had been before the battle, was crowded with dead bodies, and in very many places they were piled one upon another, two and three deep. It was a sickening sight, for nearly all the faces were of African blackness, having been exposed to the sun since they fell. I do not remember how far we moved on the road, but so far as we went, the same evidence of the terrific struggle that had taken place presented itself.

When we halted, it was generally known that Lee had re-crossed the Potomac and that the great
battle was over. The enemy was fleeing with shattered columns, to a great extent barefooted or nearly so; as a resultant, according to all human reasoning, dispirited. And it was the universal expectation in the army, that we would pursue him and strike another blow while he was in a crippled condition. Great was the surprise that orders to that effect were not received.

Time disclosed the fact, however, according to the official correspondence discovered by the newspapers, that the Major-General in command of the army learned through his inspectors that the shoes of his soldiers required mending before taking another long march, and the order was not issued.

Over thirty thousand men had been killed and wounded. Including the missing, the losses amounted to nearly forty thousand, and the important advantages that might have been secured, the great results that might have been attained, all failed to become a tangible reality because, figuratively speaking, the army was not provided with a corps of cobblers.
Note.—The Providence Daily Journal was furnished by me with a list of casualties, which I copy:

"CASUALTIES IN BATTERY D.

The following is a correct list of casualties in Battery D at the late battle of Antietam:

KILLED.

Private John Galloughly,
   " John McGovern,
   " Edward Carroll,
   " John Hopkins.

WOUNDED.

Artificer Benjamin N. Whipple, bullet across the back of hand—severe wound.
Private Reuben D. Dodge, bullet through the left arm—severe wound.
Private Jeremiah Sullivan, bullet through the shoulder—severe wound.
Private Jeremiah D. Hopkins, bullet through the leg—severe wound.
Private Everett Burt, bullet through the leg—severe wound.
Private Charles Reed, bullet through the leg—severe wound.
Private Royal W. Caesar, ankle injured by cannon ball—severe wound.

MISSING.

Private Charles A. Mullick,
   " George Bennett,
   " Frank A. Potter,
   " Isaac D. Russell,
Private Jacob J. Schmidt,
"Duty Robbins,
"Bernard Kilbarn,
"David Smith, 2d.

Besides the above there were some fifteen wounded, whose injuries were slight.”

The newspaper correspondents afterwards reported Bennett and Kilbarn in hospital, wounded.
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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THIRD SERIES - NO. 17.

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PROVIDENCE:

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.

1886.
RELIEF OF
WASHINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA,

BY THE

Fifth Rhode Island Volunteers.

BY
WILLIAM W. DOUGLAS,
[Late Captain Fifth Rhode Island Artillery.]

PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
-1886.
RELIEF OF WASHINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA.

The organization which became the Fifth Rhode Island Regiment was at first a battalion of five companies.

Though stationed during its term of service at a distance from the grand strategic movements of the armies which directly threatened the strongholds of the Confederacy, it was not deprived of the opportunity of doing faithful work in the suppression of the Rebellion. From the nature of its employment it had more than once the opportunity to make as a battalion an individual and peculiar record.

Embarking at Annapolis on the good ship "Kitty Simpson," it weathered the storm at Hatteras, and after lying stranded on the bar at the inlet from noon till four o'clock, was safely wafted by the rising tide to an anchorage within the roadstead. Then it being impossible to get the "Kitty Simpson"
over the river-bar, the battalion was placed upon the "S. R. Spaulding," the flag-ship of the expedition, and with General Burnside led the fleet towards Roanoke Island. Here it had the honor of shedding the first blood in the person of Corporal Viall, who was wounded in a boat reconnaissance the day before the battle.

At Newbern it participated with the Fourth Rhode Island in the final charge which started the enemy in full retreat, and which made Colonel Rodman, who led it, a Brigadier General.

During the siege of Fort Macon the Fifth, though composed only of five companies, stood its turn in the trenches with the Fourth Rhode Island and the Eighth Connecticut, and had the good fortune to be in the advance when the fort surrendered, and marched with its colors, just received from home and never before unfurled, to plant them on the captured walls.

When in the summer of 1862, General Burnside was ordered with Reno’s and Park’s divisions to the Potomac, the Fifth, on account of its numbers, was left behind and became part of the Eighteenth Army
Corps, to which General John G. Foster was assigned as commander. In August the regiment was ordered to Newbern, and encamped just outside the compact part of the city.

The regiment took part in the expedition to Goldsboro in December, 1862, which was successful in cutting the railroad which brought supplies to Richmond from the heart of the Confederacy, and being threatened by troops relieved from General Lee's army by Burnside's failure at Fredericksburg, retired in good order and without serious loss to Newbern.

In retaliation for the constant raids with which General Foster harassed the enemy, General D. H. Hill, on March 14, 1863, the anniversary of its capture, made an attack upon Newbern in force. Being repulsed at Fort Anderson, he retired and marched towards Washington.

The events which immediately followed gave the Fifth Regiment, under its new Colonel, Henry T. Sisson, a chance to write the most brilliant page of its history.

At this time, April, 1863, our forces, under the command of Major-General Foster, held the coast and
waters of North Carolina. The headquarters of the Department were at Newbern, the richest town in the State, situated on the Neuse river, about ninety miles from its mouth, at its junction with the Trent, and in former times the depot for shipment north of large quantities of turpentine and tar, and some cotton and tobacco. The city was compactly built, with many fine business blocks and private residences. It had two extensive hotels, one of which was burned by the rebels as they left. Here we had built forts and depots of supplies of all sorts, and traders from the north had occupied the deserted stores and drove a brisk traffic with the troops, and, it was whispered, also in contraband goods from the interior. Beside the forts, which were constructed so as to defend the town from an attack by land, a fleet of gunboats patrolled the river fronts and made our hold upon the place secure.

The other permanent posts in our possession in the State of North Carolina were Washington, on the Tar river, distant from Newbern by land some thirty or forty miles, but by water about one hundred and fifty, Plymouth, at the head of Albemarle
Sound, at the mouth of the Roanoke river, and Roanoke Island, all within the Sounds; Hatteras Inlet, and Fort Macon, which protected Morehead City and Beaufort on the sea-shore.

After the failure of his attack upon Newbern, General Hill next appeared before Plymouth, and having first destroyed or captured the small naval force stationed in the river by the help of one of those formidable iron-clads with which the rebels did so much damage when they succeeded in making them float, turned the flank of the defenses from the water, and finally, after meeting a most gallant resistance from General Wessels and his little garrison, captured the works and made prisoners of the survivors.

I remember how distinctly the northeast wind brought to us in Newbern the sound of the heavy cannonading, and with what solicitude we waited for the news which came at last of the capture of Plymouth.

About the first of April, General Foster learning that Washington was to be the next point of Hill’s attack, determined to meet the danger in person; so
ordering reinforcements to follow, he hastened to the defense and arrived before the city was invested. In his report made to the committee on the conduct of the war he thus describes the situation of affairs:

"I found the garrison, Forty-fourth Massachusetts Volunteers, Twenty-seventh Massachusetts Volunteers, one company Third New York Artillery, one company Third New York Cavalry, one company First North Carolina Volunteers, and one company negroes armed, to number about twelve thousand men. Two naval gunboats and one armed transport, all under command of Commander R. Renshaw, were in the river in front of the town. The defenses of the town were well adapted to give efficiency to a small garrison, consisting of a small and strong field work on the key point, with a line of entrenchments surrounding the town, well flanked by the block-houses and redoubts. The supply of rations on hand was ample. The enemy's force was a whole corps, estimated to number twenty thousand (20,000) men, with fifty pieces of artillery. Dispositions to resist an assault were immediately made, the Forty-fourth Massachusetts manning the line about half way, and the Twenty-seventh the remainder, the artillery in Fort Washington and the cavalry in the town. The men worked willingly and hard in strengthening the lines, using shingles from dismantled houses for lack of shovels. Abatis were made, traverses erected, platforms for guns laid, and a portion of the ditches flooded by damming the surface drains. All intercourse with the enemy, even by flags of truce, was peremptorily interdicted, leaving the enemy in uncertainty as to our force."

"The first three days of hesitancy by Hill in ordering the assault were so improved by us that, when ordered, it is reported that
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the men refused to obey, seeing that we were ready for them, and that an assault, even if successful, would cost very dear. Hill then decided on a bombardment and siege. Batteries were commenced on all the ridges surrounding the town, and on Rodman's Point, across the river. This last was our vulnerable point, as it commanded the gunboats in the river and that side of the town."

After an unsuccessful attempt to dislodge the enemy from Rodman's Point, General Foster anticipating the destruction of the gunboats, fortified a small island lying in front of the town, with the intention of removing there the ordinance from the naval vessels, and so retaining the command of the river point. He proceeds as follows:

"While this was transpiring, the enemy's siege batteries on the land side were completed and armed, and at the end of about a week opened with fourteen guns, most of them rifled. Fort Washington replied, and the cannonading thus commenced continued with varying intensity for twelve days. The town was traversed in different directions by the shot and the lines of defense enfiladed, but by means of the protection of traverses, splinter proof shelters and bomb proofs, sufficient shelter was afforded and very little loss ensued. The consumption of ammunition exhausted the supplies at the end of the third day's firing, and its replenishment became a difficult and serious matter. The fleet of gunboats below the Hill's Point Battery were deterred from coming up by the obstructions (the buoy to the narrow passage through them being removed by the rebels) and by the fire of that battery."
"The relieving force, three thousand strong, under Brigadier-General Prince, which by my order had arrived in the river in transports, was not made effective. To my written order to land and take the Hill's Point Battery by assault, General Prince returned the reply that it was impracticable, and did not even make the attempt. Our only way, therefore, to get ammunition was by rowboats and small sailboats running the blockade of the enemy's batteries at night. These finally had to be armed to enable them to force a passage through the enemy's guard boats, placed to intercept them. In this way we obtained at night the ammunition for the next day's firing, and thus were enabled to maintain the fire from day to day."

The battery at Hill's Point, about five miles from Washington, spoken of by General Foster, was placed upon a bluff fifty to seventy-five feet above the water, with steep sides towards the river and Blount's Creek, which empties into the Pamlico just below the Point. Here were mounted twelve guns, including two Whitworths. Opposite this was Swan Point, where several guns were mounted near the water's edge. Across the channel at this point had been driven a triple line of piles, strengthened by chains and various obstructions.

At Rodman's Point, directly opposite the town, on a level with the bank of the river, were mounted
WASHINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA.

one thirty-two-pounder and eight field guns, one a twenty-pound Whitworth. After we entered Washington we found shot from this gun in the batteries on the further side, where it had been thrown completely across the town.

So near were the rebel batteries to the defenses of Washington, as we found when we had joined General Foster, that in one of the redoubts the garrison ran to seek shelter first behind one parapet and then behind the other in turn, as the sentry who was posted to give the warning to dodge the enemy’s fire, cried out “Widow Blunt’s” or “Rodman’s Point.”

To us in Newbern only came the sound of the cannonading and rumors of the brave defense which General Foster and the troops in Washington were making. We did not know till afterwards of the reinforcements lying inactive on the transports, or of his repeated orders to effect a diversion for his relief.

On Wednesday, the eighth of April, General Palmer, who was left in command of the District of Newbern, decided to make an effort for the relief of
Washington by a land expedition which should attack the enemy in the rear, and at the same time cover the city of Newbern. So little confidence was felt in the success of this measure that the command of it was intrusted to a General whose military reputation could not be damaged by any event.

All the troops in the city except the Fifth Rhode Island, Forty-fifth Massachusetts, and a few companies in the various forts, were ordered to join the expedition. Immediately after their departure the Fifth and Forty-fifth were assigned places to be taken in case of attack behind the line of fortifications, and when the line was stretched the entire length of the defenses, each soldier was just within hearing of his neighbors on the right and left. It was a skirmish line with widely extended intervals.

The distrust of the situation which filled the minds of the higher officers, and which it was said caused the records and personal baggage of the headquarters to be placed on board a swift transport with steam up, communicated to the body of citizens, sutlers, traders and speculators, produced such a panic in the market as would have been joyfully
hailed by the soldiers if they could have left the lines to take advantage of it.

It was both instructive and amusing to note the different effects of the threatened danger upon the storekeepers whose property was at stake, and the soldiers who had only their lives to lose, and who had risked them too often to be overcome by apprehension.

On the tenth, General Spinola’s expedition returned unsuccessful. They had met the enemy in force at Blount’s Creek, just below Hill’s Point, and a few miles from the river, a place strong by the nature of the ground, and defended by earthworks and artillery. Here Captain Belger, of the Seventh Rhode Island Battery, was wounded, and after some further losses a retreat was ordered and promptly executed.

I have since understood that previous to this trial an attempt had been made to capture the enemy’s batteries in the Pamplico river, but we heard nothing of it at the time, and if it were made it was entirely without effect. Probably the statement was based on the orders spoken of by General Foster
which were not obeyed. It seemed, therefore, that General Foster must be left to his fate, to endure a longer or shorter siege with capture and a rebel prison at the end.

But Colonel Sisson, who had recently joined the Fifth, and who was anxious to distinguish himself and his command by some daring exploit, called his officers together and proposed to them to volunteer to run by the enemy’s batteries and join the beleaguered garrison with supplies of food and ammunition. The plan seemed a desperate one, but the officers, to a man, agreed with the Colonel that the state of the department demanded that its commander should be at Newbern to stem the panic, to direct measures of defense, and to bring order out of fast-gathering confusion. To rescue him at any cost we deemed our first duty, and the Colonel’s plan was the only possible one. So the proposition was made to General Palmer and accepted, and with sixty rounds of ball cartridge and three days’ cooked rations we were marched on board the “Escort,” which lay at the wharf.

General Palmer and Lieutenant-Colonel Hoffinan,
Assistant Adjutant-General on General Foster's staff, accompanied us. There were also on board a few stragglers from the company of the North Carolina Regiment which was at Washington.

The "Escort" was a side-wheel river steamboat, similar to those which run on Narragansett Bay, except that was decked over to the bows. Her registered burden was six hundred and seventy-five tons; her length one hundred and eighty-five feet, just five tons less burden and one foot greater length than the "Bay Queen." She had recently been built at Mystic, Connecticut, and was very fast in smooth water.

We found on board commodious quarters for our three hundred men, and plenty of room for the fifteen to twenty tons of ammunition and half dozen barrels of commissary's stores which we were confident, would make us welcome at Washington.

After a night's sail down the turbid current of the Neuse, and over a short distance of the Sound, stretching far away towards the low line of sandy banks which separate its waters from the ocean, we found ourselves at daybreak just entering the Pamlico river, and by the time that the rising sun
showed us the indistinct promontories on its banks all were alert and eager for the first sight of the enemy's batteries. But our surprise was great when, on rounding Maul's Point, several miles below Hill's, we found ourselves in the midst of the gun-boat fleet which we had pictured in our imagination engaged at close quarters with the rebel works.

General Palmer here left us to become the guest of Captain Behm, of the "Southfield," the senior officer of the squadron, and our men who had expected to escort him to Washington saw him no more.

This day (Saturday, eleventh) was spent in loading bales of hay upon the "Escort," and piling it on the upper and lower decks around the machinery and boilers, furnishing such protection as we could to the vital points of the vessel.

The pilot-house, like that of most of the transport steamers then employed in the Sound, was protected from musket shot on the sides by boiler-iron plates—and we added a few bales of hay to make it more secure. The front was necessarily open, to give the pilot a view of his course.
The orders were to start at eight o'clock that night, but were countermanded by the substitution of five o'clock the next morning. For some unexplained reason we did not get underway in the morning till eight o'clock. The plan was for the gun-boats to engage the battery, allow the "Escort" to shoot by, and then to follow us. But we were much faster than any of the naval vessels, and a dense fog so effectually shut out every object from our sight that we had gone a hundred yards beyond the gun-boats who were to support us before a gun was fired, and without knowing where we were until we were apprised of our temerity by a few scattering shots from Hill's Point, and by hearing the chain cable running through the hawse-holes of the "Southfield" as she came to anchor behind us. We dropped back to a safe distance from the Point, and when the fog cleared up had the pleasure of seeing the execution which the big navy guns could do at long range. After about an hour's firing they drew off and rejoined us. So nothing more was done on Sunday in the way of carrying out our object.

On Monday morning, General Palmer reverted
again to the idea of landing our force below Hill's Point, on the opposite side of the creek, then fording it, as it had already been demonstrated to his mind by the former expedition that the bridge further up could not be carried, then capturing the rebel battery and so freeing the river for the navy and transports. If we had numbered three thousand, like General Prince's command, who had been ordered by General Foster to make a similar attempt, the plan might have been feasible, but with three hundred men to assault an almost impregnable position well garrisoned and having more than ten thousand reserves not more than five miles distant, was one of those undertakings that we did not crave to engage in. It did not seem to us to be the thing we had come from Newbern to do.

Hearing that a reconnoissance of the enemy’s position at and about Hill’s Point was to be ordered, I obtained permission to command it. I selected Lieutenant Dutee Johnson, of Company A, and forty men out of the whole regiment, who to my great satisfaction volunteered to accompany me. We were transferred to the gunboat “Valley City,”
Acting Master Brooks, and steamed slowly towards the shore. The decks were cleared for action, the men at quarters, and my little detachment enjoyed the privilege which few landsmen have had, of being on board a man-of-war in fighting trim. Occasionally, as we sighted a knot of men on the shore, we gave them a shot, and the precision with which our guns were aimed was a delight to the visitors of the Fifth. Soon the shore was neared, and taking to the boats under cover of the shells of the gunboat, we landed.

It was obviously impossible to land any force on the north side of Blount's Creek, and my instructions were to ascertain if the creek was fordable between its mouth and the bridge. I remained on shore nearly all day, carefully exploring the course of the stream, and came off again about sunset with the information derived from actual soundings that the creek could not be forded or crossed in the force of any opposition, and so reported to General Palmer. I also ascertained from reliable contrabands that there was a camp of about five thousand men within a mile of the opposite bank, and saw
breastworks lately thrown up, but with no guns mounted, almost at the water's edge.

When I carried this information to the General on board the "Southfield," he saw that his plan was impossible, and sent again for Colonel Sisson. When he arrived and asked for orders, General Palmer told him that he would not order us to run the blockade, but would permit us to do so voluntarily if Colonel Sisson would assume the whole responsibility. As this was what we had been waiting to do, our preparations were speedily perfected to run by the batteries in the "Escort" in the darkness of the approaching evening.

In order to appreciate the risk we were to run, you may imagine yourselves starting from Newport on the "Bay Queen" on a trip to Providence. Place upon Nayatt Point a battery of heavy guns, and on the shore at Conimicut Point another, both well manned by experienced artillerists. Suppose the channel to run within point-blank range of the western shore, and to be obstructed by a triple line of piles driven closely together. Then place a still more formidable battery, containing at least one gun
capable of throwing a shell three miles with accuracy, at Field's Point, and calculate the chances of getting by all this and anchoring safely at the Continental Steamboat Company's wharf. Then place on the boat fifteen tons of ammunition, and consider that if a shell were to explode so as to fire it, there would be no boat left, and you would have the last chance left you of swimming ashore into the hands of the enemy, who, if they did not shoot you in the water, would march you to a rebel prison. Add to this the fact that no one on board knew the channel except the pilot, and he had to grope for it without a beacon light, in intense darkness, and to have got upon the flats meant sure capture at daybreak. We had not either that opportunity to fire back which occupies a man's whole attention to the exclusion of thoughts of his personal danger in the excitement of a battle. We had simply to box ourselves up and constitute ourselves a floating target.

Colonel Sisson stowed all the men in the hold of the boat, as near as possible to the water line, and sent all the officers who were not on special duty into the cabin. Lieutenant-Colonel Tew, Captain
Landers, who was the officer of the day, and Captain Potter, who commanded a squad of sharpshooters, were entrenched on deck; protected partially by the bales of hay. Colonel Sisson took his station with the captain and pilot in the pilot-house.

At eight o'clock it had become so dark that any object but a large white steamboat like the "Escort" was invisible at a short distance on the water. I had been much fatigued by my tramp on shore and the responsibility of my service during the day, and as soon as we were assigned to our quarters lay down upon the cabin floor upon a mattress taken from one of the bunks, and was fast asleep when we started. I was roused by the flash and report of the first gun which announced that we were in range of Hill's Point Battery.

The flash illuminated the cabin, and the concussion of the air sounded to us below like the crash of a shot. We all thought the boat was struck, and expected every moment to be wounded by flying splinters. Instantly I was wide awake, and in the total darkness which followed, for all lights on board had been extinguished, I listened for and felt the
progress we were making. After the first discharge I felt the boat go forward with tremendous speed, then stop, and again slowly press forward. This was the passage of the line of piles abreast of the battery. The boat forced a passage through, and again we were in rapid motion. But suddenly I felt the keel grate on the bottom, and we were aground in full range of the riled guns aimed at our lives. To add to the horror of the situation, we supposed from the concussion of the air that every shot of the iron shower struck the boat. Quick as lightning the guns followed each other, and the flashes showed us each others' faces anxious but determined. But the moment was too desperate to weigh chances, and putting on extra steam, forcing the furnaces to their full capacity, preferring to blow up by that means, if it must be so, rather than to be wrecked by some shell falling into our ammunition, we gradually push through the mud and are again in deep water, hurrying away from our first danger.

We had taken the Hill's Point Battery unawares, and were not discovered till almost abreast of it; but
we could not hope that Rodman's Point would be unprepared. The heavy firing below would bring the garrison to their guns, prepared to receive us warmly. But we had not come thus far to retreat. Indeed, we had no choice—the danger in either direction was equal. Riflemen now assailed us from every prominent position on the river's bank, but their missiles could do us little harm, and congratulating ourselves that we were yet uninjured, we hastened to the upper battery. Soon the heavy firing, the flashes, and the thuds of the shot, nearer and more rapid than before, told us that we were under the last fire, and thus passing the last mile, as it seemed in a few minutes, we stopped again.

The Chaplain's voice at the companion-way, and the music of the Forty-fourth Regiment Band, hailed our arrival at the wharf at Little Washington. Scarcely realizing our own safety, and each amazed at the safety of the rest, we formed in line and left the good boat which, with the loss of a trifling piece of her machinery, had borne us well by the fruitless efforts of the rebel artillery.

Our arrival was equivalent to a reinforcement of
ten times our number to the weary garrison, and the success of our efforts inspired them with fresh confidence. We were most warmly received by the Forty-fourth, whose brief term of enlistment had been marked by as faithful service and more varied incident than many a three years' regiment. They welcomed us to their quarters and offered us the best of their reserved stores.

The next morning we took our position in the fortifications and renewed with fresh energy the work we had learned in the trenches before Fort Macon.

The second day after, the rebels, not knowing how few men had broken through the blockade, and feeling that it was no longer effectual, withdrew their forces and joined the army which was to humble the prowess of our valiant men under Hooker at Chancellorsville.

The morning after our arrival I was called to General Foster's headquarters, and in answer to his questions gave him an account of the condition of affairs in Newbern, and that day embarking on the "Escort" he ran down past the batteries in broad
daylight. In this trip the pilot was killed by a musket ball, and seven or eight of the crew were killed and wounded, but the boat seemed to have a charmed life and carried him safely to Newbern, where, organizing his forces, he started at once to attack the besiegers. But as I have said, they had given up the siege, and he only succeeded in engaging their rear guard, and then returned to Newbern.

The gratitude of the Forty-fourth Massachusetts for our timely succor was shown by the presentation by them to the Fifth of an elegant banner with the arms of the two States gracefully combined upon it, and an appropriate inscription commemorating the occasion of the gift. They also gave to Colonel Sisson, as a mark of their appreciation of his action, a service of plate and a sword, sash and belt.

The War Department were pleased to recognize the exploit by changing the regiment from infantry to artillery, thinking that men who were not to be killed by heavy guns would do good service behind them; and after this promotion *en masse* the subsequent service of the Fifth justified the exceptional honor.
PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

War of the Rebellion,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

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A PRIVATE'S REMINISCENCES

OF THE

FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR.

BY

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First Connecticut Heavy Artillery.]

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PRIVATE'S REMINISCENCES OF THE FIRST YEAR OF THE WAR.

It is a common remark that we of to-day are too near the last war to write of it with phlegm and candor. This is mostly a piece of cant. No matter in what sense you take the word history, there is much of the history of the war that can be written better now than ever hereafter. There is much of it, in fact, that will never be written at all if it is not soon. Preëminently is this the case regarding those odd details, curious happenings, funny experiences, those indescribable scenes of camp, march and drill, which form the densest and most picturesque spots in every soldier's memory of the war. I refer to the matters with which most of our early letters home from the camp were taken up. They became so antiquated before we got out of service, and other more weighty, more serious, less
comical things came to occupy our attention, that these ludicrous sides of military life have with many passed largely out of remark. Those also who went out as recruits into well-organized regiments became soldiers with fewer of the stumbling and grotesque approaches by which the campaigners of early '61 attained to that degree.

In this aspect of its history, the first is the most interesting year in all the war. Rare were the men who, when the drums first beat to arms, knew what arms meant. My regiment, the Fourth Connecticut [after October, 1861, the First Connecticut Heavy Artillery], taking the oath to the United States on May 22, 1861, was, so far as I have ever learned, the earliest volunteer regiment to be mustered in for three years. We had been already enlisted for some time as three months' men before the call for a three years' contingent came; and so hot was our patriotic zeal, that we instantly subscribed again for the longer term.

The imagination of youth is specially active, and because I was then so young, I may perhaps retain in memory better than some of my older com-
rades, the notions, the expectations, the theories, with which they and I enlisted. One of our fixed ideas was that a single Yankee could whip five rebels with the utmost ease. Some placed the number as high as twelve; but I think that any man in my company venturing incredulity as to our ability easily to vanquish the rebels in the ratio of five of them to one of ourselves, would have been summarily ejected from the company. Like Gideon of old, we wanted no faint hearts in our band.

As part of the same delusion, men used to suggest, not wholly in fun, that our regiment, or at any rate the troops from Connecticut, should take the contract of thrashing the rebels for so many thousand dollars, the job to be completed, inspected and passed upon by competent European commissioners, not later than the end of July, or no charge at all to be made.

Quite as laughable were the pictures we drew to ourselves of the manner in which we were to make the campaign. When I enlisted, and for some days thereafter, I fully expected to carry a trunk with me, and a commodious number of changes of rai-
ment; on finding which impossible, I felt as down-
cast as did the hundred days' man whom I met at
Bermuda Hundred in '64, who, being just out from
Ohio, hadn't had any pie or any butter for his bread
since leaving Fortress Monroe. How, too, we
loaded ourselves with pistols, bowie-knives, and a
whole lot of other furniture that was, we thought,
going to be handy when we got down South. One
might be called upon to clinch with a rebel. The
rebel would, of course, be the under dog, but might
not let you up, you know. How convenient to reach
round behind you, draw your bowie-knife and coax
him to relax his grip! One very devout soldier car-
rried his family bible. The knapsack that tugged
at my wretched shoulders when we left Hartford for the
front on June tenth, of '61, would have made a camel
pant, containing wares enough to have stocked a
country store. This lugging about of Egyptian
pyramids upon our backs we soon abandoned, as we
did the bowie-knives and pistols. One man in our
company, however, never marched with less than
sixty or seventy pounds in his knapsack, to the end
of the war. His calling before had been that of a
pack-pedlar, and he said he experienced a certain difficulty in not falling forward on his face, unless he had about the old load strapped behind.

'Alas, the knapsack was but one among our burdens that dreadful day on which we set forth for the war. Such uniforms as we writhed under! I perspire at thought of them now, after the lapse of a quarter of a century. As the United States Government was unable to provide us in this respect, the excellent Governor Buckingham, of Connecticut, had assumed to do it. He, good man, had rigged us out with suits of the thickest sort of gray woollen, made, one would have thought, especially for midwinter wear in Greenland. There were heavy gray felt hats to match. We had no blouses. The coats were short, without skirts; the pants of so generous girth that if any hero, beating perchance a hasty retreat, should have the misfortune to lose his knapsack, he might not be destitute of a good place to bestow his blanket. Some of the trousers were three inches too long; some nearly as much too short. The average coat, too, had a considerable surplus of circumference. Vests there were none;
for which lack, coarse, heavy, gray flannel shirts, with the redundant longitude of the trousers, were expected to make amends.

We had cartridge-boxes, haversacks, canteens and old-fashioned Springfield muskets. Not being graduates of a Turveydrop Academy, we had little taste in arranging this gear when we came to don it. Here would be a tall man with the straps for those utensils so short as to bring his canteen, haversack and cartridge-box well up under his arms, the first two on one side, the cartridge-box on the other; yonder a little five-footer would go "hepp," "hepp," "hepp," along, with those same indispensable appurtenances flopping half way to his heels. Some had their overcoats strapped neatly and compactly plumb on the top of their knapsacks; others fastened them on in so dowdy a way as to suggest that they meant the very frightfulness of their appearance to drive back the foe, on the principle which Sidney Smith must refer to when he mentions a man the mere look of whose face was a breach of the peace, he was so homely.

And then what inimitable marching! My company
was about equally divided at first between the men who could keep no time at all, those who could keep some time but not much, and those who could keep a good deal of time if each were permitted to do it in his own way. In a word, it took a long while for us to become strong in rhythm. Our first marked improvement appeared at the moment when we mastered the trick of bringing down our left feet all together, responding to the "hepp," "hepp," "hepp," of the drill-master, letting the right feet take care of themselves. When we could do that, we felt that war was indeed a fine art and we fine artists. Ah, we found there were perfections not yet attained! The next stage of advance was when the right feet all struck the earth together, or at any rate a great majority of them, but not midway of the interval between two percussions with the left. Beyond this none but the men of genius went, till some time after Bull Run; and one at least of those my valorous comrades never could, to the last, learn any other than the go-as-you-please step. The sublimity of this case lay in the fact that the man did not pretend to march accurately. Another fellow
among us almost never had the step, but always, if corrected, swore—Athanasius against the world—that he and he alone had it. Marching thus out of time once behind me, and treading on my heels each pace, he threatened in language I will not repeat, to report me to the captain for not keeping step. I called his attention to the obvious fact that the great majority had the same step as I. He said he didn’t give a damn for majorities—and he was right.

But to go back and dwell on those uniforms, and to tell you how in those days we had to dwell in those uniforms! As we wore them from Hartford, how new they looked! Alas, too soon they began to assume a different face! Seven days each week we had to wear them; often, on guard for instance, at night as well. They grew dirty. That was not the worst. Repairs became necessary, and facilities for effective repairs there were none. One by one those noble garments gave way. No new ones were to be had. A hat being lost, one could indeed buy a cheap Zouave chapeau from the sutler if one had money. Let a coat wear out, its owner had no resource but to go in shirt-sleeves by day, in his over-
coat by night. At Chambersburg, at Hagerstown and Williamsport, even at Frederick, our uniforms remained fairly presentable; but by the time we reached Darnestown, Maryland, in August or September of '61, we were a sight to behold. Could we have been manifested to the rebel army at that time, I am sure that Bull Run would have been avenged and that Beauregard and his braves would have fallen back in dismay.

Let me attempt to describe to you what, by way of euphemism and with extraordinary and dangerous strain upon language, we called our "dress parade" at this period. One man in ten was barefoot. Some were bareheaded. Many wore red skull-caps, in such queer contrast with the majority, who still retained, limp, faded and dirty, the majestic old sombreros we had received from Governor Buckingham. Not a few in the regiment had become veritable sans culottes, and must needs march to the parade-ground in their drawers. Hardly a uniform in the entire line was whole or clean.

How vividly I remember a conversation that I overheard one evening, at a well whither I had gone,
some distance from our own camp, to replenish my canteen for a night of guard duty! It was at the close of a day on which the entire Division under General Banks had been on review, and my regiment had been, if I do say it, the observed of all observers. The speaker was a Pennsylvanian. "I say, Bill," said he to his companion, "did yer see that regiment in gray, half on 'em bareheaded or bare-footed and kinder lookin' zef they'd ben on a forced march like?" "'Deed, did I," said the other; "them uz a sorry lookin' set, durned if they want." "They's the fellers wot kin fight tho," rejoined the first speaker. "You bet," said the second; "they done ben to Bull Run, them fellers, 'n that's wot ails ther rig."

This complimentary critic was in error. We had not seen Bull Run. During that battle we were back under Patterson at Martinsburg and Williamsport. Yet when I think of the state of our clothing at this time, I do not wonder that the Pennsylvanian mistook us for veteran campaigners. Not worse clad were the wretches who followed Napoleon back from Borodino and Moscow. I have not told you the
worst about our experience with that clothing. Nor can I. Suffice it to remark that when, a month later, we got new apparel, every soldier, as he cast each of his old rags away forever, could have said, in the language often used to puff a new business enterprise, only with far more truth, "there's millions in it."

Striking memories come back to me touching the commissary's department and its administration that summer of the opening war. We got our first government rations at Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The beef barrels and bread boxes were marked "B. C."; and, in the well-known language of Bret Harte, "I would not deny in respect to the same what that name might imply." Certainly that food could not have been put up since the Mexican war. The beef, if such it was, consisted of so many parcels and packs of leather shoe-strings. The hard-bread it required hammers, axes and stones to break. Soaking it over night in water merely altered the form of the difficulty, giving the material the consistency of sole-leather. The only mode of preparation by which the crackers could be made edible was to
break them into scraps with a heavy hammer, soak them twelve hours in water, and then fry them in hot fat. It was hardly a Delmonico dish after all, but a taste was not sure death. Those biscuits were round, and of the size of a dinner-plate, and I speak the truth when I tell you that I have seen toy wagons made of them, wheels, axles and all, that would bear up a man. This antediluvian fodder fortunately lasted but a few months; and when we got new hard-tack, baked the same year, it was so soft and so sweet, we thought Old Abe had concluded to supply the army with soda-crackers. In one respect, it is upon my conscience to confess, the old rock was better eating than the new,—it was always azoic, and the new wasn’t.

During the azoic period we got on more happily with the bread than with the beef. For not to speak of the doubts many of us had whether it was beef at all, or of the numerous theories of those in the company who allowed doubt upon this point to develop itself in their minds to an extreme, in one particular no one was vexed with the slightest skepticism, namely, that it was tough. We were not,
however, without resources. The fortune of war had sent us into a land, if not exactly flowing with milk and honey, at any rate overflowing [if you will pardon the metaphor] with youthful swine. Since England had recognized the secessionists as belligerents, why should not we? We did, and further, not being deeply read in international law, we inclined with such light as we had to adopt as sound the doctrine of "occasional contraband." Occasionally, therefore, we viewed pigs as contraband, and proceeded as loyal executives to confiscate. Fresh pork tasted better than the flesh General Scott had brought home from Mexico. What if we sometimes happened to select a loyal pig! We did it because we loved him. One of Colonel McClure's grunlers fell a victim to our bayonets at Chambersburg on a certain fine morning, We were very sorry, but we were very hungry.

Once, when my company was marching from Williamsport to Martinsburg as convoy to one of General Patterson's wagon-trains, my comrade shot a fine fat porker suitable for a good supper to the entire gang of us. I was deputed to aid him in
dressing it. Deftly and all unbeknown to the officers, we loaded the carcass into one of the covered wagons, where, on the top of the barrels which formed the load, bending over, in spite of the jolting, as the ponderous vehicle rolled on, we performed our difficult task. At Martinsburg, being obliged to fall in and march to our camp with the rest of the company, we consigned the precious plunder to the company drummer, with orders to deliver it at the cook's quarters so soon as possible. He met a man who offered him money for it, our precious booty was sold, and we with it, having our labor for our pains.

Speaking of the cook's quarters, I am reminded of two immortal individuals who at different times presided there. One was a colored man whom we picked up in Maryland. He was bright and intelligent, though he could not read, and was, of course, distressingly ignorant. Of his ignorance, however, he was serenely unconscious, and launched into discussion upon any topic of family, church or state with as much confidence and gusto as Castlereagh or Metternich could have shown. He had been in Virginia, and had heard of New York and Pennsylvania.
These, with Maryland, he used to assert were all the states there were. The fellows assured him there was another, the state of Matrimony, which he emphatically denied, ascribing the mistake charitably to lack of information on their part. This colored cook of ours had a pretty wife, who occasionally visited the camp to see him. He professed and manifested for her the greatest affection; yet on being asked if he did not fear he would lose her when we advanced into Virginia, he replied: "'Deed I isn't 'feared o' nuf'm. De Lor' hain dun sot ah de hansum gals in Ole Ma'lun. Dey's sum mo' down in Virginny sho's yo bawn, dey is. Ef yo gwine ter 'vance inter Virginny, Ole Ma'lun sartin for ter lose dis yere niggah, wife er no wife."

Our other ever memorable cook was a soldier from our own ranks. I shall always regard him as absolutely the most remarkable personage in the entire history of man. It was not, I admit, his genius about the cuisine which entitled him to this eminence; it was certain rarer and finer qualities. Among these was his good nature. Tastes did fer, even upon coffee. Two men one morning had dipped and
sipped from precisely the same boiler of this. One returned presently for some more. "Frisbee," said he, "that's superb; it's the best coffee we've had this year." "That's so," answered Frisbee, "I took er heap o' pains with that coffee; it oughter be good." Soon came the other,—"Frisbee, your coffee is infernal; it isn't fit for bilge-water this morning. Make any more such and I'll drown you in it." "Wal," said the imperturbable Frisbee, "that's so, 'tis mighty pore this time somehow, ye know ye can't allers git it jest right." That marvelous art of agreeing with everybody! Our Frisbee had it in perfection. He was a man of expedients, too. Often have I seen him, when the coffee in the boiler was running low before all had been supplied, seize a bucket, fill it with cold water from the tank and dash it in. If any one then complained of the thus diluted stuff, Frisbee was always ready with some plausible theory, as that he couldn't get the fire to go, or that he believed the coffee was in some way losing strength, or that the army contractors were a set of rascals anyhow.

Frisbee had not very many faults. The only ones
I can readily recall were swearing, gambling, lying, drinking, stealing and speaking evil of the orderly sergeant; but in these few, I feel constrained to testify, he was an adept and did not do things by halves. In drinking, however, we had one man who was more than a match for Frisbee. It was Bill Pilkington. He avowed that he did not care for the quality of the whiskey if it would only make the drunk come, and that he never allowed an opportunity for getting drunk to pass unimproved. I could take oath that during my acquaintance with him this was strictly true.

I turn now, with martial ardor, from quartermaster's and commissary's affairs to the more serious business of drill, discipline and war. I have remarked how hard we found it always to march in the same step. This was about the lightest of our difficulties. Those of us in the rear rank when the marching was to the front,—how prone we were to allow more than the regulation thirteen inches between ourselves and our file leaders! Each wanted to see his file leader's feet, for some reason or other, and they were not invisible to the naked eye, with
army shoes on. Facing was not the easiest thing to master, and not infrequently two soldiers, after a command “right face” or “left face,” would be found hotly contending for the same spot to place their feet upon, in the spirit of “Stand, the ground’s your own, my braves,” an imbroglio often leading to blows, and to be decided only by the official count, “one, two, one, two,” etc., down the line. But wheeling required still a higher order of genius than facing, intricate as the latter was. My captain, with that coolheadedness in terrible crises which has characterized all the great masters of the art of war from Ramses II. down to Lord Wolsey, whenever we were about to attempt a left wheel, used to caution us; “Now, boys, all look to the right and glance to the left.” The few learned fellows among us who had read Hardee’s Tactics had a theory that the captain was ignorant and should say, instead of “look to the right and glance to the left,” “look to the right and touch to the left,” and that obedience to the captain’s form of the order was obviously impossible. The cross-eyed man in the company, generous-natured soul, stood up for the captain nobly. He said that
what those scholastic philosophers maintained might be true in theory but was false in practice, for he had proved that the order as given by the captain could be carried out with the utmost ease. But when a line officer, on one occasion, putting the regiment through the manual, undertook to bring us to a "ground arms" directly from a "shoulder arms," without any "order arms" between, the cross-eyed man was compelled to admit with tears that an error had been committed.

My company was at once blessed and cursed with Pat Lilly, who had served five years in the regular army, and knew the tactics as he knew his name. He was very tall, moreover, and graced the right of the front rank. I stood in that vicinity myself, and often have I heard the officer commanding the company on regimental drill lean over to Lilly, and in whisper ask: "Pat, Pat, what's the next order to give?"

But Lilly knew the wicked as well as the good ways of war. One night at Williamsport, when Jackson, then soon to become Stonewall Jackson, was just across the Potomac from us, and we there-
fore had orders to keep the strictest watch, Lilly heard the officer of the guard offering to bet a gallon of whiskey that no live man could run the guard. Lilly took that bet. He won it, too, in spite of the new and stricter orders which the officer hurried around to give, to shoot down any man passing the guard without the countersign. Lilly effected his object in this way. Getting as near the guard-line as he dared, at a point where two sentry-beats met, he lay down and pretended to be in dying agony with the colic. Having lain and moaned until apparently easier, the sentinels presently thought him asleep, when, as they were farthest apart, quicker than lightning he darted across the line, over the fence into the cornfield adjoining, and dropped flat upon the ground. Pop, pop, went the sentinels' muskets, but of course without harm to Lilly, who then got up and taking a circuit around, presented himself at the guard-quarters for his whiskey, which you may be sure he did not pour upon the ground.

The same Lilly, on another occasion, left his quarters in the night, stole horses from the wagon-camp, got a teamster to follow him as orderly, managed to
find out the countersign in some way, and rode the circuit of the entire brigade in the character of field officer—of the day, turning out and inspecting guards, giving directions to colonels and making a fool of everybody.

We first heard the dreadful name of Jackson the very night we arrived in Hagerstown, Maryland, from Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. It was past midnight, perhaps between two and three in the morning, when the long roll of the regimental drum corps startled the still air of our new camp. The rebels, it was said, led by Jackson, were crossing at Williamsport in force, and we, perhaps the only bulwark between them and the nation’s life—we six miles away! It was a time to try men’s souls and men’s patience. What a scramble for cartridge-boxes, pistols and dirks,—for the pistol and bowie-knife era was still upon us! The officers bade us be calm, but they needed the advice not less imperatively than we. At last we had formed line, and the Colonel, on the ground probably that more battles are won by marching than by fighting, started us, raw levies, with six long miles and probably a battle before us, off on a
double quick. We ran a mile, puffing, sweating, straining our eyes to see that foe we so longed to annihilate. "Halt!" What for? Why, the line officers have held a council of war while trotting along upon their horses, and have concluded that if we are to fight it may be well to have our muskets loaded. No one had thought of it before. We had supposed that our brave Colonel, in whose skill as a tactician we had the most unhesitating confidence, intended on meeting Jackson, to charge with the bayonet? We conclude that he now alters his mind. At all events he commands to "load." But we have had no instructions in loading. Which end of the cartridge shall go downwards? About a third of the men, reasoning *apriori* that the bullet was the main thing, put it in first. A good number of those who did not do this, failed to tear the cartridge paper. Several put two or three cartridges in; some even more. It was the work of a week to empty those muskets. Having loaded and breathed, we began the race again. The sun rose. Was it the sun of Austerlitz? It was as bright and as hot. Men fell from the ranks. Some fainted physically, others in
heart. Some wanted to go home. Perhaps a tenth of the regiment reached Williamsport together; the rest came straggling in all the rest of the day. No enemy was there, the more's the pity for the enemy, for a brave dozen of cavalrmyen could have captured the whole of us. However, Jackson fell back toward Martinsburg, and we flattered ourselves with the hypothesis that he had heard of our advance and considered discretion the better part of valor.

While our camp was at Williamsport, we had some of the most ludicrous experiences imaginable. Our chief occupation was that to which I have already alluded, of convoYing General Patterson’s wagon trains to Martinsburg. The road lay through Virginia; Virginia had then seceded, and we had the idea that it was a part of our duty as Union soldiers to arrest for treason, as far as we could, all who had voted for secession. Patriotic to the core, we therefore made this our main business on each return trip from Martinsburg. Partly the numberless family feuds of the neighborhood and partly a desire to fool us, brought out plenty of professed informers. Every little way along the road we
would be met by parties assuring us that at such or such a house a secessionist lived. We used to break up into little squads to go and arrest such. In one house we were told that a lot of arms had been gathered for use on the Southern side, and that men had assembled there resolved to use and defend these arms, if need be, to the death. My company besought the lieutenant commanding us that day to let us storm that rebel castle. We threw out flankers and advanced. Approaching the house, we had to ford a deep stream, and supposed that our foe was reserving his fire till he could take us in mid-current. We charged through. We raced up the bank. We surrounded that house. Never did Wellington win a completer victory. We had our fortress in our power without firing or receiving a shot! Not to have been fired at at all rather non-plussed us. Had the enemy concluded we were resistless and that his only course was to surrender at discretion? We must force our way into the house and ascertain. A forlorn hope was called for,—men ready to take their lives in their hands for this great emergency.
"Theirs not to make reply;
Theirs not to reason why;
Theirs but to do and die,"

if necessary. They muster; they rush for the door; no shot; a tottering old gray-beard of seventy-five opens; he is the only man there. "Are there any arms in this house?" "I reckon ther mout be." "What and where are they?" "Dunno zackly, mister; wese gut an ole revolver summer round yere, but durned ef I seener this six monts." The old man told the truth. We searched the premises completely with his undoubtedly genuine aid, and found not the first sign of warlike stores save the lonely, empty revolver.

We had been victimized, but we must magnify our office as Union soldiers. "Did you vote for secession, old man?" "'Deed did I," was the prompt response. "Then you must go with us to camp," said our officer; and we had the effrontery to march that poor old victim ten miles with us to Williamsport, and put him in prison there. We noticed that as we marched, he kept step with us. Some of my most zealous compatriots inferred from this that he
had been drilling for service in Jackson's force, and were for blowing his brains out on the spot. He was saved by the insistence of the cooler ones, that the law should take its course. Should we, who had enlisted to enforce law, give the example of trampling on law? God forbid! The jail at Williamsport was full of these unhappy and outraged creatures for some weeks, till a provost-marshal who knew something, arrived from Washington and set them all at liberty. I saw the brave, injured old man whom I had helped arrest, climbing the Virginia bank of the Potomac, after his release, and with his clothes wet from having forded the stream, setting off on foot for his distant home. Often have I felt like a simpleton, but never more so than then.

While we lay at Williamsport, reports came every few nights of rebel plots to cross the river from Virginia and surprise us. One evening it was said that such an attempt was quite certain to be made. It happened to be my night on guard. It fell to my lot to be placed on post at midnight, at a point thought to be more exposed than any other about the camp,—a corner running up on to a bluff over-
looking the river. Just over the bluff, half a dozen rods away, was a little copse of trees, convenient, it was thought, as a point whence an enemy might make a sudden rush upon us. Why we did not occupy that thicket ourselves I never knew. That entire side of our encampment lay upon the ridge of which this bluff was part, the crest of the ridge toward the river and toward Virginia, being two or three rods outside the sentinels' beat. Every sentry along this exposed front had been given the strictest orders to fire upon any one advancing toward us that did not give the countersign or halt after a third challenge. Time wore on. Back and forth, forth and back, we lonely sentinels paced. Moonless and cloudy was the night, though the sky was visible over the crest of the knoll toward seceded Virginia. Back and forth, back and forth. It is one o'clock and no attack yet. But hush, hark; did ye not hear it? "Who comes there?" The challenge is uttered by the sentinel next me but one along the threatened border. No response. "Who comes there?" roared out the challenger a second time. Again, no response. The suspense is deathly. Doubtless Jack-
son has come back, crossed the river in the still and dark of the night, and is at this moment just beyond that hillock, with his rebel horde, about to make overwhelming onset on our devoted camp. "Who comes there?" the third time, and "bang" spoke the old Springfield musket, with voice enough to waken the dead. Thereat, O what a trampling of feet, rushing and snorting in the copsewood in front of me—noise as of steeds and mustering squadrons, quickly forming in the ranks of war! My hair stood on end. But, dauntless as Regulus, I cocked my piece and faced the foe, "determined," as the novelists put it, "if fall I must, not to fall alone." But I was not called upon on that occasion to sell my life either dearly or cheaply. The scampering was in the other direction. A few mules had innocently gone to sleep in that brush, and had been scared by the discharge of the musket. But what had the fellow shot at? Let us see. "Corporal of the guard No. 11." The cry was passed along, and presently appeared, not indeed the corporal but the officer of the day. Not wishing to imitate Napoleon's fatal blunder at Borodino, of holding back his reserves
in a crucial exigency, he had brought both reliefs that were off duty. They moved at a double quick, with fixed bayonets and martial bearing, to help repel the dreaded invasion of our camp. The man who had fired told the officer he had heard steps and breathing from the direction of the river, and had seen a head rise above the ridge against the sky, and then sink and rise and sink again, as if some wily and determined scout were making a cautious reconnaissance of the position. He added, with the accuracy of one testifying at a coroner's inquest, that when he fired he heard something drop, and that he believed they would find a dead rebel out there. They searched. Not a dead rebel but a dead cow was found, which the commanding officer was good enough to pay thirty dollars for next morning. From mules and cows our unparalleled vigilance and valor had delivered us. There was not an armed rebel nearer than Winchester, forty miles away.

It used to interest me to notice what special agony it cost many men to understand and execute orders which demanded memory of any precise form of speech. Charley Schmidt was a faithful soldier
in my company, a believer in German beer and in German military ability, profoundly impressed "dot if Plenker [Blenker] or Zeckle [Sigel] vair only de gommander of de vorzis, mein Gott, de reppils voot shoost kit oop and kit out of de vay, you het petter peleef." Charley and I happened to be on guard together the night when the field grand rounds of the brigade we had joined at Darnestown made their first regular and formal circuit. Heretofore we had not been brigaded or divisioned, but had been a host in ourselves. The sergeant came along beforehand and gave each of us the most explicit instructions how to challenge. He said: "Now, Charley, be sure to get it right. Don't make any mistake. When you hear them coming about ten rods off, you want to shout 'Who comes there?' As soon as the answer is heard, 'Field grand rounds,' you must cry, 'Halt, grand rounds; advance sèrgeant with the countersign.'" All right, Charley will try to remember. But Charley walks on pebbles. He repeats it and repeats it with fear and trembling, lest he should make an error and the war be a failure. Hark! the august cavalcade approaches. We
can hear the clanking of hoofs and the rattle of sabres. One after another challenges, the cortége halts, the password is given, on they press to the next sentinel. Now it is Charley's turn, but the words stick in his throat, which has not been lubricated with lager beer for some hours. Summoning all his moral energy he at length sreeches out: "Who isht dair?" "Field grand rounds," they answer back. "Halt de krant rounst," commands Charley,—"atvance, zarchent, mit de—mit de—mit de—mit de—mit de—mit de gorporal-sign." The officer making the rounds did not reproach Charley for his bungling, but Charley reproached himself, and would not be comforted till the sutler's tent was opened at six in the morning and he could refresh himself once more with the beverage he loved.

I often amused myself then and later when on guard, by listening to the different national brogues that made themselves heard in the challenges as the grand rounds passed from sentinel to sentinel. There was the flat, blunt, homely Yankee challenge, uttered by the farmer boy of old Connecticut: "Who kums thar?" There was also the Irish: "Heu cooms theyer?" and the German: Who koomsh dair?"
I must conclude; but before doing so, or rather, in doing so, I am anxious to give you a passing acquaintance with a few of my first year war comrades whom I have not yet mentioned. It is no reproach to Charlie Schmidt, Frisbee and Bill Pilkington to say that they did not alone compose that galaxy of fixed stars that made up the brilliant company in which it was my privilege to shine in the character of [pardon the egotism] a lamp. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to introduce you to my friend, Private James Jacoby, the peer, if such exists on earth, of that other friend of mine already familiar to you, Frisbee the cook, in the matter of good nature, serenity of temper, facility and felicity in taking things as they come. Jacoby is from the Fatherland, but has been in America so many years that you would hardly suspect his nationality from his speech. Like his illustrious fellow-countryman, Charley Schmidt, however, he loves beverage, but rarely takes too much and is never rendered savage or brutal by indulgence. He never grumbles, but eats, sleeps, drills, stands guard, and is paid off, without a word of complaint; has learned like the
apostle, in whatsoever state he is therewith to be content. Many a time have I heard Jacoby, as he lay down to sleep on the ground at night after a good square meal, and drew his blanket over him, say: "O aint I glad I came to war!" And many a time, when some churlish Englishman in the company was grumbling at everything and cursing everybody from Abe Lincoln down to the corporal that stood by, would Jim Jacoby turn to him and say: "Man, you no business to listed, you'd grumble if you was goin' to be hung."

Let me present you next to Private Alexander Wilson. For short, we call him Alek. His father and mother were Irish and he is Irish too. This explains why Alek is a wit. He can be tender, also, as I know from having had charge of his courting correspondence for several months. The fact is, my company in general was mightier in military than in literary attainments; and as in the kingdom of the blind the near-sighted man is king, so among us, he who could read and write was pronounced to possess a liberal education. "My parents were poor but respectable," and I had seen the inside of a
school-house more days than most of the fellows with whom I stood shoulder to shoulder in defending the sacred cause of liberty. So I became private secretary to several, of whom Alek Wilson was one. It is not, however, so much on his tenderness as on his wit that I would dwell at present. Alek, one evening, had been, to state it mildly, under the influence of stimulating liquids, and the colonel had seen fit to tie him up over night, by the wrists, with several other patriots in the same happy frame of mind. About eight in the morning, the colonel, a new-comer, by the way, a West Pointer, with whom it was somehow a pet notion that discipline must be maintained, went forth to labor with these miserable offenders. Seizing the first one by the throat, he said: "You rascal, were you drunk last night?" "No, sor," was the reply. "You lie," said the colonel; "Officer of the guard, keep this man here till noon." Grasping the next man in the same manner, he demanded: "You scoundrel, were you drunk last night?" "I was, sor," the fellow said. "Will you get drunk again?" "No, sor." "You lie,—officer of the guard, keep this man here till ten o'clock.'
The rigid disciplinarian came thirdly to Alek Wilson. "Wilson, you scamp, were you drunk last night?" "Shure I was, sor." "Will you get drunk again?" "Begorra I would, sor, if I got a good chance." "Honest man,—officer of the guard, take Wilson down and send him to his quarters; he tells the truth."

Lastly, permit me to make you acquainted with their honors, Privates Cornelius Dacy and Jeremiah Horan, who dwell in my memory—and they will dwell there perpetually—together. Horan can read and is a logician; a philosopher, in fact. He has deep views about politics and has constituted himself a standing committee on the conduct of the war. He is a democrat. If a fine deed or idea is ascribed to any prominent republican, he blasts its force by the innuendo, "yes, but what are his antecedents?"

When not on duty, Horan is on the other duty of instructing his messmates what a failure Lincoln is as a president, and how badly every Union campaign has been managed. It is his hobby that the Union troops are no match for the rebels anyway. Dacy, on the other hand, can not read, does not profess
politics, is not up on the conduct of the war at large, but patriotic to the backbone, and accounting it damnable heresy to hint that soldiers ever lived who were superior to himself and his glorious companions in the service of the United States.

One day Dacy falls into argument with Horan on this point. Dacy remembers, a trifle mixedly, what he has heard about the two battles, Bull Run and Ball’s Bluff [the only considerable engagements in the East up to the time of which I speak], and concludes to attack his antagonist by the historical method. Collecting his memories of the retreat across the Potomac from the last named battle, he says: “Fair did iver dthose ribbils schwim six miles under warther wid their knapsacks upon their backs and their mooskets in their hands?” Dacy believes this to be an unanswerable argument, a regular clincher. But Jeremiah Horan isn’t a disputant to be pushed to the wall so readily. “You blockhead, you,” he rejoins, “no soldiers ever did that. It’s nonsense. The Union men never did that. Where did Union soldiers ever do such a thing as that?” Dacy’s face reddened with patriotic
blood. "Where should it be?" he roars, the assurance of forensic victory lighting up every feature of his classic face, "where should it be? Shure where should it be but at the battle of Ball's and Bulls's Bluff."
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 BATTLE OF KELLY'S FORD,

MARCH 17, 1863.

BY

JACOB B. COOKE,

[Late First Lieutenant, First Rhode Island Cavalry.]

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THE BATTLE OF KELLY'S FORD.

The two happiest years of my life, the years which I look back upon with the greatest satisfaction, were the two years which I passed as a member of the First Rhode Island Cavalry. It ought to be a matter of pride to every man to have been a member of it, whether as private or officer. I had the pleasure of meeting General Hooker in Cincinnati in 1871, and in the course of conversation he said to me that he considered the First Rhode Island Cavalry to have been one of the best, if not the best regiment of cavalry in the Army of the Potomac. And I believe that his opinion was that of every general officer who had occasion to make use of its services.

I arrived in Providence on the ninth day of December, 1861, for the purpose of enlisting in the
regiment. I brought with me to Colonel Lawton, then commanding, a letter of commendation from Colonel Lawrence, of the Fifth Massachusetts Infantry, with which regiment I had served through the first three months' campaign, participating in the first Bull Run battle and its subsequent retreat, the culmination of which was an attack of typhoid fever which kept me in Washington several weeks after my regiment was mustered out. The First Massachusetts Cavalry, with which the First Rhode Island afterwards had such intimate associations, was just completing its enlistment when I had recovered sufficiently to re-enter the service, and thinking my chances for promotion would be better, I came to the First Rhode Island.

Immediately upon my enlistment, Colonel Lawton gave me a warrant as Quartermaster Sergeant, and I reported to Captain Gould for duty. A few days afterwards I was promoted to be one of the regimental Sergeant Majors. At this time the regiment had a battalion organization, with three Sergeant Majors, three Quartermaster Sergeants, and three Commissary Sergeants. When the battalion organ-
ization was done away with, I was made the regimental Sergeant Major.

Owing to his showy uniform, the Sergeant Major of a cavalry regiment is about the most conspicuous individual in it, and if I did not put on any airs it was not because I did not feel all the "pomp and circumstance" of my new position. I think, however, I must have shown a little of the peacock nature, for I can well remember my dignity being hurt on several occasions after I had purchased my first "thigh boots" by some of the men (who had not that respect for my exalted rank (?) which they should have had) calling after me—when their escape behind the stables was well assured—"Say, boots, where are you going with the boy?" What with the riding lessons, the breaking in of horses, the squad and company drills, the sabre exercise, with its everlasting right and left mouliné, the time passed pleasantly enough, although we were all glad when we left Pawtucket for Washington.

What member of the regiment will ever forget the discomforts and hardships of "Camp Mud," at Warrenton Junction, Virginia, which we took pos-
session of on the seventh day of April, 1862? The first three days at that camp, with the pitiless and continuous falling of rain, hail and snow, provided with nothing in the way of camp equipage but our rubber ponchos, which, when several were fastened together, made a partial covering only; the endeavor to floor our huts with fence rails and underbrush in a vain effort to keep our bodies raised above the mud; the horses dying at the picket lines for want of shelter and forage; all formed a picture of misery, and an epoch in the history of the regiment which will always remain vividly impressed upon our memories.

What member of the regiment will ever forget the lustre conferred upon it by the gallant action of the New Hampshire Battalion at Front Royal, which ended with the death of the dashing Ainsworth? an action which will favorably compare with that of any body of troops in any war, and which showed the stuff of which the regiment was made.

On the ninth of August, 1862, at Cedar Mountain, the First Rhode Island achieved a reputation for coolness under fire, and steadiness of manoeuvre in
face of the enemy, which was an enviable one, and which it verified afterwards on many a well-fought field.

Whatever may have been the faults of Colonel Duffié, there is no gainsaying the fact that he was probably the best regimental cavalry drill-master and tactician in the army, and also a brave and gallant soldier. An incident will illustrate his coolness under fire. At the battle of Groveton, which the First Rhode Island opened, being relieved after having been for a considerable time under fire, by the Fourteenth New York Infantry, I was sent by the Colonel to notify the First Battalion, which was deployed in front as skirmishers, to withdraw and join the regiment, which, when I rejoined the Colonel, was halted in a roadway, within range of the Confederate artillery. After reporting to the Colonel, I remained by his side at the head of the column. In a moment he turned to me and said, "Cookie, have you some tobacco?" I replied in the affirmative, and handed him some from my saddle-bag. He took a piece of paper from his pocket and commenced rolling a cigarette. The
operation was, possibly, half finished when an unexploded shell struck the ground immediately in front of us. The Colonel regarded it with the utmost coolness, not stopping for an instant in the rolling of his cigarette, while I, I must confess, felt that my absence from that particular spot at that particular moment would be beneficial to my health; but, of course, I had to remain and face the music. In a moment the shell exploded, spattering the dirt in our faces, but doing no damage. The Colonel coolly brushed his clothes and lit his cigarette.

At the battle of Chantilly, I well remember seeing General Phil. Kearney dashing across the field, his horse flecked with foam, the bridle reins in his teeth (his left arm had been left on Mexican soil), his sabre poised high in air, the very incarnation of the spirit of war. A more gallant soldier never set foot in stirrup.

But I must proceed to tell you of the affair at Kelly's Ford. I ought to know something of this battle, for the associated press dispatches giving the particulars of it which were published in the Northern papers on the nineteenth of March, 1863, headed
the list of killed with my name, in mistake for that of Lieutenant Nicolai. A memorial service was held by a Sabbath-school at Charlestown, Mass., of which I had been a member; the Boston and Charlestown papers published glowing obituary notices, and my eldest brother went down to Virginia after my corpse, which he found to be a remarkably lively one.

This battle, for it may be dignified by that title, was of very grave consequence; not so much in the number of men engaged, nor in the number of killed and wounded. Its effects were moral rather than physical. Previous to it, the entire artillery and infantry service had heard of the pertinent question of General Hooker, "Who ever saw a dead cavalryman?" and often as we passed them on the road sarcastically greeted us with it, much to our discomfiture. The result at Kelly's Ford changed all this. For the first time our cavalry had a chance to pit itself against that of the enemy. It was a given and accepted challenge of man against man, horse against horse, and sabre against sabre.

The result was such as to elevate us in the eyes
of the army, to increase our confidence in ourselves, and to increase our *esprit de corps*.

On the fourteenth of March, 1863, General W. W. Averill, commanding the Second Division of cavalry of the Army of the Potomac, asked and received permission from General Hooker to take his division across the Rappahannock and attack Fitzhugh Lee. On the fifteenth, Colonel Dulic reviewed his brigade, the First, and at the conclusion of his review informed its officers that it was to move the next day.

On the morning of the sixteenth, the division, numbering about three thousand men and horses, with four days' rations and one day's forage, left its camp at Potomac Creek Station for the purpose of attacking the forces under Lee, reported to be in the vicinity of Culpeper Court House. There were in the command two hundred picked men from the First Rhode Island, under command of Major Farrington. The division arrived at Morrisville at about six o'clock that evening, where it was joined at midnight by the Sixth New York Independent Horse Battery. On the night of the sixteenth, the camp fires of the
enemy were seen by our scouts between Ellis's and Kelly's Fords, and the drums, beating the retreat and tattoo, were heard from their camps near Rappahannock Station. Rebel cavalry were seen by our pickets on the roads leading west, during the evening.

Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis, of the First Massachusetts, received orders during the evening to remain in Morrisville and take charge of all the pickets left north of the Rappahannock. He directed Colonel Doster, of the Fourth Pennsylvania, with two hundred and ninety men, to start from Mount Holly Church at four o'clock the next morning, and drive the enemy's pickets towards Rappahannock Station; to go thence to Bealton, and finally to station himself at Morgansburg and communicate with a picket which would be established at Elk Run, and with his (Curtis's) force at Morrisville. These orders were executed and the enemy was driven out of that section. Colonel Curtis's force numbered about nine hundred. Small parties of our cavalry had been sent two to four hours in
advance of the main body of the command to mask its approach. Captain Hart, of the Fourth New York, with one hundred picked men from that regiment, and the Fifth United States Regulars, was ordered during the evening of the sixteenth to proceed to Kelly's Ford, and at the first glimpse of dawn to dash across and capture the pickets on the south bank. He was to be supported by the rest of the regiment. These orders were given personally to Captain Hart by Major Chamberlain, chief of General Averill's staff, and a guide was furnished him.

At four o'clock on the morning of the seventeenth, the command was awakened without the blowing of the reveillé, and after a hasty breakfast took up its line of march for Kelly's Ford, about four miles distant. There were about twenty-one hundred men in column, composed of seven hundred and seventy-five from the First Brigade, under Colonel Duflé; five hundred and sixty-five from the Second Brigade, under Colonel McIntosh; seven hundred and sixty from the Reserve Brigade, under Captain Reno, and six guns under Lieutenant Browne.
When the head of the column arrived near the ford, the cracking of carbines told us that the crossing by the advance under Captain Hart had not been accomplished. General Averill was indignant that the surprise had not been effected, although it was afterwards learned that General Lee was cognizant of all our movements, and had reinforced his pickets on the evening of the sixteenth with ninety men, under Captain Moss, to whom he said that the Federal cavalry, four thousand strong, were at Morrisville, and would undertake to carry the ford by daylight the next morning. General Lee further stated that Captain Breckenridge was at the ford with sixty men, and had orders not to fire until the enemy's forces were in the water; that we should not be allowed to cross the ford, and that he would be in supporting distance at sunlight.

Major Chamberlain dashed down to Captain Hart's command, which was dismounted and firing at the enemy, who were in rifle-pits on the other side of the river, from the protection of a mill-race. Captain Hart was ordered to mount his men, form in column of fours and follow the Major across the
river. On reaching the river, Major Chamberlain discovered that the approach to the ford was obstructed by an abattis of felled trees lying across the road. At the same time he discovered that Captain Hart's command was retreating up the river. At this moment his horse was shot in three places, and he received a bullet through his nose. He then returned to the Fourth New York, which had halted a safe distance from the enemy, and sent an officer to General Averill with a request for pioneers. Twenty men from the Sixteenth Pennsylvania, with axes, were sent to Major Chamberlain, who ordered them down to the river to cut away the abattis, under the protection of two squadrons of dismounted men acting as sharpshooters, among them being Troop F, of the First Rhode Island. Under cover of this fire, Major Chamberlain again ordered the Fourth New York to follow him, and dashed for the river. The trees had only been partially removed, the fire being so hot from the rifle-pits that the pioneers hid under the banks. It was too hot also for the Fourth New York, and again that redoubtable (?) regiment retreated at break-
neck speed up the river. Major Chamberlain's horse here received another wound, but was not disabled. Giving his valuables to a staff officer, Major Chamberlain rode to the First Rhode Island and asked for volunteers to follow him across the river. All moved forward, when, selecting the platoon on the right, Troop G, commanded by Lieutenant Simeon A. Brown, and ordering Major Farrington with the rest of the regiment to follow in support, they went for the ford with a will. It was difficult work, for but one horse could leap the abattis at a time. Major Chamberlain's horse, frantic from wounds, sprung on a fallen tree, crushed through, and was shot dead as he touched the water. At that moment, Major Chamberlain received his second wound, the ball striking him in the left cheek, ranging down through the neck. The pioneers dragged him up the bank. Lieutenant Brown, followed by his platoon of eighteen men, dashed into the water which was icy cold, four feet deep, and running with a very rapid current. The fire from the rifle-pits was so hot that but three men besides Lieutenant Brown succeeded in reaching
the south bank. These men were Sergeant Emmons D. Guild, and privates John A. Medbury and Patrick Parker. Parker's horse was killed in the river. The rest of the platoon were disabled by being shot themselves or having their horses shot.

The crossing was a gallant act, gallantly done. Lieutenant Brown, who rode a white horse, was a very conspicuous mark. Upon reaching the south bank he rode up to the edge of the rifle-pit and looked down upon the "rebs" for a moment, who were so much astonished at his audacity that they did not fire. Wheeling his horse to the right, managing to get behind a tree in line with the rifle-pits, he waved his sabre in the air for a moment, calling out to the rest of the regiment, "Come on! Come on!!" He then dismounted, turned to Sergeant Guild, and asked him for his carbine. It was handed to him, and firing into the rifle-pit he killed one man and wounded two others. Many shots were fired at Brown, but he escaped being hit, although he had three bullets through his clothing and his horse was hit twice. Sergeant Guild was wounded in the side, but not seriously.
By this time the head of the remainder of the First Rhode Island’s column was in the middle of the river, charging across under a heavy fire, the “rebts” in some cases standing up in the pits. I remember particularly one long, lank fellow who had a bead on me, and I thought for a moment my time had come, but I bobbed my head to him and his bullet whistled harmlessly over it. The first to reach the south bank were Major Farrington, Captain Thayer, Lieutenants Fales, Chedell and myself. So far as I was concerned, all the credit there was in it was due to my horse. She had a mind of her own, and that mind was always to be in the front. But although we were the first, the rest of the boys were right behind us. As we reached the bank the “rebts” began to leave their rifle-pits and run towards a piece of woods about a quarter of a mile distant, in which their horses were tied. The south side of the bank was protected by an abattis constructed of stakes driven into the ground, tied together by twigs, and running from the end of one of the pits to the edge of the river. Major Farrington ordered two men to dismount and tear this down,
when Lieutenant Fales jumped his horse over it and rode to the top of the bank, where he waited for Major Farrington, who, with some of the rest of us, were with him in a moment, and a second afterwards dashing after the fleeing "rebs," whom we ordered to throw down their arms and surrender. Twenty-five of them were thus captured and sent to the rear.

During the crossing of the regiment, Colonel Duffie's horse was hit by a bullet and his rider thrown into the river, considerably bruising one of his legs. Lieutenant Rhodes's horse was killed. Near the woods in which the "rebs" had secured their horses there was a fence which was speedily torn down, with which we made fires and warmed and dried ourselves.

The balance of the First Brigade now crossed the river, followed by two guns; then the Second Brigade, and the remainder of the artillery, followed by the reserve. All the horses were watered by squadrons, and we were ready for a forward movement. At eleven o'clock the entire force moved towards Culpeper Court House, fourteen miles dis-
tant, with Colonel McIntosh's command, consisting of the Third, Fourth and Sixteenth Pennsylvania, on the right; Reno's command, consisting of the First and Fifth Regulars, forming the centre and reserve, and Duflic's Brigade, composed of the First Rhode Island, the Fourth New York, and the Sixth Ohio, on the left, the First Rhode Island taking the advance, and the Sixth Ohio being deployed as skirmishers. After advancing something less than a mile, as the head of the column approached the edge of a piece of woods, the enemy was discovered advancing in line with skirmishers. The Fourth New York was ordered to the right to form front into line and advance to the edge of the woods and use carbines; the Fourth Pennsylvania to the left with the same orders, and the section of artillery to the front to open fire. Colonel McIntosh was ordered to form line of battle on the right of the woods, and Captain Reno sent three of his squadrons to the right to act as a reserve, and one squadron up the road to support the centre. One section of artillery was sent to the right to McIntosh.

The enemy's artillery fire was now sweeping the
woods, causing marked disorder among the men of the Fourth New York and Fourth Pennsylvania. The Confederate left was advanced at a trot for the purpose of capturing a house and outbuildings in front of McIntosh, who defeated their purpose by dismounted men of the Sixteenth Pennsylvania, aided by a section of artillery. Our right was then advanced into the field beyond the house, and the enemy's left successfully attacked by McIntosh and Gregg.

In the meantime Dulli had formed the First Rhode Island, the Fourth Pennsylvania and Sixth Ohio in front of the left, with the Fourth New York as a support. At this time the First Rhode Island was in advance on the Culpeper road, alongside of which ran a stone wall, with a small portion of it thrown down. While the First Rhode Island were thus halted in the roadway, a column of Confederate cavalry advanced in squadron front from the woods on the opposite side of the field, and when part way across turned the head of their column to the left and retired, firing with their carbines and pistols as they galloped past. Major Farrington was wounded
by this fire, receiving a pistol shot in the neck, having a most narrow escape from a fatal wound. I was saved from a bad wound in the thigh by the ball striking my sabre's scabbard.

A few minutes afterwards the Confederates advanced through the same piece of woods and charged across in column of battalions, yelling like demons, and apparently confident of victory. Duffié ordered his command, which was in column of fours, forward, and it moved into the field through the gap in the wall, Duffié immediately ordering front into line. Before any troops but the First Rhode Island had time to get into line, Duffié ordered the charge. The First Rhode Island went at the "rebs" with a will, led by Captain Gould, who had taken command upon Major Farrington's retiring to have his wound dressed. The "rebs" retreated in disorder, hardly waiting to feel the sabre, pursued by the First Rhode Island with great spirit, taking many prisoners, among them being Major Breckenridge, a cousin of the Vice-President of the Confederacy, who was captured by Lieutenant Fales. Some of our men went too far, and not
noticing another column of Confederates advancing on their flank were captured. My horse carried me through the Confederate lines, and I escaped by making a detour to the left, jumping a fence into a by-road which ran into the Culpeper road, and turning to the left again jumped a fence back into the field in which the regiment was. In this charge Lieutenant Nathaniel Bowditch, of the First Massachusetts, and Assistant Adjutant General on Colonel Duffié's staff, was mortally wounded after having cut down three rebels. The First Rhode Island lost eighteen men taken prisoners, among them being Captain Thayer and Lieutenant Darling.

Of this charge by the First Rhode Island, the correspondent of the New York Times wrote as follows: "Your correspondent has seen in this war several brilliant cavalry charges, but he never saw anything so handsome and exciting as the dashing charge made on the left of our line by Colonel Duffié, commanding on that part of the field."

A few minutes later the Confederates attempted another charge, which was repulsed in such a handsome manner by the First Rhode Island and a squad-
ron of the Fifth Regulars, led by Colonel Duffié, that they retreated a mile before their officers could rally them. About the same time the Confederate cavalry on our right made a demonstration which was effectually checked by McIntosh with the Third and Sixteenth Pennsylvania. In the mean time our artillery was playing on the fleeing rebels and quickening their speed.

It now became necessary to reorganize the command, so the sections of the battery were assembled, stragglers brought up from the rear, and the left of the line, formed by the First Rhode Island and the Sixth Ohio, was rested on the road, the ground on the left being impracticable on account of its marshy condition. The right of the advance was given to the Fifth Regulars. The enemy was driven through the woods about three-quarters of a mile, with the artillery supported by a column in the road, when open ground was made, and the enemy discovered drawn up in line of battle on both sides of the road, and about half a mile in front. The Confederates had been reinforced and were said by prisoners to
be under the command of the redoubtable J. E. B. Stuart himself, aided by Generals Fitzhugh Lee, Rosser and Pelham.

The left of our line was immediately extended under a sharp fire of shot, shell and small arms, under cover of which the Confederate cavalry advanced on both flanks, the force attacking the left and advancing with great steadiness until it had reached within four hundred yards of our battery, which had not yet unlimbered. A section was quickly got into action, however, and with the aid of a charge made by the First Rhode Island and Sixth Ohio the attack was repulsed, the Confederates retreating in much disorder. Their attack on the right had been similarly unsuccessful.

The whole line was now advanced across the open ground through patches of woods until we reached a stubble field. Here we formed in line of battle, the left being composed of the First Rhode Island and Sixth Ohio. On the left of the First Rhode Island was a section of artillery. Immediately in our front, half a mile distant, on rising ground, were three pieces of artillery, two ten-pound Parrots and
one six-pounder. No horses could be discovered about these guns, and from the manner in which they were served it was evident they were protected by earthworks. These guns were served with great effect, for each shot took a man or a horse. This sort of thing was very annoying, and the First Rhode Island and Sixth Ohio were moved to the rear and marched and countermarched for the purpose of keeping out of range of the rebel artillery. During one of the wheels made at this time, Lieutenant Nicolai was killed by my side by a solid shot striking him in the neck. Major Farrington had returned to us some time before this, having had his wound dressed, and was now in command of the regiment.

While we were in this position, manoeuvring to keep out of range of the enemy's guns, General Averill rode in front of our line, and pointing to the guns said, "Boys, you mustn't mind the fire from those guns; it won't hurt you; its effect is only a moral one." At this moment a shot struck within a few feet of his horse, the "moral effect" of which was to make the General immediately gallop to the
right of the line to look after affairs there. Shortly after this a demonstration was made by the Confederate left which was repulsed by Colonel McIntosh.

Matters remained very quiet now for some time, with the exception of an occasional shot from the Confederate battery, when, at about half-past four o’clock, occurred one of the most gallant feats of the war, the credit of which belongs to the First Rhode Island and the Sixth Ohio, and of which they have a right to feel very proud.

The rebel guns in front of us had remained quiet for a while when suddenly they began a rapid and annoying fire, under cover of which a column of cavalry was seen advancing in column of fours. Prisoners stated that the command was composed of the First and Fourth Virginia, seven hundred strong, including the famous Black Horse Cavalry, accompanied, if not led, by Stuart himself. The woods from which the Confederates emerged were less than a quarter of a mile distant, and a line of fence ran across the fields from the road on our right.

The rebels advanced at a trot, under fire of our
two guns, which were unable to do much execution on account of defective ammunition, until they came to the fence, where they halted for a moment to allow of its being torn down by dismounted men; they then advanced, deploying into squadrons. In the meantime the First Rhode Island and Sixth Ohio had again formed on the right of the battery, in echelon, for the purpose of supporting it, for its capture was evidently the purpose of the Confederates. When our squadrons had been halted and dressed, for we were manoeuvred as if on parade, the order was given to "Advance carabines!" As the Confederates advanced, having now changed from the trot to the gallop, our men were anxious to open fire upon them, but although there were one or two men who indulged in such cries as "Come on, come on, you sons of guns, we can't reach you there," but one man discharged his carbine, whereupon Colonel Dufié, who was sitting quietly on his horse on the right, commanded, "Steady, men; don't you stir; we fix 'em; we give 'em hell!" A moment afterwards the orders were given, "Sling carabines! Draw sabres!!" Empty scabbards fell back with rattle
and clang, and a line of cold steel flashed in the waning sunlight. On came the "rebs," now changed from the gallop to the charge, yelling and cheering, and firing an occasional shot from carbine or pistol. Captain Rogers, who was in command of the First Rhode Island, said to Major Farrington, "Shall I not go, Major?" "No!" replied the Major. Still we remained quiet. I turned in my saddle and looked at the men behind me. Never shall I forget their appearance. Every sabre was grasped as with a hand of iron; every eye was looking straight to the front; every knee was gripping its owner's saddle as with a vise. They sat indeed like a veritable stone wall; they appeared as immutable as fate. Turning again to the front I could see that the first squadron of the charging "rebs" was wavering; files of men were breaking off from the right and left. I exclaimed to myself, with I am afraid a big, big D, "We've got them." Again Captain Rogers said to the Major, "Shan't I go?" Again Major Farrington replied, "Not yet; wait a minute." Waiting a few seconds longer, till the "rebs" were within a hundred feet of us, the Major
said "Go!" Then came the ringing order from Rogers, "Charge!" At them we went as if shot from a catapult. But they could not stand the cold steel. They broke and ran in wild disorder, leaving a number of dead, wounded and prisoners, among the former being the gallant General Pelham. Sergeant Fitzgerald, of Troop G, First Rhode Island, was killed, shot through the heart. We pursued the fleeing "rebs" but a short distance, when we returned to our battery.

During the day there had been many personal encounters, single horsemen dashing at each other with full speed, and cutting and slashing with their sabres until one or the other was disabled.

There had been many a dashing charge made and repulsed by battalions and regiments, but this last charge by the First Rhode Island and Sixth Ohio, at this time with probably less than two hundred men in line, against the First and Fourth Virginia with four times their number, was by all odds the most brilliant affair of the day, and deserves to be preserved in history. The General commanding pro-
nounced it to be one of the most splendid ever made.

Thus ended the battle of Kelly’s Ford. It was now after five o’clock; the enemy had retired behind their guns; our men and horses were exhausted; the artillery’s ammunition had been expended; the object of the expedition had been accomplished, and orders were given for retiring. The reserve was advanced to the front and deployed to mask the battery which was withdrawn, and the regiments retired in succession until the ford was reached and crossed, without the loss of a man in the operation.

The force on our side actively engaged was twenty-one hundred cavalry and six guns. The rebel force was nearly the same, although General Lee acknowledged having but between fourteen hundred and fifteen hundred men and six guns.

The loss of the enemy in killed, wounded and prisoners was more than two hundred. The loss on our side was eighty, of which forty-two were from the First Rhode Island. That tells the story. We had more than half the loss with less than one-tenth of the whole number engaged. Of the Confederate
prisoners more than three-fourths were taken by us.

It was a glorious day for the First Rhode Island Cavalry, and its memory is not to be effaced until we, each and all, are called to respond to life's last taps.
APPENDIX.

In "The Campaigns of Stuart’s Cavalry," by Major H. B. McClellan, twelve pages are devoted to this combat at Kelly’s Ford, and on page 207 is the following: "General Lee says that only eleven or twelve men were stationed in the rifle-pits at the ford at the time of the attack." This must be a mistake, and the letter of Captain William A. Moss without doubt gives the facts substantially, although he depends upon memory alone. In a previous letter he speaks of having fired five times at the officer on the gray horse (Lieutenant Simeon A. Brown, First Rhode Island Cavalry), who led the column across the ford.

Buckingham Court House, Va., Jan. 22, 1886.

My Dear Captain:

Your letter of the 20th inst. is just received, and I hasten to reply. As I stated to you some time since, I am dependent almost entirely upon memory as to occurrences which took
place during the war, having lost all my papers about the time of the surrender at Appomattox Court House. My memory now is that I carried with me to Kelly's Ford, on the morning of the 17th of March, 1863, about ninety men; that I left as a guard with the horses, in the edge of the woods, about one-half mile back from the ford, on the road to Brandy Station, five men, taking with me eighty-five to the rifle-pits near the ford. Captain Breckenridge was already in position, giving me no opportunity to find out his force, and I do not remember what number he officially reported, but am sure he must have had sixty men with him, making in all one hundred and forty-five men. Captain Breckenridge stated before the Court of Inquiry that he did not fire, being short of ammunition, so all the execution that was done was due to me. I have often wondered how it was that I could have missed the gray horse, as I fired at him more than at his rider, feeling sure that if I brought him down the rider would be helpless, besides the rider had challenged my admiration by his courageous bearing under the trying circumstances.

* * * * *

The charge on your part was a gallant one, for few regiments would have undertaken it under the heavy fire that was poured upon them that cold morning.

Very truly your friend,

Wm. A. Moss,

Late Captain Co. K., 4th Va. Cavalry.

To Captain George N. Bliss,

Providence, R. I.
Major McClellan claims that the Confederate force on this occasion did not exceed eight hundred cavalry, supported by Breathed's battery of four guns, and that the last charge was made by the entire force on the Confederate side. On page 213 he says: "Not a squadron was left to reinforce the charge when broken on the enemy's lines, and there was nothing behind which his regiments could rally, if unsuccessful, except the four guns of Breathed's battery."

The charge was unsuccessful, and on page 215 we find: "Now, indeed, there was an opportunity for General Averill to 'rout or destroy' Fitzhugh Lee's brigade. He had a large force in reserve; and two fresh regiments, one on either side of the road, could have swept that field beyond the hope of recovery. He could have ridden over Breathed's guns before the brigade could possibly have formed to protect them." Major McClellan is not complimentary to General Averill. On page 216 he says: "We cannot excuse General Averill's conduct. He ought to have gone to Culpeper Court House."

On page 217 we find: "General Lee reports a loss of
elever killed, eighty-eight wounded, and thirty-four taken prisoners. Of the latter, twenty-five were captured at the ford; only nine were lost in the subsequent fighting. This fact is in itself an eloquent commentary on the conduct of this brigade.”

General Lee reports a loss of seventy-one horses killed, eighty-seven wounded, and twelve captured. In his address on the battle of Chancellorsville he calls attention to the large proportion of horses killed, as showing “the closeness of the contending forces.”

General Averill reports an aggregate loss of eighty. Out of this number, forty-one casualties occurred in the First Rhode Island Cavalry. “This regiment fairly carried off the honors of the day on the Federal side.”
PERSONAL NARRATIVES
OF EVENTS IN THE
War of the Rebellion,
BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE
RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THIRD SERIES - NO. 20.

PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1887.
The Investment of Fort Pulaski.

BY

ALONZO WILLIAMS.

[Late Second Lieutenant, Third Rhode Island Heavy Artillery.]

PROVIDENCE:
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1887.
THE INVESTMENT OF FORT PULASKI.

After the first campaign in 1861, which terminated so disastrously at Manassas, the army in Virginia lay comparatively inactive until the spring of 1862. During this long interval, however, several important expeditions were set on foot in the west and in the farther south. One of the latter was organized very early in the fall of 1861, and set sail from Hampton Roads October twenty-ninth, consisting of fifty keels under Commodore Dupont, and fifteen thousand troops under General T. W. Sherman. After a stormy passage, during which the fleet was dissipated to the winds of heaven and four steamers were lost in a hurricane off Cape Hatteras, the scattered and battered armada began to re-collect and rendezvoused off Port Royal, South Carolina. Forts Walker and Beauregard were reduced, a footing gained on the sea islands and the enemy forced back to the main-land.
The army and navy deployed at once in every direction by land and sea and commenced operations against the line of the enemy, which extended some two hundred miles from Charleston, South Carolina, across Georgia to Jacksonville on the St. John's River in Florida, and was commanded at this time by no less a personage than General Robert E. Lee. This line was the principal theatre of action of the Third Rhode Island Heavy Artillery, some portion of which was actively engaged at every salient point of this stubbornly defended line during the next four years, participating in every engagement in siege and field, and serving as infantry, as heavy artillery, as light artillery, as horse artillery. Company A, of which the narrator had the honor of being a member during the entire four years, was in turn metamorphosed into each of the species of the genus soldier above named; and served, moreover, for several months in the navy, until one pleasant morning in the spring of '63 all its members were raised to the mast-head by the explosion of a rebel shell in the magazine, and found, when they came down, that the steamer also had been razed to the water's edge.
The first siege our regiment was called upon to undertake was that of Fort Pulaski, situated at the entrance to the Savannah River, and to this I have the pleasure of inviting your attention this evening. Our esteemed fellow-citizen, General Horatio Rogers, who played such a distinguished and honorable part in the breaching batteries on Tybee Island, has in preparation an account of the bombardment and capture of the fort; consequently I shall limit this paper definitely to the investment, every phase of which, from the inception to the crowning consummation, came under the observation of the narrator; and of this I hope to give details which have not as yet been put upon record. I cannot well suppress the apprehension, however, lest the details I shall give may sound to you like the calm and monotonous passages from an Odyssey in comparison with the soul-stirring episodes of an Iliad, with the recital of which these halls are accustomed to be filled, and I crave at the outset your most patient indulgence.

Fortified Line of the Enemy.

Port Royal was the centre of activity. In our front the enemy had constructed a formidable stra-
tegic line, its right resting on Fort McAllister on the Ogeechee River, sixteen miles south of Savannah, passing through Fort Beaulieu on Vernon River and numerous strong batteries on the intervening islands to Forts Thunderbolt, Bonadventure and Clausten's Bluff on St. Augustine Creek, to Forts Jackson, Lee, Tatnall and Lawton on the Savannah immediately in front of the city, and thence on to the left of the line, resting on Charleston harbor, eighty miles to the north. The advanced posts of this line were at Pulaski, New River Bridge, Bluffton, Port Royal Ferry, and on the extreme left, Morris Island and Sumter. At all these points in turn attacks were made upon this line, but without avail, as the enemy had large forces encamped along the Charleston and Savannah railroad which could be readily concentrated upon any threatened point. From a careful study of the official reports — Union and Confederate — it is fair, however, to presume that a concentrated and vigorous attack might have broken this line, cut the communications, taken Savannah, and possibly Charleston in reverse, and thus very early in the war have opened an avenue to the
vitals of the Confederacy. This was the plan of General Sherman and just what General Lee feared he would attempt. The failure was due principally to the peremptory refusal of the newly-elected chief of all the armies to send the necessary reinforcements.

Compelled to give up his original plan, General Sherman decided to force the entrance to the Savannah by siege. His chief engineer, General Gilmore, made a reconnoissance and reported that the reduction of the fort was practicable from Tybee Island. The armament for the breaching batteries, however, did not arrive from the north until after an interval of fifteen weeks; yet expeditions were set on foot immediately for the investment of the fort.

The Savannah River runs to the southeast and its débouchure at Tybee Roads is about twelve miles from the city. It is skirted by low marsh islands, intersected by innumerable large and small tortuous bayous and creeks. On the Carolina side lies a vast marsh called Hog Island, below Mud River, Jones Island, across Wright River, Turtle Island, beyond New River in the background Daufuskie Island.
In the stream lie Elba, Bird, Long and Cockspur Islands. The latter is the site of Fort Pulaski. On the Georgia side lie McQueens, Decent, Little Tybee, and projecting far out beyond the northern lip of the river's mouth Big Tybee, its seaward face a low, sandy promontory, against which the Atlantic incessantly breaks.

The fort is of brick, its walls, seven and one-half feet thick, rising twenty-five feet above high water. Its form is that of a rectilinear pentagon, whose vertex is to the open sea. The up-river face, or gorge, is covered by a demilune of earth in bold relief. The main work is surrounded by a ditch forty-eight feet wide, and the two faces of the demilune were protected by a ditch thirty-two feet wide. The only communication with the exterior, up to the time our James Rifles opened a better one, was through the gorge over a drawbridge into the demilune and then through the left face of the demilune over the demilune ditch by another drawbridge. The fort is casemated on all sides and mounts one tier of guns en embrasure and one en barbette, a full armament being one hundred and forty, though
only forty-eight were in battery at the time of the bombardment; twenty of which bore on Tybee, viz.:

- Five 10-inch columbiads.
- Five 8-inch columbiads.
- Four 32-pounders.
- One 24-pounder Blakely.
- Two 12-inch seacoast mortars.
- Three 10-inch seacoast mortars.

The position is a very strong one and commands both channels of the river. Well might its commandant, Colonel Olmstead, feel secure in such a stronghold against any batteries that could be planted in the bottomless marshes by which he was encompassed.

**FIRST RECONNAISSANCE.**

The expeditions for the investment were made on the north via Calibogue Sound, Cooper, New, Wright and Mud Rivers, planting batteries in the marshes on the north bank and in the middle of the Savannah.
A reconnaissance was made by Lieutenant Wilson, of the United States Topographical Engineers, to spy out the land. We set out December twenty-fourth, forty men from Company A under Lieutenant Fry, and forty men from Company E under Captain Bailey, marched across Hilton Head to Saybrook, entered four large surf-boats and pulled out through Skull Creek into Calibogue Sound. At night we ascended Cooper River and turning into Ramshorn Creek, which connects with New River, we landed about nine o'clock on Pine Island. Here in a small cabin a council of war was held, and each squad was instructed in the perilous duties it might be called upon to perform. I may read the orders given to my sergeant, Charles H. Williams, in the execution of which—execution is here just the word—his squad was to furnish the background to the claret-colored scene he was about to paint and to give bold relief to the stalwart form of its sergeant in the foreground. A lonely picket was supposed to be stationed at a certain outpost by which we must pass. The poor picket was not to blame. But it is the inexorable law of life: the individual must
ever be sacrificed to the advance of the race. Our
sergeant was to land and approach the object of our
compassion. When arrested by: "Who goes there?"
he was to answer: "Friend with the countersign."
[What a fib! but, lying like swearing, is at times a
military necessity,] and when invited to "Advance,
friend, and give the countersign!" he was to approach
as close as permitted and then, leaning forward as
if to whisper the password, then—shall I tell it?—
I will read the very words of the order: "Strike
down your man!" The squad was to be near enough
to see that the picket interposed no objection to the
execution—of the order. A nice way this to spend
Christmas eve. Each of our sergeants was in turn
summoned into that little shanty and assigned
some similar duty, and we remember how cheerful
each looked as he came out.

As we were now inside the enemy's lines, oars
were muffled, and having been enjoined to speak
only in whispers, we pushed on in the direction of
Savannah. We passed through one noted thorough-
fare called: "Pull-and-Be-Damned-Creek." That
was the euphonious title which the "contrabands,"
who are of rather an emotional religious-temperament, gave to the harmless waterway. If I remember rightly, as we struggled against its swift tide that night, several of my non-religious comrades expressed to each other in pretty stout whispers their opinion that the sluice was none too well named, and even volunteered a few semi-religious epithets as harmonious additions to the sentence-tious appellation. Our negro boatmen and guides lost the way or became frightened, so we turned back and landed on Daufuskie toward morning, and after throwing out pickets, snatched a few hours sleep in a deserted house.

Lieutenant Wilson now set out with Captain Bailey and a boat's crew to get the bearings in the day time, leaving the rest of us to cover their rear, and to meet them after dark on Pine Island. On their return at evening they were intercepted by pickets stationed near Bloody Point, on the very island where we had spent the day. They rowed boldly for the shore, and after a sharp encounter drove them in.

Nor had the party left on Daufuskie been inactive.
They too had met the enemy and gloriously conquered. If you will call upon my *Fidus Achates*, comrade George M. Turner, he will give you the details of the charge which he so gallantly led, and will tell you how the new sabre-bayonets of Company A received their first stain of hostile blood. As the result of the skirmish—for it hardly rose to the dignity of an engagement—the party sat down to a Christmas dinner of roast beef, sweet potatoes and confiscated chicken.

Soon after our re-union on Pine Island an alarm was given by the enemy and rockets sent up all along the line for miles. You must remember we were wholly within their lines, as they occupied the islands behind us. As the enemy were now on the alert, it was decided that only one boat should make the final and farthest venture that night. We started about ten p.m., Lieutenant Wilson, Captain Bailey, ten picked men and eight negro-boatmen. We worked our way stealthily up Wright River, through Mud River into the Savannah, Lieutenant Wilson making careful observations all the while, and each man grasping firmly his trusty rifle, his finger upon
the trigger, straining eager eyes into the darkness, ready to anticipate any over-hasty picket. We ascended thus the Savannah to within three miles of the city, and would probably have landed in Fort Jackson had we not come unexpectedly upon one of Commodore Tatnall’s fleet, the giant gunboat "Samson." We passed within twenty yards of it and could see the sentry pacing upon the deck. As it was getting early and the evidences of the enemy getting more and more numerous, indicated by the firing all about us, we concluded to turn back; and after a sharp exchange of compliments with the pickets along the streams, we arrived off the camp on Daufuskie, about ten o’clock in the morning, laden with much important information and several suitings of very rich mud.

To this camp, Lieutenant Fry and his men had returned about eleven o’clock the night before, stationed outposts, hung the windows of the old house with rubber blankets, built a fire and turned in with toes to the hearth. About one o’clock the firing, which had been heard at intervals, became more general and quite near. The sergeant of the guard,
Williams, was summoned without intermission from point to point. One picket after another claimed that he had seen men in the woods, and some that they had been fired upon. The guard was doubled, and later trebled, and all the men were aroused. Positive orders had been left not to fire unless attacked, as it might cut off the return of our party. Thus the men sat dosing, with equipments on and rifles across their knees until daylight, when they distinctly heard the *réveille* and platoon firing in the enemy's camp. Before our party returned they had become alarmed, had embarked in hot haste and were on the point of departure when we put in an appearance several hours behind the time agreed upon.

As the objects of the reconnoissance had been attained, we turned our prows toward Hilton Head, where we arrived at evening of the third day. Soundings had been made of the streams leading to the Savannah by which gunboats might approach to protect us while erecting batteries. It was developed, however, that New and Wright Rivers were connected by a narrow but deep artificial
channel, called Wall’s Cut, in the centre of which a
large schooner had been sunk and fixed in position
by heavy piles. Lieutenant Wilson reported these
facts at headquarters, but his report as to the prac-
ticability of erecting batteries on those mud
marshes was that it was absolutely impossible.

This expedition, penetrating so far into the enemy’s
lines and remaining there so long, was regarded as
a feat of unusual daring. The Comte de Paris in
his excellent history alludes to the discovery of the
inland passage “by a bold explorer.” Lieutenant
The greatest trouble was they wanted to fight, but
that was not our object.” We were welcomed as
heroes on our return, as it was rumored that we had
all been cut off and that Captain Bailey had been
killed. The genial captain still lives, however,
though he has passed through many a “Pull-and-be-
Damned-Creek” since Christmas eve, 1861.

REMOVAL OF THE SCHOONER.

A secret expedition was sent January eighth to
remove the schooner from Wall’s Cut, consisting of
Company I, First New York Engineers, Captain Walker, twenty picked men from the same regiment, and sixteen men from Company G, Third Rhode Island Heavy Artilley, Sergeant Hudson, all commanded by Major O. T. Beard, Forty-eighth New York. Surf-boats with tools were towed by the steamer Mayflower as far as prudent, a landing made on Daufuskie, the boats with the tools rowed by night around to the Dunn plantation near Bloody Point, where the men, who marched across the island, arrived at midnight, and in silence the stores were landed.

The next day an advanced line of pickets was sent out in boats, and preparations made by the engineers to commence work at nightfall. Steamers were constantly passing up and down the Savannah so near that men could be seen walking upon their decks, and the stars could be counted on the flag at Pulaski. That night the engineers succeeded in sawing off, with peculiar saws of their own invention, five of the piles at the very bottom of the deep channel, and in the morning returned with the piles in tow. Thus by incessant labor, night and
day, for nearly a week, they succeeded in removing all the piles and swung the schooner around and secured it to the side of the Cut.

One night as the details were approaching the Cut, a shot from that direction threw them into consternation. A moment later two shots were heard in their rear; then one from Fort Jackson, which was answered from the city. "What does this mean? Are we discovered?" asked Major Beard, as he called Captain Walker along side. The men were unarmed and apparently surrounded, but Major Beard was there, and after consultation it was decided to go ahead. Permission was kindly given to any who did not wish to accompany them to get out.

Did you ever know a man brave enough to back out under such circumstances? How situations like this taught us early in youth that fear is of very little real value in the practical affairs of life. Often when perils seem to gather about us there is no real danger of losing our life unless we first lose our heads. The firing was started by the neglect of Lieutenant Wilson to answer promptly the challenge of a picket, and there was no let up until the
circuit was completed, for when one picket has fired, every wavering reed becomes a man to every other picket; in the palpitation of his own heart he hears the tramp of the approaching foe; and the goblins of his own past deeds fill the air with frightful spectres. Have you ever been a lonely picket, my friend?

Early one morning, it was Sunday, a small boat was discovered coming up Mud River from the Savannah. Our picket boat lay in hiding until it had passed, and thus cut it off and captured it. The party proved to be duck hunters from the city. When informed that they were prisoners, they retorted: "We have a pass from General Drayton." "All right," replied the amiable and facetious lieutenant, "pass into my boat." When will men learn not to go down the river duck hunting on Sunday? The prisoners were much surprised to learn that the obstructions were nearly removed from the Cut, and told Major Beard what he already knew, that if it were known at Pulaski, they "would be blown to, to——; the Revised Version
spells it *sheol*, with a downward pitch on the last syllable.

When we remember that this obstruction was so far within the lines of the enemy that it was left unguarded on the supposition that we would not have the temerity to approach it, nor the ingenuity to remove it unseen, especially as steamers were passing daily in the Savannah, we may gain some idea of the delicacy and difficulty of these operations. The boys of the old "Third" have since then removed many schooners from their progress in life, but none that taxed more their ingenuity and powers of endurance than the one which they sawed out in Wall's Cut, January, 1862.

**JOINT EXPEDITION OF ARMY AND NAVY.**

A joint expedition of land and naval forces was now at once prepared. We left Port Royal January twenty-sixth, the Forty-eighth New York, Sixth Connecticut, parts of the Eighth Maine and First New York Engineers, and of our regiment, Company E, Company G, and twenty-five picked men from Company A, all commanded by General
Viele; and accompanied by gunboats under Commander John Rodgers. The guns and ordnance stores were towed on flats by the steamer Mayflower:

Four 30-pounder Parrott rifles.
Three 20-pounder Parrott rifles.
Two 8-inch siege howitzers.
One 24-pounder field howitzer.

Each flat carried equipments and ten rounds of ammunition for each gun. A schooner followed, containing, besides intrenching tools and ammunition:

Five 24-pounder field howitzers.
Three 24-pounder James rifles.
One 8-inch siege mortar.
One 10-inch siege mortar.

General Gillmore accompanied the expedition, and to his zeal and indomitable perseverance is chiefly due the success of the work accomplished on the upper Savannah, as well as that on Tybee, whither he was summoned a month later.
We rendezvoused on Daufuskie, where we found a part of the Seventh Connecticut guarding Wall's Cut. After a reconnoissance it was decided to erect a battery at Venus Point on Jones Island by towing the armament through Mud River and down the Savannah under protection of the gunboats; but it was deemed important to construct first a causeway over the marsh from Mud River, so that, in case of an attack in force, our infantry supports might be readily brought up from Daufuskie, four miles distant, the nearest point where reserves could be located with any certainty of finding them above the surface when wanted.

The first week was spent in cutting poles for the causeway, and in filling sandbags. Ten thousand poles nine feet long and from five to six inches in diameter were cut and brought a mile or more on the shoulders of the men. Several more days were spent in transporting this material to a temporary wharf in Mud River, and in constructing a wheelbarrow road of plank across to Venus Point, over which several hundred sandbags and a quantity of material were carried by the men, mostly at night.
Our men assisted in these various tasks, but our particular duty was to guard the flats. Lieutenant Porter, the Chief Ordnance Officer, said in his report: "Their skill and energy alone saved the flats during the long time they were exposed to rough waters, winds and tides." Those alone can fully comprehend the significance of these words, who passed those winter nights upon them, exposed to the fury of the storms, drifting in the swift running creeks, or stranded on the marshes, at the risk of losing the guns, which were more worth than their life.

The narrator was a member of a reconnoitering party sent out into and across the Savannah to find and cut the land and submarine telegraph wires between the city and fort. About a mile of the wire, running, as it were, under the very keels of their gunboats and between the legs of their pickets, was cut and carried off, a piece of which I hold in my hand.

Many interesting incidents occurred during our stay on Daufuskie, had we time to recite them. Here for the first time were we afforded an oppor-
tunity to develop that predatory faculty innate in every genuine Yankee soldier. If there was anything savory on that fertile island which the "Third Rhode Island" did not first enjoy, it is not recorded that any other regiment discovered it.

An incident, or rather accident, that befell one of Company E, Sergeant Keene, later Lieutenant in Company B, who has long since joined the boys on the other side of the river, we can never forget. Commander Rodgers had engaged five rebel gunboats, which were passing down the Savannah with barges in tow for the fort, and every one was on tiptoe to get a good view of the engagement. Sergeant Keene had been a sailor, and is led at once by his seafaring instinct to "shin" up one of the tall slender pines grown for that purpose. We watch him with envy as he climbs up, up, ten feet; up, up still, now twenty feet above our highest aspirations; he reaches at last a limb, and good seaman as he is, nimbly swings himself over it, seats himself in such a way as to show that the Creator made no mistake when he bifurcated man, and then prepares to drink in the enchanting pano-
rama. What envious creatures we are, forgetting, alas! the great truth in life's economy, to wit: the higher up a man gets, the more difficult it becomes to maintain his equilibrium. Hark! Something snaps and something drops. Envy is changed to pity, and a score of comrades hasten to raise a fallen brother. Is he dead? Bounteous Nature has provided a soft cushion, a sort of life-preserver for just such emergencies, if one but knows how to avail himself of it. Sergeant Keene had not been to sea in vain. Drawing the correct mathematical conclusion that the least surface of contact is furnished by two colliding spheres, he makes a few revolutions that would have done credit to an expert tumbler over elephants, then assumes the attitude he was looking for, and lands on that part of his rounded development where the least harm could result. That was the moment his picture should have been taken. The laugh that arose has hardly subsided to this day. Surely men are creatures of changing emotions.

One day a violent storm swept over the island, accompanied by terrific thunder, following in the
wake of wicked flashes of lightening. Sergeant Williams seeing a guard near his tent carrying his musket at shoulder with fixed bayonet, shouted: "Stick that d-d- dangerous bayonet in the ground!" Good soldier as he was, he halted on his beat, faced outward and ordered arms. The next instant he lay prostrate beside his musket — dead! He was laid in an "A" tent on the shore and Sergeant Williams was ordered to furnish a man to spend the night with the body. I heard him say that he wanted "a man who had sand in him" — that was one of his classical expressions, — and so he detailed one bearing the same name as himself, and there were but two of that distinguished Rhode Island name in the detachment. That body-guard has never forgotten the long cheerless hours of that night, and often has he prayed to all the Stygian gods that they will yet grant him an opportunity to reciprocate the kindness shown him at that time by his sandy namesake.

Taken all and all our life on Daufuskie was not an unpleasant one, a fact due in no small degree to the beauty of the island itself. The coast from
Charleston to Savannah is fringed with low, rich islands, which on the map has the appearance of elegant lace on a lady's mantle. Amongst these islands and the marshes which separate them from the main land, run innumerable rivers and deep, narrow creeks and bayous, into which the tides bring the warmth and life of the Gulf Stream. The islands have a rich, vegetable substratum, and are blanketed by the fine sands of the ocean's margin. These are the famous Sea Islands, and here grows in wild luxuriance the Sea Island cotton, with its long silky fibre. Here in stately majesty tower to the bending blue sky the unctuous southern pine, the proud, pompion-shaped palmetto, the delicately slender cypress, the fragrant magnolia; and here the majestic live-oak rears its graceful triumphal arches and hangs them with the gray, clinging drapery of the soft southern moss. Here abound shrubs and vines and flowers even in mid-winter, the lovely jasmine, the *gelsinium sempervirens*, clothing its climbing tendrils with yellow flowers and spreading fragrance and beauty on all around; as also the passion-flower, an inspiration
and assurance of our own success, preaching by cruciform petals and medicinal virtues the lesson of triumph through suffering.

Of all these charming islands none is more beautiful, fertile and luxuriant than the quiet isle of Daufuskie. Looking out through dense forests over the placid waters of Calibogue Sound; and toward the rising sun to the white caps of old ocean lashing itself to fury upon the sand-bars that lie upon the far horizon; and southward over the broad Savannah and its myriad isles, she seems to sit a queen of veritable eastern luxury and indolence among the many low marshes and flat rice fields that lie between her and the main land. Large mansions surrounded by ample buildings and rich gardens, added the life and grace of civilization to the native and semi-tropical wildness of this charming Sea Island. No one, surely, of the "Third Rhode Island" who passed the days from January 26 to February 11, 1862, on this island, can easily recall a sunnier spot in that, at once, dark and bright era of our life. Even now as I dwell upon it, recollection seems to grow clearer, memory sees farther
THE INVESTMENT OF FORT PULASKI.

back into the past, a holy calm encompasses those stormy years, and fain would I linger still within the precincts of the encircling charm and leave to others the recitals of the dangers and sufferings now so soon to follow.

THE PLANTING OF BATTERY VULCAN.

All was now ripe for planting the battery on Jones Island, and the contrast between our life of comparative comfort on Daufuskie and the arduous duties awaiting us call vividly to mind the statement of Cæsar in his commentaries on the Gallic War: that the gods are accustomed to grant to men favorable fortunes for a while that they may suffer the more grievously from a violent change of circumstances. It was decided that the gunboats should attempt the Mud River passage on the night of February ninth on the tide, and the Mayflower should follow immediately behind with the flats in tow. At nightfall all is in readiness for the perilous passage. The signal is given and the Mayflower turns on steam. The elements, however, were averse, if not in league with the enemy. The
bottom of the heavens fell out; the winds howled and spirits of terror and dismay were abroad; the muddy rivers boiled as a vast maelstrom; the mad tides rushed in from every direction, covering the islands like a second deluge; an impenetrable darkness spread itself over the scene; yet we struggled against Fate with a determination that would not yield till broken. What strength of character and iron wills that war developed! But our efforts were in vain and toward morning we cast anchor, and at daybreak found ourselves near the spot whence we started.

The gunboats now seemed reluctant to move. As Mud River was only about eight feet deep at flood and one and one-half at low tide, there was some doubt whether they could get back, should Tatnall prove more than a match in the Savannah. As the fort prevented them from going down the river, they might be themselves bottled and exposed to all the torpedoes and fire rafts from above. It would be useless for us to attempt the Savannah River passage without the gunboats. But General Gillmore was not a man to be frustrated in his
designs. He decided to haul the guns over the marsh to Venus Point, nearly a mile, a task any rational man would pronounce impossible. Had not General Lee already reported to Richmond that the erection of a battery on these islands was impossible? But General Gillmore left his dictionary at home and had evidently forgotten the definition of that word.

Let me describe to you Jones Island and you may judge of the feasibility of the undertaking. Like the adjacent islands it is covered with reeds and tall grass, and flooded at high tide. It is soft unctuous mud, free from sand and of the elasticity of gelatine. A pole can be forced into it ten or twelve feet with ease, and the resistance diminishes with increase of penetration. Even in the most elevated parts the crust is but four or five inches in depth, and the sub-stratum is a semi-fluid mud, which is agitated like jelly by the movement of bodies over it. A person is partially sustained by the roots of the grass and sinks only a few inches, but when this top gives way, he goes down suddenly several feet and unless rescued at once is in imminent peril.
THE INVESTMENT OF FORT PULASKI.

Over this treacherous surface the rash general proposed to transport guns of several tons weight; impossible! impossible! so said wise men, so said the rebels, so said the Fates. General Gillmore said: we'll try, and his features were set. That night four flats were towed by row-boats up against the tide through Wall's Cut into Mud River, between eight and ten p. m., and when all the guns and ammunition had been landed, an immense task alone, the men were set to hauling the pieces over the marsh. Most of them had been on continuous duty up to their waist in water for twenty-four hours and from sheer exhaustion were unfit for the arduous work, hence the pieces were covered with reeds and grass to prevent discovery and the men withdrew. That same night the engineers commenced the magazine and platforms on Venus Point. The floor of the magazine rested on sand-bags which raised it twenty inches, and the platforms, nine by seventeen feet, were raised six inches with sand brought up from Daufuskie and carried over in bags on the shoulders of the men. They also concealed their work and withdrew just before daybreak.
The next night the work was resumed, and the narrator can never forget that he was there. The task was of the most extraordinary labor, and exhausting to a degree beyond one's power to describe. Let me attempt to tell you how it was done. The pieces, limbered up, were moved on runways of planks laid end to end, each fifteen feet long, one foot wide and three inches thick. Each squad had one pair of extra planks which were placed in front and then the pieces drawn forward with strong drag ropes, and suppressed groans, until the rear planks were cleared and then those were carried to the front and the operation repeated, a slow and tiresome process. The planks soon became smeared with the slimy mud and difficult to handle, so that ropes had to be attached by which they were dragged through the mire. We sank to our knees and often to our waists, and encased our feet in sand-bags tied below the knee, and these served as a sort of pontoon, but after one had been under a few times, these became too heavy to drag and were discarded. Many vexatious delays and much exhausting labor was occasioned by the slipping of
the gun-carriages from the runways. They would sink at once to the axle, even deeper, and only by the most expeditious use of skids and great exertions were they kept from sinking to the bottom, while powerful levers had to be devised and much time and united effort expended to raise them to the surface again. When the wheels struck the poles on which the planks were laid, the other end of the pole would fly up, striking the men in body or face and land them in the mud, if not seriously cripple them. Add now to these Herculean efforts the dispiriting discomforts attendant upon a drenching winter storm, remembering what these same men had been called upon to undergo during the three preceding nights and intervening days spent in bringing up material from Daufuskie, and you may possibly form a faint conception of what those boys, then fresh from the schools and shops and farms and comfortable homes of New England, had to suffer on Jones Island that bitter night in February.

Need I tell you that toward morning they began to give out, and neither encouragements nor threats nor maltreatment availed. Many fell in the mud
and refused to rise, in most cases could not. As for myself, my very final effort at last was spent. The Fates, however, were not wholly unpropitious. At that instant there was for some reason a momentary halt. The wheel of our gun-carriage had scarcely ceased turning, when I saw my stalwart sergeant and namesake embracing its tire lovingly with folded arms, holding on for dear life, but fast asleep standing. I needed no farther incentive. I let go the will, my hamstrings relaxed and I dropped. Never did softer or more welcome couch receive the weary form of a king. I slept. I dreamed. Even now I recall the bliss experienced as the mud seemed to open and let me down, down, down to — well, any place were heaven to the sheol we were in. Those were precious moments, but, alas, they were fleeting, as all the purest joys of life. Whether it was a prod from a bayonet or a kick from my sergeant's stern foot, I was rudely aroused and summoned to the endless and hopeless task. I looked to my namesake for compassion, but he now towered up against the midnight sky forbidding as a Jove, looking as austere and inno-
cent as if he had never himself lapsed from duty. You who know my esteemed comrade only as a Paris, little realize what he is when a Mars. We must not linger to depict farther the details of this weary night. At two a. m. the first piece was at Venus Point and the last before nine o'clock, and by noon six guns were in battery ready for business:

Three 30-pounder Parrott rifles.
Two 20-pounder Parrott rifles.
One 8-inch siege howitzer.

The southerners had shown their knowledge of classical antiquity by naming this small elevation Venus Point, whether because it rose from the waves of the sea, or whether because so slightly clad, or because its fair surface was so treacherous, does not appear. The Yankees, not to be outdone in display of academic lore, recalling the special favors shown to the grim forger of Jove's thunderbolts by that fair goddess to whom all the gods, as well as degenerate man, are ever ready to pay
homage, solemnly christened this, the first offspring of their labors, "Battery Vulcan."

The day was spent in preparing for action. As night approached we began to look about for hard, not soft, places in which to sleep, being excluded from the platforms, as they could barely sustain the weight of the guns. Foresight had led the narrator to place his effects upon the cross-bar of a limber standing behind the gun in the mud, and thus he claimed by pre-emption this bar and the adjoining pole as his headquarters, and on that slender tongue he balanced himself and slept in happy equilibrium of body and spirit dreaming of the battle to come on the morrow.

In the morning the steamer Ida came down on her trip to Pulaski, all unconscious of the hidden danger. She was thrown into consternation by the storm of shot and shell that unexpectedly burst upon her, but escaped unharmed, as all our guns, except one, recoiled off the platforms. Having now disclosed our position, Tatnall might appear at any moment, and our guns were sinking in the mud. Ignorant of our plight the attack was delayed.
Meantime strenuous exertions were made to remedy our mistakes, and this preliminary experience, disclosing as it did our defects, saved Battery Vulcan from being knocked off Venus Point, and this narrative from being abruptly curtailed.

When Tatnall appeared the next day with four gunboats, we were ready for him, and after a warm engagement of an hour he was glad to have his disabled flagship towed out of action. This engagement was fought by us against large odds in number of guns, without any cover by parapet, and that, too, on unfinished platforms. General Sherman sent his felicitation as follows:

"The commanding general requests that you will thank the officers and men of the Third Rhode Island Artillery for the admirable conduct displayed during the recent engagement with the rebel gunboats, having every confidence they will always distinguish themselves; and expresses his conviction that when opportunity offers every other company of the regiment will emulate the conduct of Companies E and G and the detachment of Company A."
THE PLANTING OF BATTERY HAMILTON.

It was now decided to plant a battery in the middle of the river on the upper end of Bird Island, directly opposite Venus Point, in order to close the south channel and St. Augustine Creek. Company E and the detachment of Company A were selected to man the guns, and the flats with the armament and material were brought from Daufuskie into Mud River February twentieth. About midnight we reached the mouth of the river, and on the change of the tide at one a.m. pulled out into the Savannah, under the very noses of the rebel gunboats. It was a perilous passage. The solemn injunction that no one should speak was superfluous. We held our breath, our hearts stopped beating, our hair stood on end:

"Obstupui, steteruntque comae et vox faucibus haesit;"

nothing moved but the even swing of our muffled oars, and uncertainty which beat its thousand-fold dark pinions about our anxious heads. Major Beard and Captain Hamilton led in a small boat, and by a
preconcerted system of signals indicated the proper direction to Captain Bailey, Sergeant Williams and the other flats. As the tide was running strong and the night exceedingly dark, we found it difficult to keep our course, but succeeded about two A. M. in reaching the point designated, and commenced at once to construct the platforms and magazine and to land the armament. Such silence was preserved that the enemy was not aware of the movement till daylight, when it was too late to attack us with impunity. At daybreak an eight-inch howitzer was in position, and by three p. m. we had in battery six pieces:

Three 24-pounder James rifles.
One 30-pounder Parrott rifle.
One 20-pounder Parrott rifle.
One 8-inch howitzer.

Thus all communication by the Savannah, between the city and the fort, was effectually closed on the twenty-first day of February, and on the same day the first vessel with ordnance from the North for the siege batteries on Tybee Island arrived off the
THE INVESTMENT OF FORT PULASKI.

This side was blockaded, and hence the fort invested on this side first. Early in December the Forty-sixth New York, under Colonel Rosa, had been secretly landed, as a precautionary measure, on Tybee, and there they had lain all this while, as it were sub rosa. Two companies of this regiment were sent the next day to occupy Decent Island, in order to close Lazeretto Creek, and thus was completed on February twenty-second the absolute investment of Fort Pulaski. The erection of the breaching batteries on Tybee, the bombardment and capture of the fort, and the important, nay leading rôle played therein by the officers and men of the Third Rhode Island I leave to another and abler pen.

LIFE ON BIRD ISLAND.

Our life, or rather vegetation, of nearly two months on Bird Island with its attendant privations and sufferings and frequent contests with the fleet, was very trying. These vicissitudes must be left untold. I will add one or two characteristic incidents and from these you may judge of them all.
The first night I well remember. Exhausted by the unceasing labors night and day for two weeks, especially the exertions of the previous night, and the unremitting toil of the day, we began to long for darkness and rest. But where could we lie down? The platforms were sinking and we were forbidden to stand on them. We were ever ready to die standing, but to sleep standing required more nerve than any of us possessed, though our sergeant had been seen to perform that feat. To add to our discomforts a rain came on with the darkness. Each man was left to care for himself. The narrator went out into the marsh and broke a bundle of reeds and grass and made a bed on the spot, and weaving together the tops of some of the tallest reeds and spreading them apart he formed a shelter in the shape of an A tent, under which he crawled and was soon dreaming like a child in its mother's arms. Good and bad are largely relative terms. The next few hours were among the happiest in life. The world, however, moves and our relations are ever shifting. Moon and tide wait upon no man's pleasure. It was about two A.M. I felt a moisture
beneath me, but when I remembered where I was, I did not think it strange, and rolled over to continue my dreams of home. Soon, however, I awoke to find the pockets and all the vacant and sinuous labyrinths of my regulation trousers filled with water. Deeming it prudent to make a reconnaissance, I found all the island about me flooded. I started instinctively in the direction of the battery, forgetting that a ditch had been begun there until I landed at the bottom of it up to my neck in water.

The early hours of February twenty-second were passed, not as had been our custom in former years, in preparing to honor the Father of his Country, but in frantic endeavors to avoid the alligators which were out for their early morning exercise. If what I say in this connection may seem incredible, please call up my comrades to verify it. The layer of mud on these islands was the regular habitation of this amphibious tribe, and it will show the nature of the mud if I tell you that when the tide went out they sank easily right down out of sight, and the firing of the guns often brought them to the surface. We discovered the nose of one of these
carnivorous reptiles near the cook's kettle, and digging about him we lassoed him and drew him out with hawssers. He measured about ten feet, and the boys have not forgotten what tender steaks he made, as this kind of meat was at a premium for a few days. The high winds and strong tides due to the storm, as also the renewed vigilance of the enemy prevented us getting supplies via Mud River across the Savannah, and we were compelled to subsist on native products and faith. The boys drew the line, however, at alligators, and refused to prolong life by eating the snakes that abounded. I always thought this distinction was not so much a matter of taste as of prejudice inherited from our distinguished ancestress. Captain Bailey succeeded later in conquering a prehistoric crocodile which measured fourteen feet and proved a trifle ancient for our digestive apparatus even under such stimulating circumstances.

Reduced to extremities we sent a boat to Mud River to report our distress and to bring immediate relief. The next night we stood waiting, cold and hungry, at the water's edge, peering with dilated pupils into the impenetrable darkness and
listening with ears acute to catch the dip of the muffled oars, for our comrades were true and we knew they would attempt the passage that night, even were all Tatnall's fleet in the river. Slowly the hours passed and midnight came and went. Only hollow tones of the distant breakers give answer to our longing. Most of the men have fallen in the mud, asleep. A few of us stand shivering still, and on the flood of the tide, ere we are aware of its approach, a boat is rowed right up on to the island into our midst. The men are aroused, and half crazy they rush for the boat. The provisions brought are soon distributed. What is it? Could you have looked upon it and have witnessed the scene that followed, it would give you a more vivid conception of what the Union soldiers was called upon to suffer in that long, terrible war than any painting of words can portray. When shipped from the North, it was supposed to be a barrel of yellow meal, presumably for horses. That was all. It had evidently been thrown out into the surf at Port Royal and towed ashore months before, and had since been floating around
the mud rivers on flats in the rain, who could tell how long. It was green with mould and cobwebby, but now fully alive to its important mission. We broke it up with our shovels, regardless of the sacrifice of life it cost, and each man received a piece—a piece? no, that is too nice a word, a chunk,—a hunk, that fits the case better. What could we do with it, you ask? Trust a hungry soldier for that. A stampede was made for the old barrel into which we had thrown pork rinds, skim-mings and superfluous grease. This we mixed with our shorts, and adding a sufficient quantity of the brackish river water, we reduced the mass to a paste, and the small hours of the night were spent around the fire, each with his little tin pan in which he turned from time to time his Johnny cake until it was baked to a crisp brown. That that was a genuine "Camp Fire," of which those who have seen only the simulated ones of these degenerate days; consisting of scalloped oysters, ice cream and horticultural rhetoric, can form but an indistinct conception.

Since then it has been my privilege to sit at rich
banquets in many of the great capitals of the world, but I am unable to recall one which I enjoyed with such a keen relish as I did that brown Johnny cake seated with my comrades in Bird Island mud. Surely happiness is largely a relative state. The water we drank was from the river, of which we had our choice, either at high tide when it was fresh from the Atlantic and about as palatable as a dose of Epsom salts, or at low tide when charged with all the mud of the swollen creeks above, a choice as difficult as the one imposed upon the renowned Mr. Hobson. We had no change of clothing, or none to speak of, and as it was well nigh impossible to wash what we had on in the heavily impregnated water, our condition may be more easily imagined than admired. It was equally impossible to make any satisfactory impression upon the successive deposits which had become encrusted upon our bodies. Indeed, it became rather a matter of pride to carry these evidences of our heroic service as one does honorable scars, and he who succeeded in removing them was looked upon
much as a dude is in our day. Thus ever does our environment determine largely our fashions.

One of our gravest discomforts was the various kinds of animal life that insisted on sharing the island with us. There was one animal who had come with us, landed with us, stayed with us, sticking closer than a brother; a wingless, hemipterous animal known to scientists as the pediculus vestimenti, better known to soldiers as "the gray back." You can form an idea of the sufferings from cold and hunger, from sickness and wounds, but you cannot gain any adequate estimate of a soldier's sufferings if you leave out of account this sturdy camp follower. Where it is possible to boil one's clothes, the encroachments of this pest may be warded off, but on a campaign, such as this, it is simply out of the question, and no one, from the commanding general down, is exempt. It is only a question of degrees of multiplicity. Herod as well as Phillip II. of Spain, died from the attacks of these ridiculous pediculi. Most of my comrades were in a condition to envy the happy lot of those two royal sufferers. Among all the tortures we
were called upon to endure in this siege, none were more aggravating than the insistent incursions of this pest. As we had no kettle in which to boil our clothes except the cook’s, who stubbornly refused to loan them for the purpose, and as washing them in cold water seemed only to invigorate the robust constitution of their tenacious tenants, the only recourse left us was, as it was euphemistically called in the army, to "go skirmishing," and this pleasant duty became one of the chief recreations during our stay on Bird Island.

CONCLUSION.

Such, ladies and gentlemen, were some of the experiences through which those passed to whom was entrusted the investment of Fort Pulaski. In conclusion I desire to call your attention to one important lesson to be drawn from a siege such as I have endeavored to describe. Many persons fancy that the only important duty of a soldier consists in fighting on the open battle-field. Such persons estimate the service of a regiment by the number of great battles in which it was engaged and the
number of men it lost therein; and they estimate the service of any given individual by the number of times he has been killed, or at least mortally wounded. How often have you, my comrade, been asked by such persons: Were you at Gettysburg? No! At Fredericksburg? No! At Vicksburg? No! At Charleston? No! Ever killed? No! Wounded? No! An ordinary soldier has no show in the hands of these unread torturers. They never heard of other battles, and conclude at once that he could not have seen much service. There are two palpable fallacies involved in such estimates to which I wish to draw your attention. In the first place, many a man was present at more than one of the great battles mentioned, and yet saw no more severe fighting than another man possibly present at no one of them. We remember that many a regiment marched up the peninsula and marched down again without firing a shot, while some of us remember that one detachment of our Battery was at Gainesville, where the fighting was so desperate and decisive, and finally hand to hand, that the gun, limber, caisson and horses were all lost, and twelve
out of fifteen men either cut down or landed in Andersonville. Few regiments at Fredericksburg saw such fighting as the First Cavalry at Kelley's Ford, a mere reconnaissance. The fact is, many are here present who have been in battles where from fifty to one hundred thousand were engaged, who, however, were called upon to perform more arduous, more desperate work, on other fields seldom mentioned by name, where but a few hundred were engaged.

These statements every soldier here readily admits, but the one I am now about to make may seem at first untenable, to wit: the most dangerous service was not rendered on the field of battle at all. Let us glance at the statistics of the war:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Killed in battle</td>
<td>44,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died of wounds</td>
<td>49,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>93,443</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Died of disease in the service</td>
<td>212,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged for disability</td>
<td>285,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>497,029</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged because of wounds, subtracted</td>
<td>65,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remainder</strong></td>
<td><strong>432,174</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do these figures mean? They mean:
1. That more than twice as many died of disease in the service as were killed in action and died of wounds combined.

2. That nearly five times as many died of disease as were killed in action.

3. That five times as many were discharged for disability, excluding those discharged because of wounds, as were killed in action.

4. That more than five times as many died of disease and were discharged for disability combined, as were killed in action and died of wounds combined.

In some departments these ratios are increased to an appalling degree. One regiment from this State serving in the department of the Gulf, lost thirty-six times as many by disease as were killed in battle, and another one hundred and nine times as many. Large as was the percentage of mortality in our late war, yet it was larger in former wars when sanitary provisions were less understood. In the Crimean War seven-eighths (87.5 per cent.) of the mortality among the British troops was from disease. When you think of the historic names of
the Alma and Inkerman, of Balaclava and Sebastopol and many lesser fields, remember that only one-eighth of the mortality in that entire war resulted from death on the field of action and from wounds combined. To show the rate of mortality in relation to the number in the field, we may take the report of Lord Raglan (see Kinglake, vol. iv, p. 158) for the seven months from October 1, 1854, to April 30, 1855. The mean strength of his army was 28,939. Of this number there died in hospital 11,652, of whom 10,053 died of disease. The report made on the last day of February, covering the preceding four months (see K., p. 150) shows 8,898 deaths in hospital, 13,608 lying in hospital on date of report, making a deduction of 22,506 from an army whose mean strength for that month was only 30,919; and a large proportion of those still able to handle a fire-lock were suffering from grave bodily ailment (p. 152). The rate of mortality in January, which was the greatest, was so large that to supply the loss from disease alone, which was ninety-seven per cent. of the whole, the entire army would have to be replaced by a new one every ten
months. It was only by constant reinforcements that either the English or French army was saved from extinction.

Such facts and figures as these are significant to veteran soldiers, as indicative of the kind of service that was required of the Union volunteer, as indicative of the kind of service most dangerous to life in war, showing that it is not necessarily participation in great battles, not necessarily direct exposure of life and limb amid shot and shell, though every genuine volunteer hailed such opportunities as a relief, not this alone that constitutes real service and heroic self-sacrifice; but rather the long and faithful performance of the manifold duties the soldier is called upon daily and nightly to render, in camp, on picket, in siege, in the trenches, on the march; illy-clad, illy-fed, and exposed to all the rigor and vicissitudes of the elements. If you will show me the comrade who faithfully, loyally, with glad obedience performed all these, who for the sake of his country endured all this, I will show you the comrade who was not only the man most to be relied upon when the critical hour of
battle came, but also the man who rendered to his country the best service, the most arduous service, yea, the most *dangerous* service, and who to-day, though he carry no hostile bullet in his body, yet deserves the deepest gratitude and highest rewards of this Republic.

So when I recall the eventful history of the glorious old "Third," and remember the bloody fields on which it proved its valor and heroism, James Island, Pocotaligo, Deveaux Neck, Port Royal Ferry, Coosaw River, Broad River, Bluffton, Honey Hill, Gainesville, Olustee, Cedar Creek, Morris Island, Wagner, Pulaski, Drury's Bluff, Fort Burnham, Laurel Hill, Petersburg, Appomattox and more than a score of others; when I think of the long months spent in the siege of Sumter and Charleston, where it was under fire as many days and nights as any regiment in the whole war, I would not, I cannot detract from the honor gained in the heat and danger of actual battle, but I cannot forget that she performed other services no less honorable, no less dangerous. When I recall the *thirty* hours during which she withstood the withering fire
from Pulaski, I recall no less vividly the three long months, the more than two thousand hours, spent in equally arduous, and even more dangerous duties while drawing the fatal cordon about that citadel.

So when I read over the old roster of my regiment and check off the long list of those who died of disease in the service, I think of the swamps and savannas of Georgia. When I read the two hundred and fifty-three names of those who were discharged because they were no longer fit for service, I think on the swamps and malaria of Georgia. When I place the fatal star opposite the names of so many who since then have surrendered, my mind reverts to the islands of Carolina and Georgia. When, as again and again, I go these bitter winter days to my door and find there a bent and broken form, which five and twenty years ago stood by my side as proud and erect as any that walks God’s earth, and my sometime comrade tells me how manfully he has struggled all these intervening years to keep himself and the wife of his youth and their children from the poorhouse; tells me how at length, nearly blind and
deaf and crushed in spirit, he has been again discharged by his employer as no longer fit for service, and adds that he dare not tell it to any except an old comrade, nor apply to the country to which he freely gave his all to save, lest the very people he so gladly served, if not perchance the highest officials of the land, may call him a pauper, a fraud, the scum of the earth, then, then again I think on the islands and marshes of the Savannah, and turn back once again to reflect upon the great problem of life, and to imbibe from the trials and sufferings of those heroic years, courage and strength to endure the still more bitter pangs that come with these ungenerous days.