Reminiscences
of
The Civil War

by

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This is not intended to be, and is not a full account of my experience in the Civil War, only some reminiscences of the long ago that I have felt like jotting down.

When weary of reading present day politics or of the world wide misery, it may be agreeably diverting, possibly restful, to recall events of the long ago, when we were engaged in the War for the Preservation of the Union.

THEODORE M. NAGLE.

Erie, Pennsylvania
June 1, 1923
THEODORE M. NAGLE
Born April 18, 1840
REMINISCENCES
OF THE CIVIL WAR

I.

OUR REGIMENT, the 21st N. Y. S. Vol. Inf. was mustered into the United State's service at Elmira, New York, at our barracks on the banks of the Chemung River, May 7, 1861; a few days later we were ordered to Washington. In the meantime the Sixth Massachusetts, on its way to Washington, was mobbed while passing through Baltimore; this again aroused the North and created lively anticipations within the ranks of the 21st. Trains arriving from the North did not pass through the City of Baltimore on the way South, one depot being in the northern part of the city, the other in the southern. As our train was approaching Baltimore, ammunition was distributed to us; on arriving at the outskirts of the city the train came to a stop, we detrained and formed in line. "Attention! Load with cartridges! Fix bayonets!" Thus prepared for emergencies we marched through the streets of Baltimore, every officer from the Colonel down, and every man, in his place. To our surprise, if not our chagrin, the streets we passed through were entirely deserted, not a
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person to be seen, not even at the doors or windows, which were all closed—Baltimore, while not enthusiastic over our coming was certainly quiet and well behaved.

Our train proceeded slowly to Washington, arriving at the Baltimore and Ohio Depot, at the foot of Capitol Hill, not far from Pennsylvania Avenue. After some delay we marched through the city to Kalorama Heights and went into camp on the banks of Rock Creek, almost directly opposite the Georgetown Cemetery. We called it “Camp Kalorama.” Here, of course, it was drill, guard duty and camp life in general for a number of weeks.

Washington was no such city as it is now, nor much like it. What is now the center or business part was about all that was occupied, and that only sparsely; from our camp to very near the State, Army, and Navy building it was all commons. The Capitol was not finished, the iron ribs that formed the dome were in place, but were not covered. I climbed to the top one day to get a good view of the surrounding country, the Goddess of Liberty statue, that now crowns the top of the dome, was then on the ground near the building, a part of the basement was used for baking bread for the soldiers. Oh, yes, while we were in and near Washington we received bread—sometimes. The Washington monument was only about fifty
feet high and in poor condition, the waters of the Potomac extended to within a few feet of its base, and beef cattle were butchered there, also for the soldiers.

Target practice was much engaged in. One hot day our Regiment marched from camp to the Navy Yard, seven miles or more away to exchange our smooth bore muskets for Springfield rifles. Each one gave up his musket at a brick warehouse, which stands to the left of the main road or street, and received in return a rifle; then seven miles or more back to camp.

On the Fourth of July, 1861, we passed in review before President Lincoln, Secretary Wm. H. Seward and Gen. Winfield S. Scott. A reviewing stand had been erected on the White House grounds close to the iron fence on the line of the street, Pennsylvania Avenue. It was said that 20,000 New York Troops participated in the parade, and I dare say there are not many living to-day who were reviewed in parade by these men so outstanding in American history.

The next day we crossed the Potomac to the Virginia side of the river, over the Long Bridge, to take possession of and garrison Fort Runyon. It consisted of a semi-circular embankment on the brow of the high ground, the right and left ends of which rested on the Potomac swamp, and covered the roads to Fairfax and Alexandria, which two roads met within the
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enclosure and over a causeway continued over Long Bridge to Washington. Several heavy guns throwing about 10 inch shells were mounted; what we could ever have done with them had we been attacked I am sure I don’t know, but I presume they were intended to scare the rebels and make the Washingtonians feel safe, and indeed they looked very formidable. Here we lay in the heat of the July and August sun, the miasma of the swamp, on ground but little higher than the swamp, till about everyone in the regiment had or had had fever and ague. Our Surgeon Wilcox was worried to death and tried his best to have at least some of the companies quartered on the high ground outside of the embankment, but no, the War Department was obdurate and we had to remain on the low ground, on the edge of the swamp till we were wanted elsewhere.

Nothing very stirring happened while we were there. One day a member of another company was court martialed and sentenced to “be drummed out of the camp.” He was a pretty tough character, but bore an honored name, one that is borne by many good men and I will not mention it. It was rumored that the Company to which he belonged would mutiny, and not permit him to be drummed out. Captain Washburn of our Co. “C” was ordered to carry out the sentence; he detailed myself
and seven others of our Company to act as guard. He took command, we formed a hollow square, loaded rifles, fixed bayonets, and marched to where the man to be drummed out was confined. He was ordered to take his place within the hollow square and did so. The square was closed, then with fifes and drums at our head, we began the march to and across the Long Bridge to the tune provided for such occasions. While the feeling was tense in camp, there was no demonstration. I guess the Captain and his guard looked too much like business to trifle with. Arriving at the Washington end of the bridge we opened ranks and set him free. He was completely cowed and cried pitifully. We returned to camp, or the fort, to a little more cheerful tune—such is a part of army experience.

Sunday, July 21, 1861, and the night following, I was on guard. Sometime along two or three o'clock in the morning, I was at the gate on the road to Fairfax, when a man with a one-horse light spring wagon drove up, and wanted to pass through the fort. While the Sergeant engaged the man in conversation, I passed to the rear of the wagon, and seeing some object covered with an army blanket, I uncovered it, saying: "What have you got here?" It was a corpse. He answered, "That is my brother, I picked him up on the battlefield and want to take him home." We let him pass. That was the first
tangible evidence that the much heralded and discussed First Battle of Bull Run had been fought. Our little army did not go to Richmond and the Confederate Army did not go to Washington. It was not the defeat and rout of the Union Army that it was often said to be, and from what I have learned of the battle and know of the ground—I was in the Second Battle of Bull Run, and have studied the ground since the War—I consider it a remarkably well fought battle on the part of both armies, especially the attacking, the Union Army, notwithstanding it was their first battle. I doubt if veteran troops could or would have done any better.

The Union Army drove the Confederates from position to position by hard fighting, until it finally drove it to a remarkably strong position, the Henry House Hill; the same position, held by the Union Army, that safe guarded the line of retreat for the Union Army, a year later in the Second Battle of Bull Run. Upon this position the Confederates concentrated their forces and massed their numerous batteries, and the decimated and considerably exhausted Union lines advanced time after time, only to be repulsed with terrible losses. There was no chance to outflank the position, and such was the spirit in the heat of battle, that they tried time after time to accomplish the impossible, until they
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were no longer able to make a formidable effort. Then after some delay, they began an orderly retreat—orderly, considering the thinned ranks and their exhaustion—and fell back toward the defenses of Washington not far away, which was all right. The Confederate forces did not follow or hamper the retreat to any extent.

Well to return to Fort Runyon, it was now Monday, July 22. As I had been on guard twenty-four hours, I was excused from duty from the end of guard mounting in the morning until dress parade near sundown. Along towards noon an order came: “Companies ‘C’ and ‘D’, prepare to march with full equipment.” So I with the rest of my company donned full equipment—knapsack, all accoutrements, rifle, ammunition and rations, and “fell in”, and soon “by the right flank, forward march”, we took the road toward Fairfax (and Bull Run). Arriving at a point not many miles away where the road crosses a railroad, near Bailey’s Crossroads, we halted and then deployed on both sides of the road, “C” to the right and “D” to the left, on high wooded ground, along the railroad, facing south. We constructed on our front, out of saplings, what we called a “barricade”—a battery of two field pieces was placed in the road, dominating a bridge crossing a little stream just ahead of us. Now we were ready for the rebels. We waited and waited. We did not
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remain posted at the "barricade" I went down to the creek and along the banks and I picked the sweetest and largest dew-berries I ever saw; they were nearly as large as my thumb. After eating my fill I filled my cap with them and returned to my place. At the approach of night I was one of four, sent out along the road to give warning of any approaching enemy, by firing. It was a clear moonlight night; sometime about midnight, I heard the clatter of hoofs of cavalry. I first thought they were rebel cavalry that had come in by a wood road I had passed, and as they approached on a trot, I cocked my gun. The horses hearing the click pricked up, then the officer in the lead said, "Second United States Cavalry"—they appeared to be a magnificent body of horses and men.

Not long after that came a long line of ambulances, squeeking rather dolefully, going to the front—that, in the stillness of the night looked rather sombre and serious, but that was all that happened that night on that part of the front.

The next night I was detailed to stand guard at a railroad bridge a little to our right. The night was dark and wet, the rain came down in torrents nearly all night, as I stood at one end of the bridge without shelter of any kind the entire night through. Nothing happened, only rain, rain and more rain. The night ended, day
dawned, the sun rose bright and cheerful. I was wet through and through, and the waters of the stream, though swollen were clear, it was a great temptation, and I went down to the banks of the stream, put my gun against a tree, hung my clothes on the bushes in the sunshine to dry and went into the waters to have a good wash, but before I was through there came the sound of a bugle, as clear, peremptory and commanding as ever a bugle sounded—it was the Bugle Call to "Rally on the Reserve." There I was still in the water, without a stitch of clothing on me, and my order was "hurry as fast as you can to the Reserve." What was up? Was the Reserve in danger and wanted my help, or was I in danger? Anyway, and quite naturally, it didn't take me long to get into my uniform, grasp my rifle and rally on the reserve. Upon arriving there I found everything quiet and serene, but prepared; all glad to see one another again—then coffee and something to eat. In the course of the day, we, the two companies and guns, returned to Fort Runyan. Other troops had been placed in nearby positions and thus ended a little expedition, and everything became "quiet on the Potomac" for some time.

This, the first Battle of Bull Run, put a more serious aspect on the war, more volunteers were called for and promptly responded. General George B. McClellan—"Little Mack"—was
called to head the armies at Washington. The army of the Potomac had its beginning, organized, well equipped and drilled. We, our Regiment, became a part of the First Army Corps; we were in the first brigade, first division, in the First Army Corps, and I believe the first Regiment in the first brigade. We were still at Fort Runyon when one afternoon the order came to march forthwith with all of our belongings. In a short time we left Fort Runyon and were on the march to and past Arlington Heights. I remember quite distinctly passing in front of and close to the old residence, and through a ravine just beyond. Of course, there was then not a solitary grave in all that section; they, lots of them, have come since then. Continuing on until we reached the ground now "Fort Meyers," here we halted and remained encamped for some weeks; it appeared that the entire line of the army in Virginia, in front of Washington, was extended a little southward. Soon after this we were again advanced a little, and went into camp on Upton's Hill near Falls Church. Here we remained until early the following spring when the Army of the Potomac, under General McClellan, made a general advance. Our time was taken up with drilling, guard and picket duty.
II.

General McClelland and the Army of the Potomac leave the Washington front for the Peninsula.

IN THE EARLY SPRING of 1862, the Army of the Potomac was a well organized and equipped army; the regiments formed into brigades, divisions, army corps, and well supplied with artillery and cavalry, fully officered, considerably drilled and disciplined, but only a small share of it experienced in campaigning and warfare—this it was about to get in abundance.

It was generally believed that the Confederates had massed a large force, estimated at 100,000 to 125,00 men at Manassas. This then was the enemy to face the Army of the Potomac. So, as soon as the roads were in condition to permit the army to make the move, we, the entire army were ordered to advance onto Manassas. The weather and roads were fair, and there was no trouble on the march. Upon arrival at Centreville, we found there was no rebel army near, though plenty of evidence that a large force had been camped in the vicinity, but the army had vamoosed, retreated.

Well, now what was to be done? After some delay it was announced that we were to march
back to Alexandria, and there embark on steamboats, to be taken to the Peninsula, then to Richmond.

In due time we started one morning on our march to Alexandria, but before we got started it began to rain, not very hard at first, but it soon increased, until it came down in torrents and kept it up all day. It was a cold rain and as the day progressed all the streams were working to capacity and more; there were few if any bridges, compelling us to ford many streams knee deep to waist deep. Of course in those days we had no clothing or blankets that would shed the rain, our uniforms, overcoats and blankets were flimsy, shoddy, I guess, that would readily take in the rain, pass it on to our bodies until we were soaked to our bones, I think, and then run down our blouse sleeves and pants legs in streams. A good thing we wore shoes that couldn’t hold much water; caps, too, were no protection. This severe cold rain storm, coming so soon after our winter quarters and no enemy near, practically broke up all the organizations that were on the march, and each one trudged along as best he could; at least I trudged along all day, not daring to stop in that cold rain, and loaded down with a great surplus of water, ever onward toward Alexandria. At last, just as it was beginning to get dark, I arrived in Alexandria, and found that our regiment was
assembling in a hall of a brick building, all the seats having been removed. A few of my company and myself pre-empted a corner; I threw off my knapsack and haversack, and I assure you it was a relief—I had no idea they could be so heavy. I had hardly taken off the rest of my accoutrements when a call sounded through the hall: "Nagle, Nagle!" My corner answered: "Here, Here!" It was now quite dark; as I approached the entrance or exit, I met my eldest brother, who was looking for me.

I have related elsewhere that he had charge of a large force of railroad carpenters, with headquarters at Alexandria. I need hardly assure you that it did not require much urging on his part, to have me accompany him to his boarding place. I left all my belongings in the corner, and told my comrades I would be back in the morning. I went with him, and had a hot cooked supper, instead of the water-soaked mess in my haversack, a clean, dry bed to sleep in—the first time I had slept in a house and bed since leaving Buffalo, over a year before. After breakfast next morning I rejoined my comrades in the hall. The return march to Alexandria was ended, but The End was not yet.

It developed about this time that there was a difference of opinion between the General commanding, Gen. McClellan, and those in authority over him, regarding the number of
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troops to go with him to the Peninsula. Gen. McClellan wanted to take his entire army (this did not include the nondescript forces within the fortifications of Washington) while the higher authorities did not want the Washington front stripped entirely of the active field army, laying the Capital open to an easy attack by the enemy. President Lincoln did not want to take the responsibility to decide, left that to the military arm of the Government, thought McClellan's plan might succeed, "if he moved quick enough," but insisted that Washington must be left safe beyond all peradventure. This resulted in detaining the First Army Corps, General McDowell commanding, on the Washington front, from which, however, two divisions were later on sent to the Peninsula; the rest of the Army embarked at Alexandria and went to the Peninsula. The campaign on the Peninsula under McClellan has no part in these reminiscences.

I believe that the Army of the Potomac in the Spring of 1862, before it left the environs of Washington, was the best organized and equipped ever organized on this Continent—there was not one conscript or drafted man in the ranks. It was fresh and soft and lacked experience to be sure, but was on the way of hardening and getting experience. In my opinion, it should never have been divided into parts that would
not be in easy supporting distance of each other, unless indeed it was large enough so that either of the parts was strong enough to cope successfully by itself with any combination of forces the enemy might possibly bring against it—this it was not claimed to be. Furthermore, there was just as good opportunity for fighting and keeping the Capital covered at the same time, as there was hundreds of miles away. There is no doubt but that the safety of Washington was the most important consideration, as Lincoln insisted upon, and had the entire army gone to the Peninsula, the chances are that the Confederates would have made so formidable an attack on Washington, perhaps before the last of the Army had disembarked on the Peninsula, that the government would have been compelled to recall the Army to defend the Capital, if not actually to recapture it from the Confederates, as it was obliged to recall later what had gone, after it was defeated.

Strategy is all right in itself, and is not to be ignored, but after all, war is destructive and can only be won by the destruction of the manpower and resources of your adversary, by the continued hammering, grinding and chewing, as was done by Grant, two years later. This can generally be done as well on one field as another; there is strategy to be exercised on the actual field of battle, as well as in the general campaign,
and I believe it to be even more important to gain victories than the general strategy of the campaign, but devolves more upon the officers and troops on the field, though not wholly, than upon the general command.

While the rest of the Army of the Potomac was embarking and on its way, the First Army Corps, under General McDowell, started again on its march southward—this time Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock was our destination. We met no Confederate forces till we reached Fredericksburg, and then only a few, who seemed quite willing we should take possession. We were, however, overtaken on the way by a most severe snowstorm, which lasted several days, a wet heavy snow, the fields were covered to a depth of from 10 to 12 inches with a soft wet snow. This broke up the organizations for the time being more effectually than a large force of Confederates could have done. It however, cleared the atmosphere, the sun came out bright, and soon after hot. We resumed our march; but a very few days later, when we had completed the allotted distance for that day’s march and had left the road to prepare for the bivouac, it was announced that there was no water anywhere near, and were requested to march on five miles farther where there was said to be plenty of good water. Of course we “fell in” and resumed our march. We had gone
on the road but a short distance when a thunderstorm came up, the rain came down in torrents, it grew dark, we could see the pools of water and mud puddles only by the flashes of the lightning, but we trudged on until we reached our destination for that day. The rain had stopped, but night had set in, we were in a new country that had apparently not been visited by any army, for the rail fences were fine and high, and I assure you it did not take us long after breaking ranks to start a rousing big fire by which to dry ourselves. Next morning everything was serene and we again resumed our march to Fredericksburg.

Little worthy of note occurred while we were at Fredericksburg—it was one round of guard and picket duty, drill and camp duty. We were encamped most of the time on Marie’s Heights, the exact ground that the Confederate Army fortified and held securely the following December against Burnside’s onslaughts. Our Company was for a time guard at McDowell’s headquarters, at the “Lacey House.” By the way, I met Maj. Lacey of the Confederate Army some years after the War, and he told me that what we called the “Lacey House” was really named “Chatham.”

At one time our Company was detailed to guard a foraging train of wagons outside of our
lines. We repulsed the attack of a force of irregulars or bushwhackers—nothing serious, but the weather was very hot.

After our return to camp I had a great craving for a drink of whiskey. I feared I would have an attack of sickness if I didn’t get it. I will here state that up to that time of my life, I do not believe that I had even tasted either beer, wine or whiskey, yet the craving was so great I did not want to disregard it, so I bided my time until I could see Johnnie Mansfield alone—he had been my tent mate, but was at that time keeper of the medicines in the Surgeon’s tent. I said, “Johnnie, I want a good strong drink of whiskey.” “Theodore, I haven’t any except what is saturated with quinine.” “Well, give me some of that.” “Come around to the back of the tent”—a wall tent. He brought out a big jug and a glass, I held the glass. “Now, Johnnie, I don’t know how much is a good stiff drink, but I want it.” He poured out about one-third of a glassful. “Oh, Johnnie, I can drink more than that.” “Well, Theodore, it’s pretty strong.” “Oh, fill it up, Johnnie.” He laughed, but filled the glass; I drank it like that much cool spring water, and to my own surprise it had no other effect upon me than it would had it been spring water, except that it satisfied my craving. I have had no such craving or experience since, and this was over sixty
years ago. Now, while I have been a teetotaler or nearly such all my life, and have never been financially or otherwise interested in the liquor business directly or indirectly, if the subject were an open question I would be strongly opposed to a Prohibition Amendment, and the Volstead enforcement law.

It is an interesting speculation what the Patriots of 1776 would have said or done had King George and his associates constructed an Eighteenth Amendment, passed a Volstead enforcement law, supplemented it with a Pinchot Dry law, and spent millions upon millions of dollars of their hard earned money to "Reform" them, to search the passengers of railroad trains, and passing automobiles for what— for witches? No, for a bottle of wine! Enough said—

To come down to more recent times that are within the memory of the living: Horace Greeley the greatest American Editor, would, upon occasions say, "That must be law for it isn't common sense." What would he say were he living now? From this it would appear that Horace Greeley was not possessed of an idolatrous reverence for Law. He was, nevertheless, the greatest living Disciple of Justice (to all) and Liberty.

Lest I may be misunderstood, I will say in imitation of the spirit of what many of our politicians have said "I am not writing an
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Anti-anti-saloon or anti law enforcement article—Oh no, I am only jotting down a few reminiscences of the long, long ago.

At one time I had been to view a fine dam and lock across the Rappahannoc River, above Falmouth; this made a fine large reservoir of water between steep hills on both banks of the river. Going back to camp I roamed over the fields or commons, I do not think there were any streets or roads, and came across an old neglected grave, the ground was sunken in and overgrown with weeds, there was no enclosure either of the grave or the field, and no other grave anywhere in sight. It probably had received no care since it was made many years before. A small headstone, probably twelve to fifteen inches square, all out of plumb, informed me that Mary Washington was buried there. I do not know whether or not the beautiful memorial now erected in her honor is on the site of this grave, it seemed to me to be a little farther from town, but the town may have grown that way. At any rate, if it is not on the site of that grave it is near it.

We remained at Fredericksburg until about the first of August, when we became a part of General Pope's Army.
III.

In Pope's Virginia Campaign in 1862.

EARLY IN AUGUST, 1862, while still located at Fredericksburg, we became a part of Pope's Army; he was concentrating the armies in front of Washington, of which he had command, and which were scattered from Acquia Creek and Fredericksburg on the left to the Shenandoah Valley on the right. King's division, of which we were a part marched from Fredericksburg to Culpepper and Cedar Mountain, where we arrived after dark on the evening of the day of the battle of Cedar Mountain, expecting to do battle the following morning.

I will here recall that General McClellan's campaign on the Peninsula had ended in failure, and in fact his entire Army was recalled to Washington, and was at that time on the way back to Acquia Creek and Washington. This had left the principal Confederate Army, which had defeated McClellan, without an enemy in front, and therefore free to take the offensive against Washington, and which campaign they, the Confederates, were then inaugurating, and it was the plan of the Union Commanders to hold with Pope's Army the line of the Rappahannock, until McClellan's troops could arrive to re-enforce it and then resume the offensive.
Now Cedar Mountain, where we were, must be forty or more miles in advance of Rappahannock, so the retreat of this advanced army began. We acted as rear guard, and that is particularly hard, trying duty, marching slowly day and night. When the column comes to a stop, it may be for fifteen minutes or it may be for only one-half minute, always you must keep "closed up" and that don't give time even to sit down, and this, when kept up, becomes very tiresome.

We arrived at and crossed the Rappahannock (on the stringers of a destroyed railroad bridge), in due time, without molestation, but then considerable skirmishing took place for a number of days, the heaviest of which I was engaged in was at Sulphur Springs, where artillery was also in action—some of the hotel buildings were destroyed by fire.

After holding the line of the Rappahannock for some days, it became evident that the Confederates were planning to outflank us before the troops from the Peninsula could re-enforce us to any considerable extent. The army was, therefore, ordered to retreat to the vicinity of Manassas. For a few days following, there was much marching and counter-marching, on the same road, or here, there and elsewhere. Of course for the most part we in the ranks did not know the reason, the cause or the object of all this; we obeyed orders and indulged in
more or less grumbling, yet these few days were days of great moment.

Pope's campaign was coming to a climax, and the Union and Confederate Armies of Virginia were soon to meet in mortal combat; in fact were engaged in it then. Much has been written of the movement of troops, orders of generals and so forth, mostly in criticism of these days; I have read much of it. I will say that General Pope and his army were in a critical position, a larger force of Confederates than his own was confronting him, and the large re-enforcements promised him by the War Department were not arriving fast enough. For this Pope was not to blame. For one matter equally if of not more important, however, I consider him to blame, and that is that he did not have the information regarding the enemy's movements that he should have had, especially as he was on the defensive, and that I think he could have obtained if he had exerted himself more efficiently in that direction. It is not my purpose to trace the movements of the different bodies of troops in these days—that is impossible, and will recall only one or two incidents. Of course we took a most active and lively part in all that was going—marching, skirmishing, fighting battles, and so forth. Again I record my opinion that General McDowell should have been appointed to the command of this Army.
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instead of General Pope. I think he would have done much better than did Pope.

In a general way it may be said that on the 28th day of August, 1862, that part of General Pope’s Army that had been for some days along the Rappahannock was on the march toward Manassas, our, King’s Division, bringing up the rear. About four o’clock in the afternoon we, the 21st New York Regiment were marching along with the rest of the division on the Warrenton Turnpike, at a point between Gainsville and the Stone Bridge across the Bull Run, unaware of any enemy being near, when suddenly a rebel battery fired on us at short range from a hill at our left. The shells went over us, the range was so short, I wonder they didn’t use grape and cannister. Instantly, before word could possibly come from any other part of the line our Colonel, Wm. F. Rogers, gave the command clear and distinct as a bugle call: “Companies ‘C’ and ‘D’ deploy as skirmishers.” Without a moments’ hesitation we (I was a member of “C” Co.) deployed and advanced up the hill, promptly followed by the rest of the Regiment, in fact in short order by the entire King’s Division.

When we skirmishers developed the enemy line of infantry, our regiment coming up, we took our places in the line, and then followed a most sanguinary battle. For a little distance we drove
the enemy, but then it became a stand-up fight, neither side giving way. It was mostly musketry firing at our part of the line, and was kept up until after dark, firing at the flash of the enemy fire. When firing finally ceased, about nine P.M., we held the most advanced position we had had. Then what was to be done? We had no orders to advance or to retreat, so we stood in our tracks for a long time, while our officers were trying to find out from higher officers what we were to do, to remain there and resume the fight in the morning, or to retrace our steps to the Warrenton Pike, and continue our march to Manassas, which was interrupted by this event not on the schedule. We understood that no word could be obtained from headquarters, so the Division Commanders concluded to carry out the last orders, viz: to march to Manassas. In the meantime we in the ranks had lain down and gone to sleep until about one o'clock when we were awakened to resume the march that had been so ruthlessly interrupted, and at about daylight arrived at the point near Manassas to await further orders, which came soon enough. Our action in leaving the battlefield after the battle was over, and continuing the march that was interrupted has been much criticised by critics, but it seems to me that it was the only thing to do under the orders.
This battle was called by us, the Battle of Kings Division, while all the accounts I have read of it mentions it as the battle of August 28th. (Sometimes called the battle of Gainesville). The Reports say "Losses on both sides were very severe, the Confederates losing many officers of high rank." On our side it is stated in report of General Gordon that, "more than one-third of the Federal command were left dead or wounded on the field." General Jackson (Stonewall Jackson, the Confederate Commander) called it "a fierce and sanguinary conflict."

The following day, August 29th, we lay idle for several hours in the afternoon on a hillside overlooking the battlefield of Groveton, less than half a mile away. We could see plainly the movements of the troops with their flags on both sides as far as the smoke of battle permitted us to see, and wondered why we were not ordered into the fight. At last, perhaps about six o'clock or after, came a courier, staff officer or orderly, and we moved off in the direction of the field of conflict. We met some regiments coming out, and it seemed that we were to relieve them, and we made our way to the extreme front. In the meantime it had been getting dark, and the battle was over; we had accomplished nothing, had not fired a shot, but all the uncertainties of the situation gave rise to much anxiety—perhaps more than we had experienced the evening.
before in the battle. At one time we were fired upon, in the dark, by troops of our side, but as far as I know no damage was done. A little later in our movements in the dark, we came upon a Federal battery that was ready to fire grape and cannister into us, and would have done so in another minute, except for the lucky and timely explanation made by one of our officers. Going still a little further we stopped on a hill side, dropped to the ground, and in a few minute were so sound asleep nothing short of the booming of battle could have awakened us. It was here that our Lieutenant George Hurst was shot through the palm of his hand.

After idling away a number of hours on a pleasant afternoon, we were called upon to go through, for a number of hours well into the night, a most perplexing and anxious experience, and had accomplished nothing.

The following day, August 30th, 1862, occurred the momentous "Second Battle of Bull Run." Of course we were in it from first to last, and while I am quite familiar with most of the details and remember plainly many of the scenes and experiences, I will not here relate them. The battle-field proper, that is the arena upon which the two armies contended for victory that day, is about two miles square or a little more. It is or was generally open, that is free of woods, except at the southerly edge, the ground rolling,
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in fact quite hilly—the highest ground being south of the Turnpike, around and back of the Henry House Hill, and Bald Hill opposite. The ground being free of woods mostly, enabled me at times to see all parts of the field where the conflict was going on, this, together with the fact that I have been nearly all over the ground several times since the War, and have read many accounts of the battle and the entire campaign, and especially because I was "in it" all the time, makes me feel quite familiar with the subject.

The battle was the most sanguinary I was ever in; other battles I participated in were sanguinary in spots, but this was sanguinary all along the line, all the time, and the advantages of the ground pretty nearly equal to both sides, except when Jackson’s Corps took shelter behind an unfinished railroad embankment, with the field in front of him enfiladed by Longstreet’s batteries, and we going blindly to the attack, time and again with tremendous losses on our side and but little on theirs. I think now, that if we could not have coaxed Jackson and his men to come away from their shelter, dared them to come out, or outflanked them, we should have let them stay there as long as they pleased; we had as much time for the business in hand as they, and could wait as long (we were getting pay by the month, not by the job.) The urgency
was not so great as to take chances in such a trap prepared for us. Seriously, if the one who gave the order to dislodge Jackson in that position with frontal attacks had been on the ground when the first line of attack was shattered, and if he had had any sense he would have concluded all other lines would be shattered in the same way, he would have given the order to withdraw, saved lives on our side, and used the troops elsewhere to better advantage.

The battle began about the middle of the day with our attack on Jackson's troops, north of the Warrenton Turnpike, and developed toward our left, culminating in the most severe fights, first on Bald Hill and then on the Henry House Hill, to both of which troops that had been in line on our right were rushed during the battle. As the day drew to a close our army began to withdraw to the east bank of Bull Run, protected by our troops holding the Henry House Hill; by midnight our entire army was between Bull Run and Centreville. Pope's army had been defeated, but not routed or destroyed; every organization was complete, though decimated, and could have been depended on to carry out any orders, so far as its numbers were able.

The battle of Chantilly, which is some six or seven miles north of Centreville, came next, in which I also participated. While this battle
was going on, a severe electrical storm raged most of the time, followed by a heavy downpour of rain; our part of the line was in a forest, with much underbrush; the noted General Phil. Kearny and General Stevens were among the killed.

By this time troops from the Peninsula were arriving, and I hold they should all have been forwarded to Pope at Centreville as fast as possible, and permitted him to take the offensive, which he surely could have and would have done successfully with the substantial re-enforcements. Instead of that, he was ordered to withdraw his Army to the Defenses of Washington. Much could be said and written on this action, but I will not enter upon that.

In accordance with these orders we were soon on the march again toward Washington, and one night, long after dark, as we came to a halt we bivouaced beside the road and in the morning found it was right in front of our old camping ground on Upton Hill and immediately occupied it. The weather was hot, and I had put up my little shelter tent and lay in the shade of it, when I heard some one inquiring for me. I jumped out of the tent instantly and saw my eldest brother. I was glad to see him of course, and he was greatly relieved to see me. I have told elsewhere that he had charge of a large force of railroad carpenters at Alexandria, and he had
started out to find me, inquiring on the way for
the Twenty-first, New York. He was repeatedly
told, "Oh, the 21st is all cut up" or "Oh, the
21st is all cut to pieces." When at last our loca-
tion on Upton Hill was pointed out to him, and
he saw only a small batch of shelter tents put
up, he thought the report that the 21st was all
"cut to pieces" must be true, and his faith in
finding me was at a low ebb; however, when I
jumped out of my tent he was satisfied that
though the 21st may be all cut up, I was not
cut up. We spent some little time together
chatting, and then he started on his way back
to Alexandria, while I awaited orders, which
came very soon.

We were now in General McClellan's com-
mand, and were about to start on the Maryland
Campaign. Orders came promptly to march
over the "Long Bridge" to and through Wash-
ington. We made no stop in Washington. There
were many new and old troops in Washington
at the time, the streets were lined with soldiers,
mostly new troops, seeing us old vets marching
through Washington. While I remember that
we entered Washington by way of the "Long
Bridge" I do not remember which street or
road we took on our way out. Rockville, Mary-
land, is the first town I remember passing. We
had now got fairly started on the Maryland
Campaign of 1862.
IV.

An Incident of the Battle of Antietam.

THE FIRST ARMY CORPS, of which we were a part, had been engaged with the enemy since early dawn, on the 17th of September, 1862, the details of which I will not attempt to trace now. When sometime in the course of the forenoon, the exact hour I cannot give, the entire Corps seems to have been at rest, our Brigade, our Regiment was resting on the northern edge of a piece of woods, but a little distance from the Dunker's Church, but on lower ground than the church. The regiments at this time were no larger than a company should be, if even as large. Our men were mostly squatted on the ground, some making coffee. Our Colonel, Wm. F. Rogers and Brigade Commander, Gen. M. R. Patrick, both on horseback, talking together quietly. Then, over an open field on our left, came a new full Regiment, new uniforms, new flag, full ranks, and a battery, marching in line of battle past us, toward the front. It was an inspiring and cheering sight. It was a part of the Twelfth Corps coming to relieve or re-enforce the First.

But a short time after this, our Colonel and General still chatting, and myself standing near
by—General Patrick wore a common blue blouse and a light colored soft slouched hat, only the star on his shoulder indicating his rank—there came galloping from the front a colonel in full uniform (apparently new), a fine looking man, long black whiskers, dark eyes and rosy cheeks, and coming to a stop before General Patrick, saluted and said: "General, I have orders to hold these woods to yonder fence. I have only thirteen hundred men, what is there to support me?" Our Colonel said: "I wish I had thirteen hundred men." The General pointed toward the Twenty-first and said in his calm, quiet way: "There is the Twenty-first, and yonder the Thirty-fifth, we'll support you good and strong." The Colonel looked, smiled cheerfully, (I suppose at the idea of those little squads supporting his big regiment), saluted, turned and galloped rapidly to the front. He was the Colonel of the big regiment we had just seen going to the front.

But a short time after this we heard the old familiar Rebel yell, volleys of musketry, bursting of shells, shouting, words of command and tumult in general, and presently the big, fine Regiment had dissolved into a big unwieldy crowd, coming back pell mell without any order or organization.

In the meantime the order came, "Twenty-first, fall in! Forward!" and we passed through
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this big crowd going pell mell to the rear, we in proper order to the front. I was never more proud of our little regiment. I, as Sergeant, marching beside the ranks, tried to have some out of the crowd fall in with us, several hesitated, but seeing their big crowd surging back, kept on rearward. When we had passed the last of the retreating regiment, we deployed in line of battle, and advanced a short distance. The rebels had not followed in force, and what did follow was stopped with a few shots. We, the small remnant of a brigade of the First Army Corps had thus established a firm front line—though thin—between the enemy and the disorganized part of the Twelfth Corps. And this at a time when some writer trying to describe the battle has said of about this time and place, that the “First Army Corps was annihilated, did not exist,” well, I think for a small part of an annihilated Corps we came in pretty handy, and did pretty well.

A word regarding the rout of this new regiment. If the orders to that regiment had been: “When you reach that line, advance and attack the enemy vigorously, inflict all the damage you can, drive him into the Potomac, your supports will take care of your flanks and rear” instead of “hold” etc., which means “stand still and await an attack” I do not suppose that the order would have been carried out fully, but I
firmly believe that it would have given a good account of itself, inflicted damage on the enemy and held its ground, and probably driven back the enemy. In an advance to attack, disciplined troops are apt to gain courage with every step, while "hold" in an unprotected, exposed position, awaiting attack, is apt to let some of the courage ooze out.

I have told what I started to tell, and having a little more spare time (though you probably have not) I will make a few remarks in general regarding McClellan’s campaign in Maryland, based upon my experience and observation in the ranks of an infantry regiment throughout the entire campaign, and my reading since the Civil War.

McClellan seems to have transferred the newly reorganized Army of the Potomac from Washington to the scene of conflict at the Antietam with commendable system and reasonable dispatch, though not with great energy. It was evidently his problem to get his army to the field of conflict not only expeditiously, but to have it arrive there in fit condition to fight a big battle, for the entire army of Northern Virginia, with General Robert E. Lee in command, was his objective, and this I think he accomplished successfully. I think the army was in better condition when it arrived at the Antietam, than when it left Washington, and
it had made good time. As a part of our work I will mention that we arrived at the Monocacy, four miles east of Frederick, Saturday evening after dark, September 13, 1862, and bivouacked over night on the left bank of the stream, and at dawn of day the next morning, Sunday, September 14th, cooked our coffee and immediately after resumed our march, soon passing through Frederick and on toward South Mountain. After passing through Frederick the road was mostly up grade and much of the way we infantry had to march beside the road, while the Artillery and Cavalry had the road. When within a few miles of the gap where the road crosses the summit of the mountain, we were dispatched some distance to the right of the road, and Companies "C" and "D" were soon deployed as skirmishers and going up the steep mountain side, closely followed by the lines of battle. We met no enemy until we reached the very top, when suddenly and quite unexpectedly from a line very near us, hid by a fence and underbrush, there came a terrific volley of musketry. Fortunately for us the side of the mountain was very steep at this point, and though quite close to the rebel line, we were on considerably lower ground than they, which resulted in their fire passing over us almost harmlessly, while our return fires were particularly effective. In the meantime darkness was gradually coming on,
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we advanced slightly onto the level ground on top, and slept on our most advanced line. The next morning the sun rose bright and on time, as if nothing had happened. A rebel officer came in under a flag of truce to get the body of a general officer who had been killed in the battle. He told us that that battle was not a test of strength between the two armies, but that they were preparing for us a few miles beyond which would be.

Well, after coffee we descended the mountainside and found our way back to the Boonesboro road, then through the gap, Boonesboro, Keedysville and early on the morning of the 16th we reached the Antietam. No particular fault can be found with all this, if only McClellan had ordered Hooker with the First Army Corps to cross the Antietam immediately, closely followed by the Twelfth under Mansfield, and ordered to attack vigorously by the First Army Corps with the Twelfth Corps, not only in support but in co-operation. Instead of this we passed most of the day in idleness on the left bank, and not until after four o'clock in the afternoon, did we cross the Antietam, miles up the stream, at a ford (so called), where the water was hip deep, and then marching miles on the other side of the stream to find the enemy. It left barely time to find and locate a line from which to advance and attack the enemy at dawn of day on the morning of the 17th of September, 1862.
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This, however, was notice to General Lee, the Rebel Commander, what part of his line would be attacked in the morning by the First Army Corps under General Hooker. He had all night to prepare for it, and you may be sure that he concentrated at this point all the troops available for the purpose of not only meeting this attack, but, if possible, to overwhelm, defeat and "chew up" the First Army Corps, before re-enforcements could come to it. You may also be sure that General Joe Hooker lost no time the next morning to get into the fight.

At early dawn the first shot fired on either side came from our battery, followed instantly by the fire of the rebel battery, and simultaneously we, the Infantry, moved forward in line of battle to the attack. The battle was on, and for several hours it was furious, of course not continuously firing by everyone, but at times manoeuvering, either to face the enemy at another point, or to attack him from another angle. In the meantime, the killed and seriously wounded were strewn over the field, at times at places it seemed as if there were more soldiers killed and wounded, lying flat on the ground, than were upright in the ranks facing the enemy.

All of our fighting was in the vicinity of the Dunker's Church—never far from it. The noise of artillery fire, exploding shells and musketry fire was much of the time deafening.
As stated before I think General McClellan brought his Army, The Army of the Potomac, successfully to the Antietam in fit condition, but I also think that if, when the Army reached the Antietam, the command had been given to General McDowell to cross the Antietam and fight the battle, McDowell would have done better than McClellan did, and the former was a Virginian, the latter a Pennsylvanian. While I am telling what I think, I will also say that I think the command that was given to General Pope early in the summer in Virginia, should have been given to General McDowell. I think he would have done better than did General Pope. He knew the country better, the army better, was a thorough soldier and a gentleman, and I think entitled to it. While a Virginian by birth, he had proved his loyalty to the Army and the Government. It was said that there was much hesitancy in Administrative quarters to give McDowell the important command given him early in 1861, on account of being a Virginian but that General Winfield Scott, who, I believe was also a Virginian, and then still the highest officer in the United States Army, vouched for his loyalty and he held for a time the most important position in the Army and should have been backed, in that field, by all the resources of the War Department.
The battle of Antietam, while not as decisive and disastrous to the Confederate Army as, in my opinion, it could and should have been, inflicted most severe losses upon the enemy, and instead of his threatening Washington, Baltimore and Pennsylvania, was driven out of the Union State of Maryland into the Confederate State of Virginia. It ended successfully the Maryland campaign, and was a great and important victory for the Union Cause.

The rejoicings throughout the loyal North were well nigh boundless. Union victories in the dark days of 1862 were scarce. It also heartened President Lincoln in his purpose to issue the Emancipation Proclamation he had been urged to issue during the summer, but he insisted upon awaiting a more opportune time, when after an important Union victory he would appear to have the power to enforce the Proclamation. I suppose he thought that without such victory the Proclamation would seem like issuing a "Bull against the Comet." Well, we gave him, the country and the world such a Victory and his "Emancipation Proclamation" soon followed.
HENRY A. OBERIST  JOHN H. MANSFIELD
THEO. M. NAGLE
THE BATTLE OF ANTIETAM had been fought September 17, 1862, our brigade commander, Brigadier General M. R. Patrick, a regular army officer, had returned from General McClellan’s headquarters late that evening, and told us, while he was still on horseback, of the progress of the battle along the entire front, during the day, and ended by saying: “and in the morning we will go at them again.”

Thus it was, that on the morning of September 18th, 1862, before daylight, I was cooking my coffee in a quart tin cup, a few rods back of my place in the ranks, or back of the ranks, as I was acting Sergeant during the battle. Of course I had no sausage, pancakes, bread and butter or cream with my coffee. I had a simple soldier’s breakfast—black coffee, hard tack and salt pork.

By daylight we had formed in line of battle, ready instantly to carry out any order we might receive. Our line, the line of our regiment, was not as long as it was in the spring when we left Upton’s Hill, near Falls Church, in front of Washington, indeed, it was not as long as it was
a week or two before when we marched through Washington to meet the Confederate Army in Maryland, but it was made up of young men who had been in numerous skirmishes and battles, We were among the oldest troops in the service and had all the experience in warfare it was possible to get in Virginia and Maryland from the first battle of Bull Run, July 21, 1861, to the battle of Antietam in Maryland, September 17, 1862, under Generals McDowell, Pope, Hooker and McClellan, and could be depended upon to carry out any order, or die in the attempt—pardon the expression. And thus we stood in line all day, momentarily expecting orders to advance; no such order or any other order came that day, not a shot was fired by either side, nor did a regiment, as far as I could see, move from the ground it had occupied all night. We had campaigned and marched under General Pope all summer, under McClellan in Maryland, and had not slept or bivouaced two nights on the same ground since we left Fredericksburg for Slaughter or Cedar Mountain, until then. For weeks we had marched in Maryland to face the Confederate Army, had fought it or a large part of it at South Mountain and whipped it September 14th, had attacked and whipped their main army under General Lee in their chosen position back of the Antietam, on the 16th and 17th of September, were ready to follow up the fight
on the 18th, but did not receive the order to attack.

The early morning of the 19th was like that of the 18th—on the same ground, preparing for the work of the day. We had been in line but a short time when the announcement came that there were no Rebels in front of us, they had retreated across the Potomac, and were well along into Virginia. We did not capture even a straggler or a gun, except what we captured during the battle.

We were soon to attack this same army again between two or three months later, December 13th, in a position much more advantageous to it at Fredericksburg, back of the Rappahannock. Why did not McClellan give the order to advance and attack on the morning of the 18th? In his official report of this battle he states as one of the reasons for not continuing the battle or following immediately the retreating enemy, that "the army was without shoes in good condition." The excuse is so flimsy, when all the conditions existing at that time are considered, that no comment, aside from the above statement is needed.

Well, we crossed the battle field that day, burying parties were detailed to bury the dead, some two thousand of the Union Army alone, and went into camp near Sharpsburg, and remained there about six weeks. Then the order
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came to march into Virginia and find Lee and his Army, or go to Richmond. We were a part of the First Army Corps, and our regiment was near the head, and as the army seemed to be marching all on one road we were near the head of a very long line of troops. As we approached Warrenton, the army came to a halt, we were drawn up in line, the Adjutant read to us the order relieving General McClellan from the command of the Army, and turn it over to General Burnside. We remained in line a short time, then the order came, "Attention! Present Arms!" and the bands along the line struck up "Hail to the Chief." Simultaneously came General McClellan and a part of his staff, riding along the line at a fast gallop, and as he disappeared in the distance toward Washington he was our Commander no longer. General Burnside was taking command. This was November 8th, 1862.

General McClellan, "Little Mack", was well liked by the army, both for his personal character and appearance, as well as for his military qualifications, and there were those who were disposed to criticise "Washington" for relieving him of the command, but we did not volunteer with the understanding that McClellan (not even "Little Mack") was to be our Commander. President Abraham Lincoln was our Commander in Chief and whatever he ordered or sanctioned
was "Our Order", and the matter was soon a closed incident, nothing more to be said.

We continued our march southward, under Burnside. In some respects the march was different from our usual, in this: that when the fields beside the road permitted, we were marched by regimental front instead of in column of four, and in route step in the road. Perhaps the innovation was a good idea, but the boys thought and said, that marching in the road, loaded with all accoutrements, weighing about 80 pounds, was hard enough, when kept up day after day. However, in due time we arrived at a point somewhere between Acquia Creek and Fredericksburg, sometime near the end of November, 1862, and now begins the incident or reminiscence I started out to tell, in which I was the hero, or in which I played a lone hand—take your choice.

I had three brothers older than myself, who had charge of a large force of men, carpenters, upward of a thousand, to repair railroad bridges, cars, scows, warehouses, etc., or build them for for the railroads and the army, with headquarters at Alexandria. One of them was later transferred to Nashville to organize and manage a like force of workingmen. Now while I was campaigning in Virginia one or another of them would occasionally look me up to see if I was still on duty, but after entering upon the Mary-
land campaign they had no opportunity to come to see me. I was, therefore, anxious to see them and let them know that I was still doing duty and ready for more.

As before stated we were near the head of a long column of troops, and I judged we would remain at the spot we had reached several days to enable the rest to catch up and concentrate before moving on.

In the meantime our Brigadier General Patrick had been appointed Provost Marshal General of the Army at General Burnside's headquarters. He was a strict disciplinarian; had been Provost Marshal of the City of Mexico under General Scott, and in anticipation of our next move onto Fredericksburg, strict orders were issued that no passes must be issued—every man to be accounted for at roll call; no passes to be recognized except those of the Provost Marshall General. Now here was a dilemma, but it was not to frustrate my designs for a trip to Alexandria. I had obtained a non-descript overcoat and hat, neither Rebel nor Union, and for the trip I was not be to an enlisted man, but a cook for an officers' mess to get vegetables, etc., at Alexandria. I had also arranged with some of my comrades that in the event of the Regiment moving before my return, my accoutrements and rifle were to be divided among them, and carried along. My Captain
and perhaps other officers knew unofficially that I was preparing for the trip, but they also knew, or felt certain that I would be back in time. During all the campaigns, battles and skirmishes in which our Regiment took part, I was with the Colors every hour, every minute, from the first to last, and they were justified in believing I would be back, and said nothing.

But what about the passes? We had in our Company a young man who had held clerical positions, and was an excellent penman, and clever at imitating hand-writings. His name was Eugene Dickinson— "Gene Dickson," for short. He was a good soldier and the champion grumbler in the ranks. To him I applied for my passes, five of them, and he readily wrote them out for me, the last one signed by Provost Marshal General Patrick.

My preparations now being complete and armed with these "genuine Gene Dickson Passes" I started early next morning afoot for Acquia Creek, and upon arriving there I found a steamboat at the end of the Dock about ready to start for Washington and Alexandria, but they would not admit me on the strength of the passes I had. They expressed no doubts about their genuineness or general good character, but said I would have to get a pass from the Quartermaster of the port, or wharf, who had an office on shore, near the wharf. Gene Dickson was
miles away, so I concluded to try to get a pass at this Q. M. Office. The office building was a newly constructed affair with few windows. The place where I applied for the pass was a hole about one foot square in the wall; however, I made the attendant understand what I wanted, and showed him the passes I had, and after some hesitation and questioning he wrote out a pass, following the wording of those I had, and signed the Captain Quartermaster’s name to it. Now, while this was not a “genuine Gene Dickson Pass” it served me a good purpose later.

While this had been going on, the steamboat I had expected to patronize on my trip to Alexandria had taken its departure without me. Now what was I to do? There was scarcely any one in sight, everything was peaceful and quiet, but perhaps because of my G. D. passes I was a little apprehensive of being picked up by a patrol; I did not want to be questioned even. There was a steamboat, apparently laid up for the season a little way off, no steam up and only one man in sight. I asked him if the boat would be going to Alexandria. He didn’t know but he thought it would go that night. So I went aboard and sat down on a coil of rope on the sunny side of the cabin. Directly a captain came aboard and calling in a loud voice for the captain of the boat, asked him how long it would take to get up steam. "About a half
hour.” “All right, get up steam and go over to the Maryland side, and at a certain point take soundings, we may build a wharf there.” Accordingly we were soon steaming up the river.

We had not been on the way long, when a man came out of the cabin door near me, and walking slowly past me, eyed me critically. Then another came in the same way, then a third, and shortly the three of them came together and stopped in front of me. One asked me where I was going. I replied to Alexandria. He said, “This boat isn’t going to Alexandria.” “I know,” I said, “you are going over to Maryland, but will be back and then you’ll go to Alexandria.”

“Got a pass?” “Yes.” and with that I arose and standing among the three, all stalwart men, I got out my “Gene Dickson passes”, and explained, and finally I came to the pass that was not a “G. D.”, and I said, “and this pass I got at the Quartermaster’s Office in Acquia Creek.” As I said that one of the men, a captain, who had not said a word before, took the pass out of my hand and pointed out to the others that I was not an enlisted man, and rather took my side after that. One asked rather emphatically, I thought, “Aint you an enlisted man?” I said “No, not now, I was a three-months man.” That seemed to satisfy him partly and after a little
further questioning they passed on. It turned out that one of the men was the captain of the boat, another was a War Department detective, and the third, who had finally taken my part was the Captain Quartermaster of the place, who had recognized his clerk's hand writing in the pass, with his name signed, and consequently defended the pass and myself. I can't tell you what would have been the result if this last pass had also been a "Gene Dickson Pass". At any rate they obtained for me the pass that was important at this stage of the trip.

The Potomac River is a mile or more wide at this point, and it did not take very long to complete the object of the trip to Maryland, so we were soon back to the wharf at Acquia Creek, and I remained aboard. Gradually in the course of a few hours the boat filled with passengers, all Washington bound. I placed myself at the rail on the upper deck away from the wharf, I think my "G. D." passes preferred that side, and looking over the water I saw a small tug boat coming. As it came nearer I discovered that the only passenger was my eldest brother. I shouted his name to the top of my voice, he appeared to have heard, for he looked up at the boat but with so many passengers evidently did not recognize me. In the meantime the little tug boat went "chuck, chuck, chuck," and rapidly carried my brother past me.
I then hurried to the gang plank, onto the wharf, down toward the shore, and in a moment stood where the tug was making fast to the wharf, and I helped my brother up onto the dock. I tell you he was surprised and glad to see me, as likewise I was glad to see him. He intended to go to the army lines, look me up and give me a pair of new boots which he had brought along. I explained to him my situation, that I had "tickets" to Alexandria (my "Gene Dickson Passes") so we both hurried back to the boat, lest they might pull in the gang plank and be off, leaving us talking on the dock.

Well, there was no more trouble or incident worth telling. In due time we arrived in Alexandria, and I slept that night inside of a house in a bed, the second time since I left Buffalo in April, 1861—the first also in Alexandria.

The next day I returned to camp by the same route, the regiment had not moved, my accoutrements were where I left them, and everybody was glad to see me, and indeed I was glad to be with them again, to take my place and my share in the further campaign against the Confederate army, the battle of Fredericksburg followed in a few days.

I may here say that I do not believe in telling or acting a lie, deception is no part of my make-up or nature, yet in time of War, in the
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War zone, an innocent little ruse to attain a desired object, may be excusable if you are successful, and are not caught at it, and especially if you are still young.
VI.

AFTER OUR DEFEAT at Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862, and retreat across the Rappahannock, we finally encamped on a steep, though not high wooded hillside near the Potomac, and built little huts of wood and clay, or mud. The side of the hill was not ideal for camp, but the soil was dry, and in general I believe, it was healthful, but we were not to remain here long. The Army of the Potomac was being reorganized for the next campaign, Hooker had taken the place of Burnside as Commander.

Our regiment, the 21st, N. Y. S. Vol. Inf. consisted originally of about 1000 men. We had been sworn into the United States service May 7, 1861 for two years service, our term of enlistment would therefore expire about three months hence. We had seen much service, had encamped in 1861 for months on the edge of a dismal swamp, I doubt if any one of the regiment had escaped fever and ague. For practically the entire year of 1862 we were on the move, marching and engaged in battles, skirmishes, picket and scout duty, here, there and elsewhere in Virginia and Maryland—and, by
the way, it was at this camp that one evening at dress parade, our Adjutant, Chester W. Sternberg, read the order appointing me a Sergeant, to date from the battle of Antietam, September 17, 1862.

Our former Brigade Commander Brigadier General M. R. Patrick was still Provost Marshal General of the Army, and so the Regiment, what there was left of it, was ordered to Acquia Creek for guard duty. We had made ourselves quite comfortable in our camp and were rather reluctant to leave, but orders are orders, and every soldier knows what that means—you may be allowed to so some grumbling to relieve your feelings, but—

Now it is a curious fact that while I remember a vast number of incidents of battles, skirmishes, marches, campaigns and camp life, and remember them as distinctly as if they had happened but a few months ago, instead of sixty years, there are some events that evidently happened, but that I have no recollection of whatever, and try as hard as I can to recall it, at least to some extent, I am as unable to recall it as if it had never happened.

This is the case regarding our march to Acquia Creek. I haven’t the least recollection of the start, the march, or the arrival at Acquia, but we must have marched, for we got there, and there was no other way.

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Acquia Creek was then the terminal of the railroad from Richmond to the Potomac River. There was a fine wharf for the landing of steamboats, it was therefore used as the base of supplies for the Army of the Potomac, and consequently of much importance.

I will here say that we, our regiment, had almost from our entrance into the service until then, been kept at the front, in as close touch with the enemy as it was possible to be, from as far back as before the first battle of Bull Run, July 21, 1861, until the close of the campaign against the enemy at Fredericksburg, a few weeks before. Our place, our experience was always "at the front", never in rear of our front lines. I was therefore somewhat chagrined, disappointed, perhaps somewhat humiliated, to be relegated to the rear to "do guard duty", even if it was at the base of supplies for the Army, while the army was being reorganized for further campaigns, leaving us out of the reckoning. To be sure those who were there still fit for duty were practically assured of a safe return home with all our limbs and faculties unimpaired, and that was some satisfaction, besides, as I said before, "orders are orders", and the 21st Regiment N. Y. S. Vol. Inf. therefore began "guard duty" at Acquia Creek, Va.

At this point, while turning my back, as it were, upon active duties at the front, I wish to
say that, during all my campaigning, marching, etc., in Virginia and Maryland under McDowell, Pope, Hooker, McClellan, Burnside, I was always at my post of duty, no march of the Regiment was ever so long in point of time, distance traveled, or hardships, and we made a number that tested the endurance most thoroughly, but that I was in my place, at the beginning and the end. No battle or skirmish, but that I was in it from first to last, but not once wounded. I was exposed to the dangers of shot, shell and bullets as often and as long as many others who were killed or wounded, in fact oftener, for while they, after being killed or wounded, were not called upon to face these dangers further, I, not having been wounded, faced them again and again at other times and places. This fact does not indicate that I was any more brave than they, or they more brave than I. I do not know as it indicates anything, and I only mention it as a fact. On the other hand there was quite a percentage of our boys who could be exposed to the fire of the enemy but a moment before they would be wounded, more or less seriously, and the same would happen the very next engagement in which they would take part.

I remember one fine fellow, who died many years ago, Frank Valentine, who was wounded in both the first and second engagements he
was in; his third, Antietam, had hardly begun when a rebel minae ball shattered the barrel of his rifle. He obtained another one from one of the seriously wounded, and continued, but soon was most seriously wounded in the knee. This laid him up for the remainder of our enlistment. I do not recall that any of those who were so easily wounded (as it were) ever afterwards received a mortal wound.

On the other hand I remember incidents that were quite different. At one time we were drawn in line preparatory to making a charge on Jackson’s troops behind the railroad embankment and in the cut, we were the first line, the first to make the charge, and were ordered to “lie down” while four or five other lines (eight or ten ranks) were assembling and forming behind us. I was in the front rank of our front line, and while we were lying down the soldier in my rear hugged me so close that no bullet coming from the enemy line could have touched him until it had passed through me. Well, in due time the order came “Up and Charge!” We were then probably seven or eight hundred feet from the enemy embankment, it did not seem so far then, but I have been on the ground since the war, and while there I estimated it to be 800 feet. We had gone but a few rods when pandemonium began. Jackson’s volleys of musketry and batteries in our front and Longstreet’s
Batteries on a hill to our left enfilading the field. In a few seconds the line was broken, the young fellow who had hugged me so closely but a few minutes before was among the killed; another young fellow, Al Schwartz, had come to my side in the tumult and confusion, saying, "Those are rebels and I'll have one shot at them, if I die the next minute." He kneeled, aimed, fired, and the same instant a bullet struck him in the forehead and he toppled over dead.

As I said before, our line was broken, our Captain, Jeremiah P. Washburn, and many others were killed, there was much smoke, noise and confusion, an order could not be heard had there been any given at this time, nor was there a rank to hear, so it was every man for himself. While I hadn't seen any bullets in the air, I thought there must be lots of them there, and that I had better seek protection. The first obstacle above the bare ground that offered after this impulse came to me, was a small wild rose bush, but I did not take advantage of it, it wasn't good enough. Going a bit further I came to a ditch about 18 or 20 inches wide and about the same depth, across our front. Yes, that was good. I jumped in, some were there ahead of me, others kept coming, many of them wounded. There was no water in the ditch and if it had not been in that particular field at that particular time, I think
it would have been a pretty safe place, but many received wounds there.

Now the next line emerged out of the woods and came forward, two or three others and myself sprang out of the ditch and went forward, but that line also disappeared as a line. The next cover I found was a little ditch 6 or 8 inches deep. Another line attempted to make the advance and a member of my company, Julius Weiss, he was a fine boy, and myself up again. Our next stopping place was about 60 to 70 feet distant from and almost exactly in front of where the railroad embankment enters the cut through the hill; here Julius and I found a place that had been slightly excavated or washed out by the rain, 5 or 6 inches deep, but the grass was 10 or 12 inches high and had not been trampled down in front of us; here we lay for a long time firing and being fired upon. How close to us the bullets whizzed I cannot tell, but as I lay to the right of Julius, a shell from our left, from one of Longstreet's batteries passed over us and struck the ground not two feet from my shoulder. I could easily have put my hand where it struck. It did not explode then but spilled a lot of dirt over us and passed on, while Julius said in all earnestness, "By God, Nagle, that was meant for you."

In the meantime more of our troops attempted to come forward but were promptly
disorganized by volleys of musketry and heavy shell fire. I do not believe that in the part of the field we were in any organized line came beyond the first ditch, about one-third the distance from the shelter of the woods to the enemy line behind the embankment.

A little to our right the woods extended to the embankment, what happened there I do not know. Finally it became evident that our side was no longer attempting to force the enemy lines at this point. The rebels were getting bold, numbers making their appearance on top of the embankment, but a short distance ahead of us. They were evidently preparing to advance. What were we, Julius and I to do in our advanced position, and without "support?" We held a hurried consultation. It must have been a kind of a Council of War—you know they never fight, for we quickly and unanimously decided to "retreat". The movement began at once led by Julius, without orders, he plunged horizontally like a fish into the shallow ditch in our rear. This was proper, not to expose himself more than was necessary. I followed promptly, but remained on my feet until I reached the ditch; this was evidently a "strategic retreat." After a short (very short) pause we scampered back to the larger ditch, this we found practically filled with Union soldiers, mostly, if not all, wounded. There were several of our Com-
pany who begged to be taken back to our line, but the field was still being swept by enemy fire, and no conveyance for carrying them, we could only assure them that they were safest where they were, and I continued my "retreat." I think Julius and I had become separated by this time. None of those I recognized in the ditch were ever heard from by myself or their friends afterward. I was soon in the semi-shelter of the woods, the trees were mostly large solid trees, the bullets crashed into them or glanced from them with spiteful venom. I didn't like the idea of turning my back to the enemy bullets, but it is a part of the fortunes or misfortunes of war.

A little further on I saw our Colors and our Colonel, Wm. F. Rogers, rallying what he could of our Regiment. That was what I was looking for. I joined them, my retreat was successfully ended. For a long time I had been ahead of the Colors and may command, if there was a command. I had now rejoined the Colors and we were fast forming a pretty respectable command. This was not the end of the battle, plenty happened after that, but this is as far as I want to relate now. It was an incident in the second Battle of Bull Run.

Massing a large force of troops opposite the enemy lines, and then doling them out in small units and in thin lines, pitting them against
veteran troops of the enemy, entrenched or protected by ideal embankments, may be a splendid idea, but it didn’t work that time successfully.

After doing duty for some weeks at Acquia Creek, I was ordered to take charge of a detail of twenty men, two from each company and a corporal from “D” Co., I was Sergeant of “C” Co., and proceed to Washington to guard the Sixth Street Wharf, which was the Washington Terminal of the steamboat line between Acquia Creek and Washington, the rear entrance to the Army of the Potomac, then quartered in the vicinity of Fredericksburg.

Orders are orders, so in obedience to these orders I took my little command by steamboat to Washington—this was good-bye to the Army of the Potomac lines. Though still under orders of the Provost Marshal General of the Army, General M. R. Patrick, by whose orders I was sent there, I was within the lines of the “Defenses of Washington”, which was another department. I reported to Q. M. Capt. Robinson, took quarters near the wharf in barracks vacated by a full large regiment, and entered upon our guard duty. Many little incidents are remembered that were different from our experiences at the front, I will, however, relate only one.

The entrance to the Wharf on the line of the street near Sixth Street, was about a rod wide,
here was placed a sentinel whose orders in part were to prevent any one without a proper pass from going onto the Wharf. At this time, early in May 1863, there was a tall soldier, of German birth or descent, of "D" Co. on guard here. One day as I was on my way from our quarters to the Wharf and nearing the entrance, a closed, one-horse carriage, with glass only in the door, driven by a darkey driver— I believe it was a common public conveyance, a hack— came to a stop in front of the entrance, and about a rod distant. A tall man in black got out, another, with long dark, iron gray whiskers, bespectacled round eyes and derby hat, stuck his head out of the window. The tall man walked toward the entrance, the other anxiously looking after him and eyeing the surroundings. The sentinel barred the way. They— both tall, stood face to face, body to body, with the sentinel's gun between them. He said, "I am President Lincoln, my man." At the same instant I, being three or four paces distant, called out, "Guard, let the President pass!" With that the guard jumped aside, presented arms, and looking after the President said, "By God, that does look like his picture."

The President passed on, the man looking out of the window of the carriage seemed relieved, seeing the boys in blue on duty, withdrew his head and the carriage with him drove away.
They were President Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton—the highest official of the Government, the best beloved man in the land, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and his Secretary of War. There was no escort of any sort, military or civil, not a policeman or even a detective.

I think Lincoln must have been on the dock nearly three hours, most of the time sitting alone on a box or barrel, and much of the time with his hand to his forehead. Those were the anxious days between the first and fourth of May, 1863 when the Army under General Hooker was fighting the battle of the Wilderness and was defeated. I have no doubt Lincoln was there partly to get away from office cares, and largely in hopes that some favorable news would come from the Army lines. In this he must have been sadly disappointed, for no steamboat arrived while he was there. When he finally took his departure, he came to the entrance, or exit, alone, there was no carriage, but in a moment the same carriage that had brought him appeared from somewhere, and in another moment he was away.

A few days after this event I joined my Company and Regiment as it passed through Washington on the way to Buffalo, there to be discharged or mustered out of service, May 18,
1863, on the expiration of our term of enlistment, viz.: Two years.

I have a recollection of seeing Abraham Lincoln at another time previous to the above. He was then President-elect, and on his way from Springfield to Washington. The trip was shrouded more or less in secrecy, to guard against possible assassination. While passing through Buffalo he stopped at the old American Hotel on Main Street between Eagle Street and Court Street, the site now occupied by the Department Store of Adam, Meldrum and Anderson. The stairway leading from the lobby to the floor above was composed of wide steps to a landing half way up to the floor; from this landing or platform two narrower steps or stairways, one on either side of the wide one, led backward to the floor above.

Mr. Lincoln was standing on a chair in the left hand corner of this landing, the crowd was passing up the stairs past Mr. Lincoln, and on to the next floor. Mr. Lincoln was shaking hands with some of the men passing, I was one of the crowd, and just as I was within arms length of him, he held both of his large hands over the crowd in a benediction sort of a way and said: "All you young men pass right on, I am going to shake hands only with the gray haired men." My hair was not gray then—it is gray now all right enough—so I missed by a
narrow margin shaking hands with Abraham Lincoln. I always thought that was a mistake on his part. I had carried the torch in the Wide Awake ranks during the campaign, and soon after in answer to his call, carried the musket. But I never laid it up against him, and don’t now, though I wish he had held out his hand.

I remember another time when the lifeless body of our assassinated martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, passed through Buffalo on its last journey to rest at Springfield, Ill. It laid in state in the old St. James Hall, which stood just about where the lobby of the Iroquois Hotel is now, facing Eagle Street. Entrance to this Hall for the occasion was by way of the second floor of some small store buildings then facing Main Street. There was no crowding here, the police saw to it that only a few were admitted at a time. As I entered the Hall, all was silence, solemn and in almost complete darkness, save for a couple of small lights at the bier, two guards standing near.
VII.

A Hearty Welcome

THE FOREGOING Reminiscences relating almost wholly to my experience with the 21st Regiment N.Y.S. Vol. Inf., of which I was a part, from the day it organized until the day it was mustered out of the United States service and discharged, I think it appropriate that I should refer to our return to Buffalo, our Home City, at the Expiration of our Two-year Term of Service.

I find it exceedingly difficult to select from the innumerable mass of thoughts that press upon me. Many pages might be written upon this event, and then not exhaust the subject or do justice to it. I will, however, be brief.

The regiment was composed of young men from Buffalo and vicinity, and its career in the Army had been watched with interest by the prominent, near prominent and not prominent people of Buffalo, and as also our labors and losses had been severe, and we had made good, it was but natural that Buffalo should turn out en mass, as it did, to greet us on our return.

I had been a resident of Buffalo less than four months when the War broke out, and was acquainted with only a very few; for me, therefore, it was after all only one of the passing events.
We arrived by train at the Erie Railroad Depot on Exchange Street, about the middle of the afternoon, May 14, 1863. Exchange Street was lined from the Depot to Main Street with military and civil organizations—the Continentals, with Ex-President Millard Fillmore in command, at the head—that were to escort us on our march to the old arsenal on Batavia Street—now Broadway—and was crowded to the limit with men, women and children.

We soon formed in line, we were a complete Veteran Regiment of Infantry of the Union Army, with every officer and man, fit for duty in his place with our Colors, and with much experience, and still in service of the Government of the United States of America. Now, with our fine Regimental Band, Peter Kraemer leading at our head, we formed in column of fours and marched up Exchange, past the escorting organizations, which were at “Salute” to Maine, where we halted, came to a “Front” and “Saluted” the escorting organizations as they passed us to take the lead the rest of the way.

We then swung into column by “Company front” on Main Street, and with our own Band at our head, at the order: “Column Forward March” we began our last march up Main Street, amid the booming of friendly cannons and the cheering of the multitude. The street was clear from curb to curb, but the sidewalks and all the
windows along the line of march were filled to capacity with joyful, cheering humanity; joy, pride and admiration filled every heart and shone in every eye. Amid all this acclaim, heartfelt joy and tumult, the Veteran Twenty-first marched steadily on, seemingly unmindful of all the shouts and cheers of welcome, approval and admiration, as was becoming in Veteran Soldiers on a Parade March. My own chief concern was to have our Company, our Regiment, make a creditable appearance, which I think they did.

Arriving at the Arsenal, we listened to some patriotic addresses of Welcome. Then "Attention!" and we were told that after breaking ranks, we would find eatables in the Hall, where we later found the tables and stands loaded with more than enough for 10,000 men.

And now the end was very near, for directly our Colonel dismissed us to go where we pleased without passes, then, "Breaking Ranks" and the labors of the Twenty-first were finished, our last march had ended, we had "broken ranks" for the last time.

A day or two later we received our discharges. We were again Civilian Citizens.

THEODORE M. NAGLE,
N. Y. S. Vol. Inf.

Written Jan. 1923.
IN DECEMBER, 1862, Generals Burnside, Franklin, Hooker, Sumner, Smith, Reynolds, Doubleday, Gibbon, Stoneman, Birney, Sykes, Warren, Humphreys, Hancock, Meagher, Howard, Pleasonton, and all the rest of us, were on the march bound for Richmond via Fredericksburg, in fact we had orders to go to Richmond. Arriving at the Rappahannock, opposite Fredericksburg, we found that Generals Lee, Longstreet, Jackson, Hill, Ewell, Stuart, and all their rebel crew, were bound that we should not go at that time, and accordingly had blocked the road we wanted to take, (the Orange C. H. Turnpike and Telegraph Roads), and fortified the hills on either side of the road for miles, planted batteries innumerable, and long lines of rifle pits in front of their batteries, all well manned by the veteran troops of the Army of Northern Virginia. I heard no talk of arbitration, or gentle, peaceful means of settling our differences. I heard the words of command: "Forward! Forward!" and that's what brought on the Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia, December 13, 1862. The battle itself, with all its
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carnage, bloodshed, and blunders, I will not now recall, but will content myself to relate several little incidents occurring before and after the battle, not at all noteworthy, except, perhaps, that they in a measure relate to that disastrous battle, formed, in part, the more peaceful, romantic fringe of the battle.

On December 11, 1862, our brigade, Gen. Patrick's; our Regiment, the 21st N. Y. S. Vol. Inf., (all New York troops) a part of the left wing of the Union Army, under command of Major General Franklin, stacked arms about noon in an open field, parallel to and 600 or 800 feet distant from a piece of woods, and about one mile from the Rappahannock, we all threw off our accoutrements; at about 4 o'clock I concluded that we would very likely remain there all night; in anticipation of this, I went to the woods, and with my hatchet, which I always carried, I cut a large armful of cedar boughs; as cedars were scarce there it took me a long time to make out my load, but finally carried them out of the woods, and when about half way to my place in the ranks the bugle called "Fall in!" Everybody was immediately astir putting on accoutrements, etc. Field officers, as I passed them, smiled to see me carrying my cedar boughs, and the boys laughed and had many remarks to make. I, however, had made up my mind to carry them to my place
in the ranks; but matters were being rushed at that time. All along the line the orders were repeated, "Fall in!" "Fall in!" "Count off!" "Count off!" "One!" "Two!" "One!" "Two!" It was now fast getting dark; four of our company were missing, so Captain Remington says to me, "Sergeant N., you take charge of these muskets and accoutrements, and when the boys come, follow the line of march with them." As I said before, things were moving, and by this time the order came: "By the right flank, forward march!" and the line took up its tramp past me. Several regiments had passed (it was quite dark), the column came to a halt; in a few moments it faced about, and, with the left in front, marched till each command occupied exactly the same ground it had before it had moved—and I slept on cedar boughs that night. Of course we had no tents with us; the ground was frozen hard; it is the only time in my experience that we started on a march and returned to exactly the same ground.

The next day, the 12th of December, we crossed the river on pontoons. By nightfall I again set out to find something to put between myself and the ground. There was not much ground on that side of the river that we could calls ours. The rebel lines were not far removed from the river, say one to one and one-half miles at our part of the line, but we looked upon the
Old Richmond Stage Road (about half way between the hills and the river) as being the dividing line between the two armies. At dusk my comrade, Henry Oberist, and I crossed this road into a cornfield where there were plenty of corn stalks stacked; for some reason or other we went from one stack to another, to pick out the softest stalks, I suppose; directly I noticed others passing from one stack to another, but more generally away from our lines; so I says: "Henry, those fellows are Johnnies," (Johnny Rebs). He looked sharp, and agreed: "Yes, that's so, by George." So we got our corn stalks and edged over to our side of the field (neither of us were armed at the time) and with but little difficulty passed our pickets, which had been placed while we were in the cornfield. Arriving at our regiment's place, the field officers wanted the corn stalks for their horses, as no wagons had yet crossed the river. But they did not get the corn that night; we slept on the corn stalks, and in the morning the horses were welcome to them—that was the morning of the day of the battle, on the field of battle, December 13, 1862.

At nightfall, just before dusk, our lines were withdrawn a little from our most advanced position; as darkness came on we lay down on the ground, bare ground this time, each one curled up by himself, his trusted rifle within his embrace. The Johnny Rebs, from their elevated
positions on the hills threw grape and cannister among us till late in the night; the poor wounded horses moving about among us. It was a cold, clear, starlit night, and while we did some thinking, we also went to sleep, to be better prepared for the morrow. After I had slept some time our Captain Remington aroused me and ordered me to go to the pontoon bridge landing to bring up our quartermaster's wagons; the bridge was between one and two miles away up the river, no roads leading there. I tramped the fields and through the ravines till I arrived at the bridge. You will remember we were the extreme advance line, next to the enemy, nearly every man asleep on the ground, with his rifle in hand, but every man in the ranks a veteran of many battles and there is no doubt in my mind but that if the occasion had arisen each one would have been in his place in a moment, ready for the enemy (we had out a few scouts or pickets who would have given the alarm.) As I passed toward the rear, coming to the next line behind us, I found the troops in good alignment with their muskets stacked and the men lying in regular order behind their guns; going still further back, I found the third line actually in line of battle, standing at "parade rest." How long they retained these positions I do not know, as I returned a little nearer the river, and I do not think I saw them. This may not speak well for
the first line of veteran troops, but from what I had seen of our men in similar circumstances, I am sure every one would have been in place the moment the necessity arose, and done his full duty. This is not saying, however, that the second and third lines would not have performed their duties in any emergency. I have been told by former Confederate officers that on this night Stonewall Jackson pleaded with General Lee to allow him to come down off the hills and make a night attack on us, but that General Lee would not permit it.

The next morning we resumed our advanced position, but only a little picket firing, though forbidden, was indulged in during the day, and at night, December 14-15, we slept on the ground in this position. The following night the entire army retreated across the river in a rain that was at first drizzling, but soon turned into a heavy, steady downpour, in which we marched all night long; a fairly high wind blew from the Rebel lines, and as the ground was soft, the enemy probably did not know of our retreat until morning.

THEODORE M. NAGLE,

Erie, Pa., July 7, 1914.