In the year 1863, at the age of eighteen, I volunteered in the Confederate service in Company E, 1st North Carolina Cavalry and General Perrin's Brigade. My company was under the command of Captain J. H. Price, of Charlotte, N.C. and the cavalry under Colonel D. D. Irby, of Beaufort, N.C.

I joined my company at Snow Hill, N.C. and first saw active service at Winston N.C. about the first of February, 1864. Then, after a small skirmish at Washington, N.C., a few days later, we were transferred to Northern Virginia. There we were stationed until about the first of January 1864, when we were again called into service at the battle of Spotsylvania Court House, and the subsequent battle of the Wilderness, and Mott's Ford on the Rappahannock River. Here our forces, under the direct command of General R. E. Lee, repulsed Gen.
Joe Hooker and drove him back across the river. In Feb. we were sent down to Halifax county, N.C. to recruit our picket stock which were getting very poor. In April we moved to Sassafras Ford and remained there until the last of May. We were then ordered back to Northern Virginia and by mere chance were passing through Petersburg when Gen. Grant first laid siege to that city. We met Grant's cavalry on the Appomattox River at the iron bridge and defeated them thereby saving the city from being taken by their dead comrade. This was about June the 12th. We were kept here from this time until the evacuation of Petersburg, which was about the first of April of the year. During this time, however, we were under almost constant fire at Peck's Station on the Weldon Railroad.
were attacked by Wilson's and Spear's Raiders, composed of cavalrymen and were driven through. After destroying the Weldon R.R. and the south-side R.R. for several miles, the enemy attempted to make their way back through our lines but were met by the 4th Cavalry and Gen. Lee's forces and repulsed. They then attacked Gen. Hampton at Stony Creek and were again defeated. A little later, however, under cover of darkness, they managed to break through our lines again and get back to their forces across the river. We were attacked again at the Davis House near the Weldon R.R. between the station and the city. There I was slightly wounded at the knee. After Sept. 15th, I was again wounded. My wound was so severe that I did not return until the day of the surrender.
In the year 1863, at the age of eighteen, I volunteered in the confederate service in Company E, 4th North Carolina Cavalry, and General Derring's Brigade. My Company was under the command of Captain J. Y. Brice, of Charlotte, N. C., and the Cavalry under Colonel D. D. Perby, of Oxford, N. C.

I joined my Company at Snow Hill, N. C. and first saw active service at Kinston, N. C. about the first of February 1863. Then, after a small skirmish at Washington, N. C. a few days later, we were transferred to Northern Virginia. There we were stationed until about the first of January 1864, when we were again called into service at the battle of Spotsylvania Court House, and the subsequent battles of the Wilderness, and Moton's Ford on the Rappadon River. Here our forces, under the direct command of General R. E. Lee, repulsed Gen. Joe Hooker and drove him back across the River. In February we were sent down to Halifax Co., N. C. to recruit our stock which were getting very poor. In April we moved to Sassafras Fork and remained there until the last of May. We were then ordered back to Northern Virginia and by mere chance were passing through Petersburg when Gen. Grant first laid siege to that City. We met Grant's Cavalry on the Appomattox River at the Iron Bridge and defeated them, thereby saving the City out of his hands and forcing him to lay siege to it. This was about June the 18th. We were kept here from this time until the evacuation of Petersburg, which was about the first of April of the following year. During this time, however, we were under almost constant fire. At Ream's Station, on the Weldon Rail Road, we were attacked by Wilson's and Spear's Raiders, composed of Cavalrymen, and our lines broken through. After destroying the Weldon R. R.
and the Southside R. R. for several miles, the enemy attempted to make their way back through our lines but were met by 4th Cavalry and General Pitzer Lee's forces and repulsed. They then attacked General Hampton at Stoney Creek and were again defeated. A little later, however, under cover of darkness, they managed to break through our lines again and get back to their own forces across the river. We were attacked again at the Davis' House on the Weldon R. R. between the station and the city. There I was slightly wounded in the knee. On Sept. 1st, which was later on, I was again wounded, this time in the foot while on picket duty near the Davis' House. I was then sent to the Confederate Hospital at Petersburg and remained there until the last of September when I was moved to the Hospital at Danville Va. Here I remained until the 5th of Oct. and was then granted a furlow home. On account of the severity of my wound I was unable to return to active service, and consequently was at home when news of the surrender reached me.

(Signed) John W. Lay
Reminiscences of John W. Lay

From Gaston's Chapter U. O. E.
Told by C. A. Legan, Historian
M. E. Wilson, M. O. E.

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