REMINISCENCES OF SERVICE

WITH THE

FIRST VOLUNTEER REGIMENT

OF GEORGIA,

CHARLESTON HARBOR, IN 1863.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

GEORGIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

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ANNALS OF THE WAR.

In preparing the following paper, it has been my desire only to record what its title suggests—personal reminiscences.

Leaving to other and abler pens the task of writing an accurate history of the scenes and events to which reference is now about to be made, I shall confine myself simply to the task of setting down such things as came under my personal observation, or within the scope of my individual knowledge.

I do this the more confidently, remembering the marked interest that invariably attaches to the testimony of an eyewitness, and also bearing in mind (for my own comfort) that this interest will always incline his hearers to leniency in judging literary demerits. It is probable, too, that some of my old comrades will be pleased at this recurrence to an eventful period in their lives, while a younger generation in the ranks may be glad to have placed before them a record, not of the "pomp and circumstance of glorious war," but of its privations, its hardships, its perils, and, it may be added, its lessons of self-abnegation and of devotion to duty.

Early in the month of July, 1863, while stationed very comfortably at the Isle of Hope, a courier, "spurring in hot haste," brought orders from Department headquarters that set our camp at once in a turmoil of eager and excited preparation. The 32d Georgia, Col. George P. Harrison, Jr., the 12th and 18th Georgia Battalions, Lieut.-Col. H. D. Capers and Major W. S. Basinger, and a battalion from the First Volunteer Regiment of Georgia, were ordered to proceed with the least possible delay to Savannah, there to take cars for Charleston.

A private note at the same time brought the intelligence that that city, so long threatened, and, indeed, once already assaulted by sea, was now to undergo a vigorous and combined attack from both land and naval forces. The day was an eventful one to us without this additional stimulant. In the morning we had received the sad news of the fall of Vicksburg and the consequent opening of the Mississippi river to the Federal fleet, from the mountains to the sea, a disaster that secured to the enemy the grand object of his most strenuous exertions, while it severed the young Confederacy in twain and deprived our armies east of the river of all the aid and comfort in the way of material supplies and gallant recruits, that had been so long and so freely drawn from the west bank.

We had just learned, too, of the check received by General Lee at the battle of Gettysburg, and now came the summons to tell that our turn had come for a little squeeze in the folds of the traditional "Anaconda," that the New York Herald had so graphically depicted as encircling the South.

The men received the orders with enthusiasm—indeed, when was it otherwise with the Southern soldier. Thoroughly conversant, as they all were, with the details of the war, they could not but be depressed by the news of such grave reverses to our arms as the morning's mail had brought them, and they gladly welcomed the relief that active service promised from the tedium of camp life, and the necessity of thinking upon melancholy subjects.

Our march began in the midst of a terrific thunder-storm that had the effect, not only of cooling down any overplus of excitement, but also of rendering the road to the city almost a quagmire throughout its entire length.
There are pleasanter ways of spending a summer's evening than in trudging for eight miles, through mud and rain, in heavy marching order; but upon this, as on similar occasions during the war, I was deeply impressed by the uncomplaining patience and cheerfulness with which the men endured hardships that few would care to face now, but which, then, were regarded as mere matters of course—distasteful, certainly—but not worth talking about.

The storm delayed our march considerably, and upon reaching the depot we found that the 32d Regiment, which had been stationed at a point nearer the city, had already taken train for Charleston.

We, too, were soon en route, and early in the forenoon of the following day—July 10, 1863—the three battalions were safely in bivouac at the terminus of the Savannah and Charleston Railroad. Here we were met by a staff officer, who informed us that we were to reinforce the garrison of Battery Wagner, on Morris Island, and that at dusk the necessary transportation would be furnished to take us down to the fort. He also told us that the enemy, under cover of a tremendous fire of artillery, from batteries on Folly Island, which had been unmasked during the night, had effected a lodgment on the south end of Morris Island, and had driven our forces back upon “Wagner,” which fortification would, doubtless, be attacked on the next day. We learned, also, that another force was threatening James Island, and that the 32d had been sent, with other troops, to meet that danger. Events proved that this last was a feint, to distract attention from the main attack.

All day we remained quietly at this place, endeavoring to make out the various points of interest in the beautiful harbor spread before us, and watching the little clouds of smoke that ascended from the parapets of Fort Sumter, as its guns were slowly fired at the enemy. It was a lovely day, clear and bright, without a cloud in the sky. The vegetation about us, freshened by the rain of the previous evening, added sweet odors to the soft sea-breeze that came up the bay. Upon our left the city of Charleston “sat like a queen,” her roof tops and spires glittering in the sunlight, while afar down, over an expanse of shining water, could be seen the ships of the fleet swinging lazily at their anchors.

The picture was beautiful, and for one I would have found it difficult to realize that beneath it all were the grim front and iron hand of war, but for the dull rumble of the constantly recurring shot from Sumter. That was “the fly in the ointment of the apothecary;” that “the spectre at the feast;” that the refrain ever ringing in our ears and suggesting the unwelcome thought—“it looks peaceful enough now, but just wait until tomorrow.”

About nightfall we embarked in a steamer that had been sent for us, and, after many delays, were safely landed at Cumming’s Point, on the northern end of Morris Island. The line was formed at once, and we set out for Battery Wagner, reporting to its commander, Col. Graham, of the 21st South Carolina Regiment, at about 11 o’clock at night.

At the risk of being somewhat tedious, I must here devote a few lines to the topography of this famous island. It is a long, narrow strip of sand, running almost due north and south for about four miles, varying in breadth from, say one hundred yards at the narrowest point to half a mile at the broadest. Upon the west side the island is separated from James Island by Vincent’s creek and by broad marshes intersected by numerous salt water creeks, while its eastern shore is washed throughout its entire length by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean. At the south end were the batteries from which our troops had been driven in the morning. Light House Inlet separated this point from Folly Island, and across this inlet the enemy had suddenly thrown their forces, under cover of a furious fire of artillery, as has already been stated. At the northern extremity of the island, known as Cumming’s Point, was
located Battery Gregg, and about three quarters of a mile to the south of this, Battery Wagner stretched entirely across the island from the sea on the left to Vincent’s creek on the right, the battery facing due south. It was an irregular work. On the extreme left a heavy traverse and curtain protected the sally port and gave a flanking fire down the beach to any force that might assail the main work. Then came a salient, one face of which commanded the ship channel, then a broken line, arranged for flanking fires, extending to the marsh. The parapets were solid, and a broad, deep, dry moat added boldness to their profile. Within the parade were bomb-proofs and lightly constructed barracks for the small garrison that had heretofore occupied the work. The armament consisted of one 10-inch Columbiad and some 32-pounders in the sea face, and four or five lighter guns, chiefly howitzers, on the land side. A short distance in front of the right of the line an inward bend of Vincent’s creek narrowed the island in such manner as to render it obligatory upon an attacking force to deliver its assault only against the left half of the fort, and also affording scant opportunity for the deployment of such a column. In point of fact this peculiar feature in the topography proved of great service to us, and correspondingly troublesome to the enemy in the operations that followed. The surface of the island is but little raised above the level of the sea and presents a glaring stretch of white sandy hillocks, which were sparsely dotted with the coarse grasses of the coast, and which changed their contour in every high wind.

There is but to add that the main channel by which ships enter Charleston harbor runs within easy gunshot of Morris Island from one end of it to the other, then crosses to the northward and passes between Fort Moultrie on Sullivan’s Island, and Fort Sumter, built upon a shoal about midway between the two islands.

From this rapid sketch, reference being had to the map, it will be readily appreciated that from the base held by the enemy, a front attack upon Charleston could begin here and nowhere else; and that, as the defences of the inner harbor were at that time imperfect, the immediate fall of Wagner would gravely impair the safety of Charleston also. But that little mound of sand had its history to make, a story that will ever bring a flush of honest pride to the face of every man who participated in the long defence.

As soon as we had reported to Colonel Graham, the troops were put into position, the 18th Battalion in the salient, the 12th upon its right, and the 1st Georgia on the left, occupying the flanking curtain and the sea face, to which allusion has been made. The guns were all manned by South Carolina artillery and the right and centre of the fort were held by infantry from the same State. The men were cautioned that an attack was expected at daylight, and then, tired out, they slept on their arms upon the ramp, ready at a moment’s call for action. Captain C. Werner, of the German Volunteers, was appointed officer of the night, and in a few minutes every sound was hushed save the swash of the waves upon the beach, and the occasional challenge of a sentinel from his post.

My own resting place was upon the parapet, and looking up to the cloudless heavens above the solemn glory of the night impressed itself upon my last waking thoughts.

At the first peep of dawn, on the 11th, we were wakened by a few straggling shots in our front, followed by a ringing cheer and three distinct volleys of musketry from our picket line. The anticipated assault was upon us. In an instant, the garrison was aroused, and as the men had slept in position they had only to spring to their feet, and we were ready. Now we could see our pickets, their duty having been faithfully performed, retiring rapidly towards our right, in accordance with the instructions they had received, so as to uncover the advancing
columns of the enemy. And, then, through the dim, gray light of the morning we could distinguish a dark, blue mass of men moving up the beach towards us, at the double-quick, cheering as they came.

Then came the thunder of our first gun (what old soldier is there who does not recall its startling effect), then another and another, then the deafening rattle of small arms, mingled with yells and cheers, and we were fairly in the midst of battle. The issue was never doubtful for a moment. The attacking column attempted to deploy after passing the narrow neck in front, but entirely failed to do so; while the dense formation rendered it an easy mark for both infantry and artillery. Still it pressed gallantly on, and some few of the foremost men reached the scarp of the work, only to find themselves unsupported by their comrades, and with no other alternative than to yield themselves prisoners. One brave fellow I saw, however, who had not the thought of yielding in him. Alone he reached the top of the parapet, immediately in front of a 32-pounder, double charged with grape-shot. The officer in command (Lieutenant Gilchrist, of South Carolina, if memory serves me,) struck by his bearing, called to him to come in before the gun was fired. His only reply was to put his musket to his shoulder, and a bullet whizzed by Gilchrist’s head. The explosion of the gun followed, and a blue and mangled body, all that remained of a brave man and a good soldier, was hurled across the ditch.

The engagement was of short duration; the attack had failed, and soon the broken column was in full retreat, rapidly, and without any semblance of order, leaving some hundreds of their number, stretched dead and wounded on the sands, or prisoners in the fort.

Our own loss was insignificant in numbers, but the 1st Regiment was sorely bereaved in the death of Captain Werner. This gallant officer was slain early in the fight. He died in the discharge of duty, nobly battling for the land of his adop-

tion. His voice, calling his comrades to arms, had been the first to greet our ears as the morning broke, and now it was hushed forever. Modest, simple, and unpretending in his manners, he had won a warm place in the affections of the command, while his perfect reliability under all circumstances enforced the respect and admiration of all who knew him. Savannah was called upon to mourn the loss of many sons in those terrible years, but none of them had taken up arms in her defense sooner, none suffered privation and imprisonment for her more patiently, and none died more gallantly than Claus Werner.

The loss in the 18th Georgia was heavier than in any other organization, as it had occupied the salient, against which the assault was principally directed.

Lieutenant Frederick Tupper was severely wounded, and among the killed was young Edward Postell, who now sleeps in Laurel Grove, side by side with a noble brother, who, like himself, as the marble record testifies, “died in battle.”

Immediately after the action, a singular instance of the ups and downs and uncertainties of warfare, was brought to our attention. Among the first troops to enter Fort Pulaski, at its capture in the previous year, was the 7th Connecticut Regiment, then commanded by Colonel Alfred H. Terry (subsequently Major-General). Both officers and men had behaved towards us with great kindness during the few days that we remained at the fort after its capture, and we had become personally acquainted with quite a number of them. Now, we were the victors, and among the prisoners brought in at our end of the line, were many of our old friends of the 7th Connecticut, who recognized and called us by name.

The news of the attack created much excitement in Charleston, and during the morning many visitors, both military and civilian, came to the island, some to assure themselves of the continued strength of our position; others to gratify a pardonable curiosity. Among the former was Brig. Gen. Ripley, the district com-
mander, who was much elated at the successful issue of the fight, and who wished to examine, personally, the ground in front of the fort.

Now, at one point in our front, torpedoes had been planted the day before, and to prevent any of the garrison from treading upon them, a sentinel was placed to warn them off. At that time the man who held this post was private Donnelly, of Company G, 1st Georgia, a native of the Emerald Isle, as his name would indicate, and a true son of his mother. Of any knowledge of ordinary military manoeuvres he was calmly innocent. On one occasion a Lieutenant of the company asked him, impatiently:

"Donnelly, why don't you keep step? All the men are complaining about you."

And received the reply:

"Faith, its divil a one of 'em can kape shtep wid me!"

Past this hero General Ripley spurred his horse, and was riding straight for the dangerous ground, when he was suddenly brought to a halt by a loud "Shtop!" uttered in the most emphatic tone, and the emphasis receiving additional point from Donnelly's attitude, as he stood with his musket at full cock, at the shoulder, and squinted along the barrel, taking dead aim at the General. For a moment there was strong probability of a vacancy among the Brigadiers of the Confederate army, but an officer rushed forward, struck up the gun, and explained to General Ripley the reason for his being halted.

Subsequently, our sentinel was asked:

"Donnelly, what were you going to do?"

"I was going to shot him."

"And why?"

"To kape him from being blown up with the saltpters, to be sure."

Donnelly's comrades, in view of his little infirmities of drill, had always insisted upon his having a place in the rear rank, but on this day he was heard to say, with much satisfaction:

"There's mighty little throuble getting in the front rank now."

Our experience for the next week was a trying one. Falling in the direct attack, the enemy's endeavor seemed to be to make our berth uncomfortably warm, and here the success was undoubted. Day after day the monitors—some four or five in number—and that tremendous war vessel, the "New Ironsides," would take their positions directly opposite the fort, at a distance of six to eight hundred yards, the wooden ships being at much longer range. Then would be poured upon us a steady stream of shot and shell, much more pleasant to dwell upon as a memory than it was to endure, while upon the land side new batteries were built by the enemy, and each day the weight of metal thrown against us would seem to be heavier than the day before. I well remember the approach of the first monitor. How deliberate its movements; how insignificant its appearance; the deck almost level with the water, and the little black turret giving small promise of its hidden power for attack. My curiosity about the vessel was great, but was soon to be satisfied without stint. There was a slow revolving motion of the turret, a cloud of smoke, a deafening roar, and then, with the rush and noise of an express train, the huge fifteen inch shell, visible at every point of its trajectory, passed over head and burst far in the rear. The next shell exploded in the parapet, covering several of us with dirt. The introduction was complete. Thenceforward we held these singular looking craft in wholesome respect. The "Ironsides," however, was probably the most formidable ship of the fleet. She is said to have carried at bow and stern two hundred pound Parrott guns, and nine eleven-inch Dahlgrens on a side. Her broadsides were not fired in volley, but gun after gun, in rapid succession, the effect upon those who were at the wrong end of the guns being exceedingly demoralizing. Whenever she commenced there was a painful uncertainty as to what might happen before she got through.
We had but one gun with which to fight the monitors—the ten-inch Columbiad located just over the sally-port. True, the thirty-twos were tried for a while, but they were so impotent to harm the heavy mall of the ships that their use was soon discontinued. This Columbiad was manned, I think, by the Matthew's Artillery, of South Carolina, and the gunner, Frazer Matthews, was as noble a soldier as the siege produced. In the midst of the hottest fire he would stand quietly on the chassis directing the aiming of the gun with all the coolness and precision of target practice. Never flurried, always intent upon the work before him, and never giving the signal to fire until the aim was taken to his entire satisfaction, the accuracy of his marksmanship was great. Again and again I saw the solid ten-inch shot strike upon the sides of the monitors, only to break into a thousand fragments, that would splash into the sea like so much grape-shot.

At first we thought that no harm was done by our fire, but we learned afterwards that the concussion within the turret was tremendous, and that, among others, one very prominent officer had been killed by it.

Unfortunately, our Columbiad was soon dismounted, and although a new carriage was supplied, that, too, was knocked to pieces in short order. Indeed, this experience was repeated half a dozen times.

Such continuous cannonading of course seriously impaired the integrity of our parapets. But as at that stage of the siege the firing ceased at nightfall, opportunity was given to repair damages, and all night long the garrison would work, filling sand bags and painfully endeavoring to make good the yawning chasms and ragged craters left by the terrible missiles that had been hurled into the fort during the day. There was a constant strain upon all the faculties, that gave little time for anything save the stern duties of the hour, and yet there were humorous incidents ever occurring that even now will bring smiles to the lips of all who remember them.

Who can forget "Aquarius," the water bearer, as he was dubbed—a simple-hearted fellow, from the back woods of South Carolina, who devoted his time to bringing water to the wounded. Both heels of his shoes were carried away by a shell, and from that time he went bare-footed—there was "danger in shoes," he said. And, then, the simple manner in which, on returning from one of his trips to the well, he held up one full jug and only the handle of another, saying, apologetically, "Oh, a shell took hit."

I can see in my mind's eye, too, the brilliant engineering feat of a member of the Oglethorpe Light Infantry, who, while cooking a little dinner in the open parade, provided protection for himself by placing an empty flour barrel alongside of the fire, and gravelly sticking his head into it whenever the scream of a shell warned him of approaching trouble.

During the week Taliaferro, of Virginia, assumed command, and on the night of the 17th fresh troops were sent to relieve us—and it may be mentioned here, that this plan of changing commanders, and the garrison (or at least a part of it), every few days, was continued throughout the siege. In fact, the strain upon body and mind was so unremitting, that a week's tour of duty was about as much as any men could undergo at a time, as there was no rest day nor night.

We were landed at Fort Johnson, on James Island, a little before dawn on the 18th, and were just getting comfortably settled in the village then existing at that point, when a tremendous cannonading began against the fort we had just left. All day long it continued, exceeding in fierceness and rapidity anything we had yet witnessed. The noise was terrific, great clouds of smoke hung over the devoted battery, and huge columns of sand rose high in the air, as shell after shell rent the parapets, while only an occasional shot in return gave any sign that there was life left in the garrison. With
mingled feelings we watched the bombardment, full of anxiety for the ultimate result, and for the safety of our comrades in the fort, there was, also, it must be confessed, a profound composure at the thought that we were well out of it ourselves.

A little before dusk the firing suddenly ceased on the part of the enemy, and almost instantaneously a rapid succession of guns from Sumter, trained for the beach of Morris Island, gave notice that another attempt was to be made to throw a column into Wagner by escalade.

It was even so. General Gillmore, fully alive to the difficulties which the topographical features of the ground presented for regular approaches, and counting with reason upon the damaging effect of the awful bombardment, both upon the work itself and the "morale" of the garrison, had determined to make one more effort to wrest the position from the Confederates by storm. To this end he had organized a strong column of two brigades (a third brigade being held in reserve), under command of General Seymour, the formation being made behind the sand hills. Its advance was supported by light batteries, and as the heavy firing ceased, it swept forward with a rush. An officer, who was in Wagner, told me on the following day that the assault came very near meeting with perfect success, for, although it was anticipated, the awful artillery fire had compelled the garrison to seek shelter in the bomb-proofs. The exits from these places were narrow, and there was much trouble in getting the men to the ramparts in time to repel the onslaught. As it was, the result was long doubtful. A part of the enemy's column effected a lodgment in the salient on the left, and not until reinforcements were sent down from James Island to the assistance of the garrison, were these assailants finally overpowered and the entire fort once more in the hands of the Confederates.

The attack was bloody and disastrous to the attacking force. Its leader, General Seymour, was dangerously wounded, and General Strong, with many of his best officers, and hundreds of the men, were killed, while the total loss in killed, wounded and prisoners, has been variously estimated at from 1,500 to 2,200 men. Nearly all of the enemy's regiments were in a state of disorganization, and gloom and dismay settled upon them.

In this connection it will be of interest to state that, during the siege, the Federal signal book was in our possession, having been captured on the person of a signal officer, near Georgetown, South Carolina. Its valuable secrets had been drawn from him by a Confederate who shared his place of imprisonment in the garb of a Federal prisoner. More than once the knowledge thus acquired proved of essential service to us. On this occasion, the following dispatch from General Gillmore to Admiral Dahlgren had been intercepted, and in General Beauregard's possession hours before the assault: "Continue the bombardment throughout the day; at sunset redouble it. The assault will commence at seven."

Notwithstanding this disaster, General Gillmore, with great tenacity of purpose worthy of admiration, gave no evidence of having been diverted from his objective point. Though apparently convinced of the futility of all efforts at a coup de main, he at once settled down into an endeavor to reduce Wagner by parallels and trenches. Time was necessary to do this, however, and time was the salvation of Charleston, for upon our side the distinguished officer who commanded the department, General Beauregard, was not idle, and nothing was left undone for the defence, not only of the outworks, but of the inner harbor, and of adjacent islands and inlets. The batteries on Sullivan's Island were strengthened, heavy additions were made to the armament of Sumter, new batteries were constructed within the city limits and upon the shores of James Island; some to command the ship channel, and others to deliver a flanking fire, though at a long distance, upon the enemy's works on Morris
Island, while every device that the highest engineering skill could suggest, was gallantly acted upon by the garrison of Wagner to prolong its defence and retard its fall to the latest possible moment. Torpedoes and submarine batteries were placed in the waters of the harbor also, and, although I did not learn that one of them was ever exploded, there can be no doubt that they exerted a great moral effect, and deterred the vessels of the fleet from prowling around where we did not want them.

On the night of the 22d of July our second tour of duty at Wagner began. We found General Taliaferro still in command, and the garrison increased to about 1,500 men—though changes were so constantly being made that, without reference to statistical reports, I will not pretend to accuracy on this point. On every hand could be seen evidences of the severe trial through which the fort had already passed and was daily called upon to endure. The barracks and store houses were in ruins, and all of the slopes and inclines, upon which the eye of the engineer had loved to rest, were ploughed up in huge furrows, or pitted with cavernous holes that marked the bursting place of shells. But sand has many advantages over masonry, and wherever during the day the injuries done had impaired the defensive powers of the fort, a thousand busy workers would bend their energies, and the morning light would show guns re-mounted, parapets repaired and a strong front still standing to the enemy. On the 24th of July the bombardment was unusually severe. The iron clad, having nothing in Wagner to oppose them (for on that day our 10-inch gun was useless), came in as close as the channel would permit, shortly after daylight, and in conjunction with the land batteries poured in an awful fire upon us for hours, while from our side, Moultrie, Sumter, Gregg, and the batteries on James Island, Johnson, Haskell, and Cheves, joined in the fray. It was certainly a sublime yet terrible sight, never to be forgotten by any who witnessed it. The impact of tremendous missiles, followed by the roar of their explosion, shook the solid earth, and the loud thunder of the guns seemed to rival the artillery of the heavens as its unceasing reverberations smote upon the ear. Grave doubts were entertained as to the ability of our fort to stand much longer this dreadful storm, but help came. About noon the steamer Alice (that had recently run the blockade), under command of Colonel Edward C. Anderson, of this city, came rapidly down the harbor from Charleston, bearing a white flag, and laden, as we learned, with a large number of Federal wounded, who were to be exchanged for Confederate wounded. She steered directly for a position between the fleet and Wagner. One shot was fired over her, but in a moment the cannonading ceased, and never was relief more welcome or more needed.

Serious injury had been done to Wagner, injury, indeed, that a short continuance of the firing might have rendered irremediable, as upon inspection it was found that there remained but about eighteen inches of sand as a covering for the logs, of which our main service magazine was built. One shell had carried away the air-flue and the flame, as it burst, had lit up the interior of the magazine, very much to the dismay of the men who were serving there, and who came tumbling out head over heel—evidently not standing on the order of their coming—only desiring to come quickly.

Colonel Anderson, in speaking of this occurrence, tells me that as he came down the bay, the gravity of our position was fully realized by him, and his determination formed to pursue the course he did in order to bring the firing to an end as soon as possible. He was warned off as he drew near the fleet, and a shell fired over him, but paid no attention to the warning, and succeeded in what he aimed to do. It was the right thing done at the right time, and, as a member of the garrison, I beg to make
here my acknowledgments of the service performed.

The bombardment was not renewed that day, and during the afternoon General Taliaferro worked to such good purpose that nightfall found the principal damages substantially repaired.

On this occasion was brought to my attention a striking instance of the fact that a lofty heroism and nobility of soul may exist where an ordinary observer would never expect to find them. In the ranks of Company K, of the 1st Georgia, was a man from Bulloch county. Before his enlistment, a charcoal burner; he was of mean exterior, sickly frame and complaining disposition. He had long been a butt for the rough witticisms of his comrades, and more than once came to me for redress. What troubled him most was that the men told him he had been "dug-up," an implication upon the manner of his entry into the world—that he resented bitterly. During the bombardment of this day he had, in the performance of customary guard duty, been posted at the rampart, near the flag staff, to watch for any movements of the enemy that might indicate the formation of an assaulting column. At the end of his tour, Lieutenant Cyrus Carter started from the guard quarters to relieve him. Carter told me that as he crossed the parade, he did so with the profound conviction that he would be struck down before reaching the other side, so appalling was the storm of projectiles that tore up the ground around him. What was his surprise, therefore, to find the sentinel, not sheltered behind the parapet, as it was intended he should be, but quietly walking back and forth upon its very crest, for the expressed reason that he "couldn't see good down thar."

The flag staff had been shattered at his side, and with a strip torn from his shirt, he had tied the colors to the stump and continued his walk. As may be well supposed our charcoal burner escaped criticism after that.

From this time forward the works of the enemy were pushed forward most assiduously. One parallel after another was opened and breaching batteries established, armed with heavy sea coast mortars and rifle guns of tremendous size and power.

On our part, corresponding exertions were made. A heavy fire from our howitzers and other guns was maintained; sharpshooters, armed with Whitworth rifles, kept unremitting watch upon the movements of the enemy, and a well placed line of rifle-pits, two or three hundred yards in our front, gave additional strength to our position and seriously annoyed the besiegers. There were two sides to the matter of sharp-shooting, however, and the loss of some brave officers and men, killed by bullets fired at a thousand yards distance, or more, warned us against anything like heedless exposure.

The discomforts and privations to which the garrison was subjected rapidly increased, and soon attained proportions that will be remembered by those who endured them, like the details of some horrible dream. To avoid an unnecessary loss of life, the men were kept as much as possible within the bombproofs during the day time; but the gun squads and riflemen, of course, were constantly exposed, as well as numbers who could find no room in the shelters, or who preferred taking the fresh air, with all its attendant hazards. From these there were constant additions to the list of our losses. The wounded (and the wounds were mostly of a terrible character), were all brought in among the men, and the surgical operations were performed in the midst of the crowd, by the light of candles, that dimly burned in the heavy air from which all vitality had been drawn. The cries of these poor sufferers, the unceasing roar of artillery above and around, the loss of rest, the want of pure air, and the baking heat of a Southern summer, all combined to render the position almost unbearable. The enemy's dead from the two assaults had been buried immediately in front of the most; those from our garrison just back of the
fort. From the description of the island it will be understood that shallow graves only could be given—graves from which a high wind would blow the light, sandy soil, or which a bursting shell would rend, exposing the bodies to the sunshine. The whole air was tainted with corruption, and finally the little wells, from which our supply of water was drawn, became so foul, from the same cause, that their use was abandoned, and thenceforward drinking water was sent from the city of Charleston.

Now began a most remarkable feature of the siege, and one that has marked a new era in the science of attack and imposed new and startling problems upon the military engineer charged with the construction of permanent fortifications. I allude, of course, to the battering down of the walls of Fort Sumter from a distance of two and a half miles. The power of rifled guns against masonry had been conclusively demonstrated during the previous year at Fort Pulaski. There, however, the breaching batteries were distant about one mile, but there were few who could believe that at more than twice that range Sumter was seriously endangered. It had been thought that the grand old fort was safe so long as Wagner held out. But one morning a new battery opened; the shot and shell went high above our heads, and were hurled with irresistible power against the walls of Sumter. Great masses of masonry from the outer wall fell as each shot struck, and ere many days it seemed as though naught but a pile of ruins would mark the spot. Here, however, General Beauregard gave splendid evidence of his readiness to meet emergencies, and of his skill as an engineer.

As soon as it became evident that the fort must yield to the power of the heavy artillery brought to bear upon it, he rapidly withdrew all the guns that could be utilized for defensive purposes at other points, and from the very ruins of Sumter, constructed, as it were, a new fortification, fully adequate to the purpose of commanding the ship channel to the city.

But all other power of the fort was gone, and in the subsequent events on Morris Island, Sumter took no part. This bombardment lasted for seven days, and in that time a first class masonry fort was reduced to a shapeless ruin from batteries located at points far beyond the remotest distance at which any engineer had ever dreamed of danger. The debris of the walls fell in a natural slope and served as an impenetrable protection to the lower casemates of the channel face, in which the new battery was placed. Some little time elapsed, however, before these changes were completed, and I am unable to understand why Admiral Dahlgren did not meanwhile avail himself of the opening thus offered and push with his iron-clads for the inner harbor. We certainly looked for such a dash, and General Gillmore was evidently chagrined at the fact that it was not made. Whether or not such a course would have been successful is problematical. There can be no doubt, though, that it would have added grave complications to the Confederate military position, to say the least of it.

At such time as the 1st Regiment was not on duty at Wagner, it was posted at Fort Johnson, the point of James Island nearest to Morris Island. For a time our comrades of the 12th and 18th Battalions shared this post with us, but as the season progressed, we were separated; the 12th going to Sumter and other points, and the 18th to Fort Moultrie, where it performed months of arduous and trying service.

At Fort Johnson, which, up to that time had possessed no special strength, very heavy works were constructed, having reference not only to the inner harbor, but also to the operations of the enemy on Morris Island. These batteries, as well as the others along the shores of James Island, proved very annoying to the enemy, and the accuracy of their fire is mentioned more than once in his reports.

A most interesting feature in this summer's operations was the development of
the attacking power of movable torpedoes. Special interest attaches to a boat that was brought from Mobile, by railroad, and which was generally known, from its shape, as the "Cigar Boat." Its history is linked with deeds of the loftiest heroism and devotion of self to the service of country. The story is familiar to all of us, yet I cannot refrain from repeating it.

This boat was one day made fast to the wharf at Fort Johnson, preparatory to an expedition against the fleet, and taking advantage of the opportunity, I examined it critically. It was built of boiler iron, about thirty feet in length, with a breadth of beam of four feet by a vertical depth of six feet, the figures being approximate only. Access to the interior was had by two man-holes in the upper part, covered by hinged caps, into which were let bull's eyes of heavy glass, and through these the steersman looked in guiding the motions of the craft. The boat floated with these caps raised only a foot or so above the level of the water. The motive power was a propeller, to be worked by hand of the crew, cranks being provided in the shaft for that purpose. Upon each side of the exterior were horizontal vanes, or wings, that could be adjusted at any angle from the interior. When it was intended that the boat should go on an even keel, whether on the surface or under, these vanes were kept level. If it was desired to go below the water, say, for instance, at an angle of ten degrees, the vanes were fixed at that angle and the propeller worked. The resistance of the water against the vanes would then carry the boat under. A reversal of this method would bring it to the surface again. A tube of mercury was arranged to mark the depth of descent. It had been the design of the inventor to approach near to an enemy, then to submerge the boat and pass under the ship to be attacked, towing a floating torpedo to be exploded by means of electricity as soon as it touched the keel. Insufficient depth of water in the harbor prevented this manner of using the boat, however, and so she was rigged with a long spar at the bow, to which a torpedo was attached, to be fired by actual concussion with the object to be destroyed. This change necessarily made the boat more unwieldy, and probably had something to do with the tragic circumstances of her after history.

It will be remembered that she was sunk at the wharf at Fort Johnson by the waves from a passing steamer, while a part of the crew were in her. Days elapsed before she could be raised. The dead were removed, and a second crew volunteered. They made repeated and successful experiments in the harbor, but finally they, too, went down and, from some unknown cause, failed to come up. Once more a long time passed before the boat was raised, and then the poor remains of the devoted crew were taken from her in an indescribable condition. Yet, still another set of men came forward and volunteered for the duty. Surely love of country and courage of the sublimest type never found better exponents than these. The expedition started, but did not return. That night the sloop-of-war, "Housatonic," was reported as having been sunk by a torpedo in the lower harbor, but of the gallant men who had thus accomplished what they aimed to do, nothing definite was ever known until after the war, when divers, in endeavoring to raise the Housatonic, discovered the cigar boat with the bleached bones of her crew lying near the wreck of the noble ship that she had destroyed.

The line of rifle pits in front of Wagner had been gallantly held by our men during the siege, and had sorely troubled the besiegers. On the 21st of August an infantry force attempted the capture of these pits, without success. On the afternoon of the 26th, a heavy artillery fire was brought to bear upon them without dislodging the holders, but that night a dash-
fifth and last parallel was at once established on the ground thus won, and before dawn on the 27th, under cover of the flying sap, the trenches were pushed about one hundred yards nearer to the fort.

Notwithstanding this success, General Gillmore, in his report, speaks of this period as "the dark and gloomy days of the siege," and of the progress made as "discouragingly slow, and even painfully uncertain."

The ground between his front and Wagner was thickly studded with torpedoes, his left flank was searched by the unremitting fire from our batteries on James Island. The head of the sap was slowly pushed forward under the ceaseless fire of howitzers and sharp-shooters from the entire front of the fort, while last, though not least, the besiegers had now reached a point where every onward step compelled them to dig through the bodies of their dead, who had been buried some weeks before.

"In the emergency," General Gillmore availed himself of his superior resources in artillery, to keep down the active resistance of Wagner, and to this end every gun ashore and afloat was turned upon it. The final bombardment began at daybreak on the 5th of September and for forty-two hours continued with a severity and awful terror beyond the power of words to describe. That night, as witnessed from Fort Johnson, where the 1st Regiment were stationed, the scene was grand in the extreme. The lurid flashes of the guns, their unceasing roar, the shells from every description of tremendous artillery, that could be tracked through the air by flaming fuses; the mortar shell rising in stately curve and steady sweep, the Parrott shell darting like lightning in its mission of death, the missiles from the fleet booming along the water and bursting in Wagner with cruel accuracy, the glare of calcium lights, bringing out every detail of our works as in the noonday—all these filled the souls of Confederate spectators with awe, and found their painful anti-
thesis in—the silence of Wagner. The end had come.

All through the 6th the bombardment continued, and that evening the sap had reached the counter scarp of the work, and only the ditch and parapet separated the combatants. The assault was ordered for nine o'clock on the morning of the 7th, but by midnight on the 6th the place was evacuated by the Confederates, the whole force being taken off the island in row boats. Some few of these boats were intercepted, but the garrison, as a garrison, was saved. The enemy at once occupied both Wagner and Gregg, and Morris Island in its entirety, was in their possession.

So ended the siege of Battery Wagner, after a defense of fifty-seven days: a defense that may, without question, be said to have saved Charleston. The outwork was taken, but the inner citadel still proudly stood. Still from the ruins of Sumter, still from historic Moultrie, still from the "City by the Sea," the Southern Cross fluttered in the breezes of the bay and bade defiance to the foe.

The evacuation so successfully accomplished, in the face of so many difficulties, under so terrible a fire, and with the enemy in such close proximity, has justly been considered a remarkable event and the crowning glory of the defense. That had been protracted to the latest moment, and when resistance was no longer possible, the brave garrison was saved to add fresh lustre to the Southern arms on many another field.

On the afternoon of the 8th of September, notice was received by the commanders of batteries within range of Sumter, that a boat attack would be made upon that fortification during the night, and they were ordered at a given signal to open with all their guns upon the point where the boats were expected. The signals of the enemy had again been interpreted, and upon our side there was perfect readiness. The garrison of Sumter prepared to meet the enemy upon the slope with a shower of musketry. The guns of our contiguous batteries were,
carefully trained upon the right spot before dark, and as soon as night had fallen, a Confederate ironclad moved into position to add the fire of her powerful guns. Silently the night wore on; for hours not a sound broke its stillness; the men sat drowsily by the guns, and the belief gained ground that the proposed attack had been abandoned, when suddenly there was a twinkle of a musket from Sumter, then a rocket soared in the air, and then the bellowing thunder of the great guns and the explosion of shells instantaneously and startlingly contrasted with the sleepy quiet of our long hours of watching. The assault was repulsed with considerable loss to the assailants, but with no loss to the garrison.

It is singular to note from General Gillmore's report, as an evidence of a want of harmony between the land and naval forces, that two independent expeditions were organized for this attack—one by Admiral Dahlgren, the other by General Gillmore. The report says: "The only arrangement for concert of action between the two parties, that were finally made, were intended simply to prevent accident or collision between them. Each party was deemed in itself sufficiently strong for the object in view."

The naval expedition, consisting of some twenty-five or thirty boats, came directly from the ships, in tow of steam tugs, and, reaching Sumter first, at once delivered its attack. The land forces, about 400 strong, embarked in their boats in Vincent's creek. The windings of the creek probably delayed them, and they had not quite reached the fort when the naval assault was made and repulsed. All hope of a surprise being at an end, the second force retired.

From this time the active operations for the reduction of Charleston upon this line virtually ceased, though an interchange of artillery fire was continued with more or less activity for many months. Not until Sherman's great army swept through South Carolina, and the dying days of the Confederacy were at hand, did the proud city bow her head, and yield to the inevitable.

Mr. President, my story is told. It has been my endeavor to place graphically before this audience a sketch of some of the scenes of that eventful summer. They have passed into history, but history fails to record a thousand little details which breathe life into the picture. Some of these I have tried to present.

Certainly no period of the war was more fruitful in dramatic incident, and in no portion of the Confederacy was there a grander exhibition of scientific warfare. The wonderful developments of engineering skill, both in the attack and in the defense, will ever mark the siege as a most memorable one, while the share of success attained by each side robs the memory of the event of any sting of mortification for Federal and Confederate alike. Sure am I that every member of the First Georgia who participated in these stirring scenes will, to his latest day, feel his heart throb with pride in saying, "I was at Charleston in 1863."

Savannah, March, 1879.

Note.—Referring to the action of Col. Anderson, related on page 10, it is proper to state that the steamer Alice was sent out from Charleston in conformity to an explicit arrangement that had been entered into by the commanding generals for an exchange of wounded on that day. She carried a "hospital flag," as well as the ordinary flag of truce. Soon after the firing ceased, she was met by the Federal steamer Cosmopolitan, bearing the Confederate wounded, when the exchange was effected. Both steamers then returned, and the truce ended. C. H. G.
CHARLES H. OLMSHEAD IN 1890
INTRODUCTION

THE Memoirs of Charles Hart Olmstead, written for his daughters, gives a charming picture of ante-bellum Savannah and a vivid and moving account of Civil War scenes and battles.

The details of Colonel Olmstead's life are set forth in the narrative and will not be repeated here. He died in Savannah on August 17, 1926, in his 90th year. He was long associated with the Georgia Historical Society and had served it as Curator and Vice-President.

The manuscript was written about 1912 or 1913 when Colonel Olmstead was a resident of New York City. His literary pursuits, begun in Savannah, were followed in New York. Mrs. Marion King in her Books and People (New York, 1954), p. 64, gives us this charming picture of him in the New York Society Library: "Colonel Charles Olmstead, a gentle moon-faced elderly Georgian, spent many hours of his New York winters in the Library and told us about the progress of his daughter Florence who was just beginning to interest Scribner's in the first of her pleasant novels."

The three daughters for whom the Memoirs were written were, like their father, distinguished for their literary talents. Susan Olmstead, who gave this manuscript to the Georgia Historical Society, died in 1960. Sarah (Mrs. A. Pratt Adams) was born in 1862 and died September 20, 1950. Florence, author and teacher of English and History in the Savannah public schools for 50 years, died May 23, 1955, at the age of 80. At the time of Mrs. Adams' death, the Savannah Morning News, September 23, 1950, editorialized her and her sisters, calling them "Savannah's most distinguished and beloved daughters" and likening them to
the Bronte sisters for their contributions to the cultural life of Savannah. The editorial was reprinted in the issue of May 26, 1955, on the death of Florence Olmstead.

Besides the Memoirs the Georgia Historical Society has other manuscripts written by Colonel Olmstead, gifts of his daughters. They are “Fort Pulaski,” published in The Georgia Historical Quarterly, I (1917), 98-105; “Savannah in the ’40’s,” ibid., 243-52; “Defense of Battery Wagner;” “Return from a Federal Prison;” and “Recollections of the Civil War.” The unpublished sketches will not be published as they are repetitious.

In addition to the papers listed above Colonel Olmstead wrote and published Art Work of Savannah (Chicago, 1893); “Confederate Times and Confederate Men,” in Addresses Delivered Before the Confederate Veterans Association, of Savannah, Ga. (Savannah, 1893), 1-10; Reminiscences of Service with the First Volunteer Regiment of Georgia, Charleston Harbor in 1863 (Savannah, 1879); “The Story of a Rebel,” in Addresses, op. cit., 41-47. With Otis Ashmore he wrote “The Battles of Kettle Creek and Briar Creek,” in The Georgia Historical Quarterly, X (1926), 85-125.

It should be borne in mind that the Memoirs was written late in life and many years after the events they chronicle, which would account for any slight discrepancies. The spelling and punctuation are Colonel Olmstead’s; no changes have been made.

We are identifying in footnotes members of the Olmstead family, several local persons and events and giving certain bibliographical information where it seems indicated.


LILLA MILLS HAWES
ILLUSTRATIONS

Charles H. Olmstead in 1890 ........................................... Frontispiece

Savannah in 1837 ............................................................ Page 2

Charles H. Olmstead as Colonel ............................... Opposite page 88

Drawing ................................................................. Opposite page 126

Drawing ................................................................. Opposite page 137

Drawing ................................................................. Opposite page 140

Drawing ................................................................. Opposite page 149

Drawing ................................................................. Opposite page 157
THE MEMOIRS OF CHARLES H. OLMSHEAD

You have often asked me, my dear Daughters, to write down some of the incidents of my life for your benefit and it has always been my intention to comply with the request. Yet somehow year after year has slipped away without the thing being done.

Now however a beginning shall be made; to be added to from time to time as opportunity may present.

I was born on the 2nd of April 1837 in a house which now forms the Southern end of the Screven House on Bull Street. There were three houses connected in the rear by a long piazza, though entirely distinct in other respects. Two of these were occupied by Cousin
Susan Platt as a boarding house and I may add that it was known all over the State. Many prominent people from the interior made it their stopping place whenever they came to Savannah. With reason, too, for Cousin Platt was a most notable provider and as kindly a soul as ever breathed the breath of life. The Southernmost tenement was rented jointly by my father\(^1\) and Mr Loring Olmstead Reynolds his intimate friend and a distant relative. Mr R and his Sister Miss Charlotte (afterwards Mrs David Veader,) had the third floor and one baggage room in the attic, but all the rest of the house, excepting a store on the street floor, was ours. We had two very large rooms on the parlor floor, (three windows in the side,) with a spacious pantry and store rooms, two bed rooms in the attic, a large kitchen and a wood and coal cellar. The yard also was ours with a commodious stable and servants quarters. You see that although we took our meals at Cousin Platts, to all intents and purposes our home was for ourselves alone.

In the boarding house were my great aunt Elizabeth Emerns, (Cousin P's Mother) Auntie Greene with her son Herman D. her three daughters Cousins Jennie, Susie and Maggie and the husbands and children of the two first named. So many early years were spent in very close contact with all of my relatives on Mothers side of the house and an affection grew up between us of a very strong and enduring character; Cousin Jennie, Cousin Sue and Cousin Maggie were more like elder Sisters to me than Cousins. As for dear Auntie Greene my own Mother could not have been sweeter to me than she was. When I reach the heavenly home one of its greatest joys will be the looking into her dear face again. In the dining room the family all sat at a table by themselves with two or three close friends, such as Miss Charlotte, Mr Reynolds Mr and Mrs Eastman and Mr James M Prentice. Father always presided at the head of this table, Auntie Greene being his vis-a-vis at the other end. While young enough to require the services of a nurse I sat at a little side table near by with Peggy (whom you know,) to attend to my wants and I can remember the happiness I felt and the sense of promotion when permitted to take my seat with the family - it seemed a great step upwards.

The time will doubtless come when I shall look back upon the advancements of later life in much the same light as I now regard this trifling incident. Peggy followed me upward, she always stood with folded arms right behind my chair with an ear as keen as my own for the delightful conversation that was going on all around

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1. Jonathan Olmstead (1798-1854); married in Savannah, April 29, 1835, Eliza Hart (1802-1881).
us. She was not the most elegant of nurses but her loyalty and affection were beyond question and through my whole life they have been a possession to me. She was much afraid of vexing my Mother yet did not hesitate to interpose between Mother and myself when she saw a chance to save me from some merited punishment.

There were three of us children, as you know, and we all came very close together. My eldest Sister Sarah Morris was but a year and two months older than I, she having been born on February 8th 1836, and there was just about the same interval between my youngest Sister and myself, though I cannot recall the date of her birth. She was named Harriet Eliza after Auntie Greene and Mother. She was said to have been an exceedingly beautiful child with brilliant complexion, large blue eyes and a head covered with masses of flat, golden curls. I have always thought your little Sister Neely must have resembled her. My recollections of this precious baby are very vague; necessarily so for she died from whooping cough when I was only four years old. I can remember her putting her sweet little arms around my neck to comfort me in some childish sorrow, but there comes only a dim vision of her features. No memory of my early days is more distinct, however, than that of the night on which she died. Auntie Greene took me in her arms in the middle of the night out of the little trundle bed in which I slept and carried me for a last look at the dying face. Mother was rushing wildly about the room in an agony of grief and father following trying to comfort and restrain her. It was my first knowledge of death and to this day I recall the strange fright that took possession of me as I clung to Auntie. It seems so long ago as I write of it—almost as though in another age and as the experience of some person other than myself. Yet in these later years the thought of meeting that sweet baby again before very long, is with me often and always with a certain curiosity as to whether I shall know her by intuition. I feel much in the same way of your little brother Charlie upon whose face I never looked.

Between Sarah, (or "Sister" as I always called her,) and myself the bond of love became stronger and stronger with every passing day. As little children we slept side by side and would talk far into the night, as children will, of what we should do when we were "grown up." I do believe the tie between brother and sister was never a sweeter, purer one. Her's was the truest nature I ever knew. Her mind was unusually bright, with good, solid reasoning powers yet adorned at the same time with graces of feeling and expression that made her sought after in every circle in which she moved. She was very witty yet her wit was free from sting, it was never exercised at the cost of pain to others; indeed it was a sweet and loving
sense of humor rather than the sharper quality of wit. As a very young girl the religious side of her nature was awakened and an exquisite conscientiousness in regard to her duty to God and to man became the rule and guide of her life. It did not abate the sprightliness and animation of manner that always marked her bearing, but imparted to it a genuineness and freedom from triviality that won for her affection and respect from all who knew her. As she grew older a love for music developed and under capable teaching she became a fine musician, rather, however, as an interpreter of the composers feeling than in brilliant technique, though not wanting in that. This gave great happiness to my dear Father who was devoted to the art and himself a musician of no mean ability. How often I have heard him say as he threw himself on the sofa after a hard mornings work "Now daughter go to the piano and play me to sleep" though her music seldom had that result, he was wide awake so long as it lasted. But I am getting ahead of my story.

When I was five years old my parents thought Sister was far enough along to begin her schooling and accordingly they made arrangements to send her to a school kept by Miss Betsy Church in a long, ram-shackle, one story, wooden building on the North West corner of Broughton and Abercorn Streets—(where Carsons stables stood for many years after). It was intended to keep me at home for a year longer but I was thrown into such a passion of grief at the thought of being separated from Sister that Father and Mother concluded to let me begin my education also and so my first steps were taken up the slopes of Parnassus. Miss Church was a typical New England school mistress, rather gaunt in form and severe in countenance yet with the kindest of hearts. She wore cork-screw side curls and her head was always adorned with a cap of spotless purity. In the many years in which it was my privilege to know her she was always accompanied by a little white poodle dog with a blue ribbon around his neck. Of course there were successive generations of dogs, but they seemed ever the same to me. While teaching in school she sat in a large rocking chair, the scholars ranged before her in benches without backs the boys on one side the girls on the other. As the youngest and least of her pupils I was placed in a comfortable little chair at her feet and permitted as a great favor to amuse myself in the intervals of acquiring knowledge, by looking over a basket full of what she called her "curios." I have forgotten what they all were excepting two things—one, a button from the coat of Captain John Church, an ancestor of the dear old lady's, of whom she was very proud, a notable figure in colonial days and a great fighter in the early wars of New England against the Pequod In-
diars—the other, a genuine piece of lava from Mount Vesuvius. Upon both of these articles Miss Church dilated at length and frequently a fact that doubtless impressed them upon my memory.

I must have been an imaginative child for I can yet recall the thrill that went through me at every repetition of the exploits of the redoubtable Captain John; in fancy I

"heard the soldiers ringing shout
The Pequods wild hallow."

And the eruptions of Vesuvius were very real to me as my hand grasped what had once been molten rock flowing from a fiery crater.

The discipline of the little school was not particularly rigid. I have a dim recollection of a strap being used occasionally on the hands of some of the larger boys who happened to be unruly, and there was the awful punishment of being made to stand in a corner with one's face to the wall to contemplate the dreadful results of lapsing from the paths of scholastic rectitude. But I had no personal experience of either of these having always been a biddable child, amenable to rightful authority. One thing our gentle school mistress took special pride in—her hand writing. There was a standing desk at one end of the room at which we took our turn every day making pot-hooks and lines with both "tongue and pen." This was before the day of steel pens, so as soon as the school was opened each morning Miss Church would haul a sheaf of goose quills from the desk, select one with great particularity, and then with a sharp knife, in the presence of an admiring audience, would proceed to fashion a pen from it. To us it seemed the "ne plus ultra" of mechanical skill. I felt it was a point of excellence unattainable by ordinary people, and indeed I never have attained it. The bonds of discipline were relaxed while all this was going on but as soon as the pen was completed there would be a stamp of the foot, a frown and the invariable sentence, "Go back to your seats children, what do you mean by crowding around me so." Then she would take her place at the desk and set the loveliest copies imaginable for every grade—"pot hooks" for beginners like myself and the most beautiful moral maxims such as

"Honor and shame from no condition rise,
Act well your part, there all the honor lies,"

for those highly educated boys and girls who had mastered the intricacies of writing in "small hand." It was quite astonishing what an amount of ink we children managed to accumulate on our little persons during the painful process of learning to write. My hands
were never free from it except on Sundays when my dear Mother
had scrubbed them with cornmeal—a trying ordeal in the winter when
they were generally badly chapped.

The curriculum of the little school was a limited one. Websters
Spelling Book was its main stay and it must be said we were honestly
drilled in it. Then there was a very small geography with an ac-
companying atlas on which the present states of California and Texas
and the territories of Arizona and New Mexico were portrayed as
belonging to Mexico, while over the area covered by Oklahoma,
Kansas, Nebraska, the two Dakotas, Colorado and Wyoming, was
sprawled in large letters “Great American Desert” with curious pic-
tures of Indians hunting the buffalo. We had a “Child’s History
of the United States” three fourths of which was devoted to Ply-
mouth Rock and kindred subjects. Capt John Church was one of
the heroes of this book and we were never permitted to forget it.
Besides these there was the old New England Primer for the younger
pupils—that quaint old book with its rhymed couplets, “In Adam’s
fall we sinned all,” “Young Obadias, David, Josias, all were pious”
“Whales in the sea Gods voice obey” &c &c. I smile to remember
that our poetic instinct rebelled against that last rhyme and we al-
ways pronounced “sea” after the Irish fashion—“say.”

“Whales in the say, God’s voice obey.”

About the only other circumstance that remains in my mind in con-
nection with this school was a vigorous dash that I made for freedom
one summer afternoon. It was a clear case of “the call of the wild,”
there came upon me an uncontrollable desire to get out of doors
where the sun was shining, and a sweet breeze blowing, and leaves
rustling, and boys laughing and shouting, and dogs barking. I said
to myself “When I count twenty I’ll run.” Several times my heart
failed me when Nineteen was reached but at last I shouted “Twenty,”
 aloud, made a jump for my hat and was off for the door as fast
as my little legs would take me. There was a dismayed call from
Miss Betsy as I went out but the deed was done and nothing but
her overtaking me by running, which was a physical impossibility,
would have brought me back. My dear Father understood the situa-
tion for when confession was made to him that night, with the added
words “I couldn’t help it” he only laughed, though warning me
against a repetition of such escapades. I often think of that old school
house and always with a feeling of tenderness. The influences there
were all good and sweet; the personal touch of the teacher was ever
with us and what was learned was learned thoroughly and well. I
dare say there are many old men and women now who share this sentiment with me.

My subsequent teachers were a Miss Lydia Norton and her successor, a Miss Palmer, who kept a school in an old building on the North side of President Street a little west of Whitaker. Eliza Philbrick ("Aunt Eliza") and her brother Samuel were pupils here, also Charles Davis and his sisters, now of Portland Maine, and, I think, Anna Turner, (Mrs Cann,) and George. One of the boys was Norton Hooker of whom the rest of us were exceedingly envious. His father was interested in Warner's Stables at the Western end of Broughton Street; on a large lot connected with this stable every circus that came to Savannah pitched its tent and Norton had free entrance to all of them. It was a privilege to be on friendly terms with an individual so highly favored by fortune and who was actually acquainted with the dazzling beings who dashed around the sawdust ring in tights and spangles. I never knew what became of this lad but have an impression that he died young. From this school I went to the Chatham Academy which was then presided over by the brothers Preston, Henry K and James—sons of the Reverend Willard Preston who was for many years the beloved Pastor of our old Independent Presbyterian Church. To both of these gentlemen I owe a debt of gratitude. I understand their worth now better than when a child, but even then my nature was drawn to them. James Preston doubtless gave the bent of my mind toward mathematical studies by his patient and timely aid in helping me over difficulties that seemed insuperable to me. Sister went to the Academy at the same time but I do not remember who her teachers were. We both of us studied French at this time under Mr Henri LeCoste whose descendants I believe are still in Savannah. I remember the amused look on his face at my pronunciation of the first French sentence he put before me, "Quand les dernier rayons du soleil &c." It must have been awful to make him show his feelings for he was scrupulously courteous even to us young children. The sessions of the Academy were opened every morning by a spelling exercise in which every scholar from the oldest to the youngest took part. We all stood up behind our desks as a signal was sounded and spelled and defined the words given out by Mr Preston. About four columns of the Dictionary we were using was the allotted lesson for each day and we went through the book two or three times while I was at the school. There is no over-estimating the importance of a drill like this, nor do I think anything in the modern methods of teaching takes its place. Friday afternoons were always devoted to declamations which we all enjoyed, especially those boys who were blessed with loud voices and had confidence
in their oratorical powers. I never was much of a hand at it myself though, of course I "spouted" with the rest. One piece we were all fond of, Campbells poem on the battle of Hohenlinden, and it was repeated so often that Mr Henry K who was somewhat irascible became quite impatient whenever he heard it. Among the pupils was a boy from the West Indies, Bob Campbell, the very embodiment of mischief. He was always up to some trick or other and never so happy as when he could worry the teacher. One Friday at recess he got a number of us together and made the following suggestion "Fellows, let's all speak 'On Linden' this afternoon and make old Preston mad." The proposition met with hearty approval and that afternoon some eight or ten of us were on hand to carry it into effect. The first boy called went through the usual sing-song performance of "On Linden when the sun was low." Mr Preston looked bored but made no sign. With fear and trembling I came next; the bored look became a frown but still no lightning from the cloud. Then Bob Campbell was called and he came toward the platform, his eyes twinkling with fun. Just before he reached it Mr Preston rose from his chair, (in front of which the speakers had to stand) stretched his hand to a rack on which he kept a choice collection of hickory switches, selected a fine supple one and took his seat again. The act was so significant that our notable conspiracy came to naught then and there. Bob treated the school to "Romans, Countrymen and Lovers" or some similar gem instead of "On Linden." He is a wise man who knows the psychological moment for a change of front.

At that time there was no such thing as a long summer vacation. We had two weeks holiday at Christmas and one week in the first part of May but children were expected to grind away at their studies all the rest of the year. I am not sure but that too much of the limited period for education is devoted to resting in these days. My chief friend in boyhood, as he has been all of our lives long, was your dear Uncle Mat Hopkins. God bless him, never was there a more faithful and truer heart. We were inseparable though on one occasion we did have a tremendous fight in which, candor compels me to admit it, I came off second best. The cause for this "unpleasantness" has passed from my memory. I had also a spirited encounter with "Billy" Elliott one day, on the corner of Bull and South Broad Streets, after school. He tells me he has forgotten all about it, but it sticks in my mind, probably because this time I was the victor. George Turner, Mrs Canns brother was likewise a close friend; he was, later on, my room mate at Marietta and a groomsmen at my wedding. Poor fellow, he yielded up his life at Sailors Creek one of the last battles of the Civil War. Isaac Avery was another of the
boys with whom I was quite intimate and he was also one of my groomsmen. During the War he became quite a distinguished Colonel of Cavalry and was desperately wounded in some engagement in North Georgia, but he pulled through and lived for a long while in Atlanta. I believe, though, the wound troubled him to the end of his days. He wrote a good history of Georgia that you ought to find among my books. Oh! that terrible war; how many of those with whom I began life were sacrificed in it—Joe Turner, a first cousin of George's at Trevillian Station while fighting under Gen Jeb Stuart; Spalding McIntosh at Sharpsburg while serving on the staff of Gen McLaws; Cyrus Carter, a Lieutenant in my own Regiment, at Kennesaw Mountain; Ned Stiles, (a brother of Miss Kitty's,) while commanding a Regiment in a nameless skirmish in Virginia; John Patton a Captain in your Uncle Charles Williams' regiment, at South Mountain, (he also was one of the attendants at my wedding, the "best man" indeed); John Branch as Adjutant of the 8th Georgia at Manassas; Freddy Bliss an officer of the same command, at Gettysburg. A woful list that could be prolonged almost indefinitely. Yet time softens all sorrows and regrets and I can think of them all now with composure. Had the War spared them, most of them would doubtless have passed away ere this.

Savannah was a very different place in my early days from what it is now. There was not a paved street in the city and all the roads leading out from it were beds of sand that made hard going for horses. The city was lighted (2) at night by oil lamps—whale oil, not kerosene—one at each of the public pumps, our only source of water supply. These pumps were located in each of the squares and at the intersection of the broader streets; between these radiant points Egyptian darkness reigned. I can remember when looking South from where the De Soto hotel stands, there was only one residence which had just been built by Mr John N Lewis. The second was put up by Mr Gauladet, Major Hardees father in law, at the North West corner of Bull and Jones Streets. From Harris Street out to Gaston stretched a broad open common and at Gaston a dense pine forest began which extended straight out into the country. Right through the Centre of what is now Forsyth Park was a huge open ditch several feet deep with sloping sides that had been cut for the drainage of surface water. The White Bluff road crossed it by a bridge that stood just where the fountain now is and on its banks

3. Compare this account of Savannah in his childhood with his "Savannah in the '40's" in Georgia Historical Quarterly, I (1917), 243-52.
4. The question mark is the author's.
on either side were magnificent old pine trees, part of the virgin forest. This was a great play place for us boys on Saturdays in winter, and an ideal place it was, but a short walk from home yet practically remote from civilization. It gave to us all the sense of freedom and adventure that boys are so fond of, while there was not even the shadow of danger there to cause uneasiness to our anxious Mothers. We could imagine ourselves in Western wilds and yet be in hearing of the clock in the Exchange tower telling us when it was time to go home. Our great delight was to make roaring fires of pine-straw and to dig ovens in the sides of the ditch in which to cook sweet potatoes. I do not think we were ever patient enough to wait for these to be thoroughly done; they were generally eaten half raw but we were endowed with appetites and digestions that were indifferent to such trifles as that.

Another favorite resort of ours was Stone's Mill pond about three quarters of a mile out on the Central Railroad. There we were not quite so safe and I doubt whether our Mothers fully understood what we did there. The pond was full of great logs of timber waiting to be cut up in the mill and on these we would spend hours poling backward and forward with great enjoyment. A Saturday never passed there without one or more boys falling into the water, but the mill furnaces were handy for drying clothes and "Mum" was the word when we got home.

We gave the names of famous naval ships to our logs and on one occasion the "vessel" under my command ran "bump" into another of which George Turner was Captain. "Board her, Board her" I shouted to my crew in approved naval style, and, obeying the order, Aleck Drysdale, (able bodied seaman of the forecastle) made a leap for the other log. George met the assault at the gangway, so to speak, and by a vigorous shove sent the too zealous Aleck headlong into the pond. He disappeared for a moment and then arose sputtering out the reproachful but not very heroic cry that became a by word with us for a long time. "George Turner, that was a ding mean trick."

Aleck became an Episcopal Minister after he reached manhood. He moved to Alabama and I think was in charge of a church at Mobile, but I have not heard of him in many years and dare say he has joined "the great majority" long ere this.

It would be a grave omission not to speak of the educational influences that were around me at home, exerted as they were by both of my parents. My dear Mother was a great lover of poetry. She was familiar with many of the plays of Shakespeare and with the poets of a previous generation; she had also a sweet voice and a decided taste for music though it had never been cultivated. It was her habit
very often after Sister and I had been tucked away in our little trundle-bed, to take her seat by it and tell us the stories of these plays and old poems repeating long passages of them from memory and singing the songs she knew. These last were mostly of a pathetic character and invariably demanded the tribute of our tears. One in particular “The Orphan Boy,” was my favorite; she may have sung it to you when you were little children. She was a most indulgent and loving Mother but exacted obedience to her commands and compliance with such regulations as were established for the family government. We could only receive visits from our playmates and return them on Friday and Saturday nights; on every other evening we had to prepare the lessons for the following day and it was a rare thing for either of us to make a failure in school. The same care was given to our Sunday School lessons. I had always to recite them to Mother before going out to play on Saturdays. Mr Charles Green was my teacher in the Sunday School and he often spoke to me in after years of what a good pupil I used to be. The merit was not mine but hers. Your grandfather was a skilled botanist and one of the most enthusiastic lovers of plants I ever knew. He knew the habitat of every flower that bloomed within miles of Savannah and just at what season of the year to go for it. He was Cashier of the old Marine Bank and the hours of the Bank were such as to give him the afternoons to himself, thus affording ample time for his pet hobby. Almost every day found him taking long walks in the woods and I was his constant companion on these tramps as soon as I became old enough to stand the fatigue of such excursions. Who can overestimate the value of this contact of a young, untrained nature with a mind so cultivated, sweet and sane as his? I never think of him save with reverence and tender love. For nearly fifty-six years he has been in his grave yet I dream of him to this day and always awake from such slumbers with a softening of the heart and a yearning of soul to be with him again.

Surely God blessed me in my parents.

Chas. H. Olmstead

II

There were some quaint characters in Savannah in those days. One very picturesque old gentleman was known as “Cocked Hat Sheftall,” a Revolutionary soldier of advanced age who lived in a low wooden house on the North Side of Broughton Street between Whitaker and Barnard. He always wore the old Continental uniform—

5. Sheftall Sheftall, born in Savannah in 1762 and died there August 15, 1847.
blue coat with brass buttons, flapped waistcoat, knee breeches, silk stockings and low quartered shoes with huge silver buckles. The old cocked hat that topped this costume gave him the soubriquet by which he was known. A long piazza stretched across the entire front of the house on which the old soldier could be seen every day taking his constitutional walk backward and forward. It was said, and I could well believe it, that he wore out two or three sets of planking on this piazza. Oliver Wendell Holmes’s poem “The Last Leaf” has always reminded me of this lingering link that connected me as it were with the very infancy of our country. There was a pathos in the queer old figure too that I felt without then being able to define, but the poet has done it for me. When the old man died the entire military force of the city paraded to do honor to his memory. He was buried in the old Jewish Cemetery in the Western suburb of Savannah. I accompanied the procession and witnessed the interment from the top of the high brick wall that surrounded the cemetery. I was of an inquiring turn of mind and was bound to see all that was going on if it were within the bounds of possibility to do so. Aside from that however I had a real reverence for one who had battled with the British in our war for independence.

Old “Moko” was another very strange person whom I remember at that time as impressing me both with interest and awe. She was a demented Negress who roamed the streets at will, generally with a tailing of small boys behind her at a respectable distance. They were fascinated by her personality yet careful not to approach too near for she would frequently turn and charge down upon her followers with blood-curdling shrieks and wild laughter. It was well upon such occasions to be able to have a good start for rapid retreat. “Moko” was reputed to be a native African but I do not know whether that was so or not, nor can I vouch for other stories that were told about her. She was one of the brown races of Negroes, probably with a Moorish or Arabic strain. A most striking figure she makes in my memory with her slender form aquiline features, turbaned head hooped ear-rings and uncanny demeanor. It was said she had been wronged in early life by an officer in Africa and color seems to be given to this tale by her frequent exclamation “He promised to give me a gold ring, a go-o-old ring, Oh! Wirra, wirra, wirra, whoopee.” This last word was usually the signal for charge and retreat.

Your grandfather was very good to Sister and myself in the matter of taking us to places of amusements. He was fond of the drama and two or three times every winter we went with him to the Theatre when specially good plays were being presented. There was no such thing then as a traveling dramatic company, except perhaps
Sol Smith Russel's that went up and down the Mississippi River on a flat boat. *Stars* went from city to city but their support depended on local "stock" companies, who remained in one place and were individually known to the audiences. Their repertoire was extensive and the same play was rarely given two nights in succession. The bill for the evening was always a double one, first the serious play and then "a roaring farce" as it was called to send people home in a good humor. A Mr Forbes was manager of the Savannah Theatre for many years—a worthy old gentleman as I remember him, fitted by nature for the part of "the heavy father" which he usually took. Under his management I saw many of the great lights of the stage of the last generation: the elder Booth, and Hackett an unrivaled delineator of Sir John Falstaff, Edwin Forrest, Mrs Mowatt, Charlotte Cushman, Charles Mathews the celebrated English comedian, and, (I think but am not certain) Macready also an Englishman and the most noted tragedian of his day. He was in Savannah but my memory of him is not distinct. A subsequent engagement of his in New York was the occasion of a dreadful riot at the old Astor Place Theatre in New York, begun by over zealous admirers of his contemporary and rival, the American actor Edwin Forrest. Miss Cushman I saw as Meg Merriles in a dramatised version of Scott's novel, Guy Mannering, and a weird looking gypsy hag she was. The best tribute I can pay to the power of her acting is to say that it really frightened me. Forrest appealed to my childish taste and imagination very decidedly, though I should probably have a different opinion of him now for he was an actor of the most robustious school. Physically he was a man of great power with huge knotted muscles and a tremendous voice that he never failed to send out like thunder in the climax of a scene. I saw him in several plays: "Spartacus the Gladiator," "Metamora" and "Pizarro or the death of Rollo." These were all of more or less melo-dramatic character and were intensely enjoyed by a part of the audience at least. Sister and I followed every line with thrilled interest and it was no half hearted sympathy we gave to the woes of the hero in each of these plays. "Spartacus" treated of a gladiatorial revolt in the latter days of the Roman Empire; it was based upon historic incident and I believe quotations from it are still in use in the school readers of the present day. "Metamora" portrayed the red man of the idealist, the "noble savage" choke full of fine moral sentiment, instead of the Indian as he really is crafty, blood-thirsty and cruel. My favorite of all plays was "Pizarro" the scene of which was laid in Peru at the time of the Spanish conquest. Oh! it was a grand play, abounding in such splendid sentences as this: "The terror of his eagle eye would strike you dead,"
and I am quite sure that nothing in these degenerate days half way approaches it. Rollo, (of the “eagle eye,”) was the Peruvian chieftan and in the last act he dashes across a light bridge that spans an awful chasm, bearing Cora’s child and pursued by brutal Spanish soldiers. He reaches the other side in safety, cuts the slender fastenings of the bridge and hurls it into the abyss. Then in the very moment of triumphant escape he is pierced by a Spanish bullet but rushes on to die at Cora’s feet rejoicing that he has saved the “ch-e-ild.”

It will strike you at once that this was a remarkably fine play and you will not be surprised to know that it was faithfully reproduced a short time after in the hay loft of your grandfathers stable by a dramatic company consisting of Messrs Hopkins, Turner, Bliss, Olmstead and other noted artists of the same grade with Miss Hattie Gladding, (or “Harry” as we used to call her) for an audience. It was the custom of this talented troupe to permit the member who had seen a play at the theatre to take the principal part in its production—indeed it was necessary that this should be so for no one else knew anything about it. On this occasion therefore I enacted Rollo. A plank was placed over the hole where hay was thrown down to the horses, to represent the bridge, and over this I pranced with Freddy Bliss on my back, kicking the plank down to the stable below after I had crossed. You will have to take my word for it that it was a moving spectacle; it satisfied our hearts anyway.

It is astonishing what an amount of pleasure children draw from things of this kind—their vivid imagination enables them to see the unseen and fills every gap in their crude performances. I have often wished in later life for this faculty of being amused and interested by simple things. There are some fine natures that never lose it and living is a perennial joy to them but for the most part our ideals and wants become so complex that it is more and more difficult to satisfy them. I am grateful to realize that in approaching the end of life the old childish readiness to be pleased is returning to me. May I be a little child indeed in soul and spirit, trusting and loving.

The first Operas I attended were sung by the Seguin Opera Troupe, a company well known in all of the Atlantic States. John Seguin and his wife were the leaders and a very interesting couple they were. If I remember rightly his voice was a barytone and her’s a sweet soprano, though my childish recollection of their quality is uncertain. Mrs Seguin was a very pretty little woman, piquant and attractive in her manner and a great favorite in Savannah where the company sang several winters in succession. The Operas were rendered in English so there was no need of a libretto and the music seemed to me then the acme of artistic excellence. For these performances Father
always secured season tickets—the "season" being generally of two weeks duration, and while we children were not taken every night, we went often enough to make the advent of the troupe each year a great occasion for us, a thing to be anticipated with rapturous delight. "The Brewer of Preston" was the first of their repertoire that I heard sung. Who was its composer I do not know nor have I ever heard of it since. The story dates at the time of the rising of Charles Edward, the "Pretender," in Scotland and it turns upon a resemblance, approaching identity, of twin brothers. One of these is an officer in the English Army, the other a prosperous brewer in the little town of Preston. The Officer is absent from his command without leave, because of a love entanglement, when orders are received for the immediate march of the Regiment to the front. This means ruin and disgrace to him and to ward off the danger an old serjeant, his devoted friend and servant, prevails upon the brewer to don the uniform in his brothers place. The man is the embodiment of peace without a spark of heroism in him, yet he comes out of the battle that ensues with great honor his brother's horse having run away with him straight toward the lines of the enemy. The Regiment had followed with gallantry and enthusiasm and this unexpected charge had been largely instrumental in winning victory for the English arms. Promotion comes to him for bravery and in addition he is chosen to carry the captured standards to the court of the King at London. There is a funny scene there, and complications also arise with the sweethearts of the two brothers. You will note that there is plenty of room for comic situations, my memory of the opera is that it was full of them.

These old time performances seem very crude as I look back upon them and make comparisons with the elaborate and splendidly staged and sung Operas that it has been my good fortune to attend in these later years, but the enjoyment of them was even keener than that of the present day. There is a glamour about the stage for children that is lost in after life; the critical faculty has no existence in young minds and it is good that it should be so. We lose our illusions too soon for happiness anyway.

Well, enough has been said of amusements. I will get on with my story.

III

I thought to have finished speaking of the public entertainments visited in my childhood but other memories are coming back to me and they shall be jotted down. The circus certainly should not be left out, for like every other healthy boy who ever saw one, I was devoted to it and endeavored in leisure moments to master the feats
of agility seen there. Only a moderate success attended these efforts however; I learned to throw a tolerable hand-spring and could stand on my head fairly well but there my accomplishment in the acrobatic line ended. I was very proud of the ability to perform this last feat and at recess on the first day of my attendance at the Chatham Academy it seemed to me proper to impress the other boys what a talented new comer was among them. Accordingly while they were engaged in a vigorous game of "hollermeroy" (this spelling is by guess,) I retired to a quiet corner, reversed myself, and waited for the expected attention. It came, but not exactly as desired; a stinging blow from a hard rubber ball sent by the muscular arm of Wallace Stiles, fell on that portion of my anatomy designed by nature to receive punishment, and knocked me down. There was a great shout of laughter from the whole play ground as I scrambled to my feet sorely discomfited; but a good lesson had been taught me; there were no more attempts to show superiority. Circuses bored your grandfather immensely yet he always took me to them and to my profound astonishment would frequently sit with closed eyes while the fascinating performances were going on, an indifference to such wonders that was beyond my young comprehension. When I was quite a little fellow, Van-Amberg's Menagerie came to the city and pitched its tent in the Common about where Jones Street now is. There was a street parade with a big elephant in the lead, the first my eyes had ever seen. I followed the procession all around town and when it finally returned to head quarters and disappeared within the tent my soul was desolate. Tickets had been bought for us to attend the show that afternoon but I wanted to see more of it then and there, the thought of being separated so long from that elephant was insupportable. Making a tour of observation around the tent I found a place where no one seemed to be on the watch and where my small person could easily slip under the canvas. Trembling at my own daring I made the venture and in half a second was inside, face to face with an enormous bull dog that had been chained up at that exact spot. He made no sound but with a savage glare in his eyes was reaching forward to the extreme limit of his tether and his ugly muzzle was within a foot of my face. I could feel his hot breath and sheer terror almost paralyzed me. You may be sure that so soon as the power to move returned, I backed out of those premises in much quicker order than I had gone in. The dog would probably have killed me had his chain been only a little longer. An old English sea songs has the lines,

"There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft
And keeps a look out for poor Jack"
and I think some ministering angel must in like manner keep watch and ward over children, they are so often in deadly peril and yet emerge from it unscathed.

Cousin Platts boarding house was as well known as any of the hotels and in consequence she had many transient boarders among the show people who came to the city. To my great delight I was told one day that Mr John Robinson the proprietor of a celebrated circus, with his wife and son “Jimmie” had taken rooms in the house for a week or more. Now “Jimmie” Robinson was a hero to every boy in Savannah; every high sounding adjective in the dictionary was used to describe him on the bills and posters, and in fact he was one of the finest “bare-backed” riders that I ever saw. Had any of us had the choice of growing up to be President of the United States or holding a place in the circus world like Jimmie Robinson’s, there could be no doubt which way the decision would have gone. The thought of being under the same roof and in the same dining room with this gifted person, perhaps of even rising to terms of friendly familiarity with him was most alluring and I bragged of it to the other boys who were denied such exalted privilege. But alas! disillusion comes to us very early in life; the brilliant creature, separated from pink tights, satin breech-clout and spangles, proved to be a very ordinary boy in everyday attire. Stockily built, coarse features, low language, innocence of grammar—those were his special peculiarities; they shook my faith in the world and when in addition I found out that he could neither read nor write I realized that my idol had “feet of clay” indeed.

On one occasion a traveling magician boarded at Cousin Platt’s while he was giving his entertainments in the city. Shows of that kind were more rare than they now are and the Negro servants were much worked up about this man; Mother, going to the breakfast table one morning found a lot of the poor darkies gathered around the dining room door peering in with the most absorbed attention. Peggy was of the number probably the most interested of any of them. Mother asked of her, What is the matter Peggy, what are you all looking at so? And received this answer “Miss ’Liza I hear say he gwine swallow he wife.” I never learned whether or not the feat was actually performed. A “Professor” of Mesmerism was another man of whom I have a vivid remembrance. The so called “science” was new at that time and the “Professor” had large audiences at the Theatre to listen to his lectures and witness his experiments upon such persons as could be induced to come up and be mesmerized. Sister and I were too young to be supposed to have an interest in such matters. Nevertheless our interest was very keen, especially so because we saw a
great deal of what was going on in Cousin Platt’s parlor, where every
evening an effort would be made to put somebody in the mesmeric
sleep. Cousin Sue Gladding always proved a ready subject. She would
drop off to sleep after a few passes from the Professor’s hands and
then answered the various questions that were put to her, involving
things of which she could have no personal consciousness, in what
seemed to us a very marvelous way. I never knew whether Cousin
Sue was actually asleep or “played possum” a little, though at the
time there were no doubts in my mind and in the light of what
afterward happened I am inclined to think she was genuinely mes-
erized.

One night Mother and Father had gone to the Theatre and we
children were left in charge of Patience, one of our servants whom
you will remember in her later life. We were all full of what was
going on in the house, so, very naturally, we began to play at mes-
erism. Patience was the subject and Sister made the passes before
her face in the most approved style. In a few minutes they seemed
to have been effective for Patience closed her eyes and began to talk
in the far away manner peculiar to the mesmeric condition, whenever
we questioned her. It was a most successful game, the “subject” had
responded beautifully, but when we got tired and wanted to wake
her up we found it impossible to do so. She would reply whenever
spoken to but was unquestionably in what we would now call a
hypnotic state. Both of us were much frightened and poor Sister cried
bitterly but nothing we could do changed the situation. After what
seemed an interminable time our parents returned, but they were no
more successful than ourselves in waking the girl up. She was not
restored to consciousness until the Professor himself guided Sister’s
hands and instructed her what to do. Very strict orders were given
us at the time not to indulge in that sort of play any more, but they
were needless, we had been too badly scared even to desire to repeat
the experiment. This incident has always convinced me that there is
a measure of truth in the claims of hypnotists and mesmerists to the
possession of a power over other minds. Just how far it goes I do
not know for I have never pursued the subject or made it a matter
of study. There is a great deal of charlatanry connected with it and
that has probably prevented the serious investigation of scientific
minds. On this particular occasion the effect was brought about by
an innocent little girl who did not dream of having the ability to
do what she did. It may be added here that three or four years after
this I attended an exhibition given by one of these traveling “Profes-
sors” at the Armory Hall. The subject of his experiments was a rice
field darkey—ignorant and uncouth, who was made to believe that
he was President of the United States and while in that condition gave utterances to expressions (though in his own dialect,) that were absolutely inconsistent with any previous knowledge he could possibly have had.

Politics engaged my attention at a very early period of my life—much more indeed than they have in later years. Of course I was too young to have any recollection of the Presidential Campaign of 1840 when Wm Henry Harrison and John Tyler were elected, but I do remember quite distinctly wearing a little suit adorned with "log cabin" buttons, the cabin being the distinctive badge of the supporters of General Harrison; it was considered indicative of his bluff, unaffected manner and his affiliation with common, every day people. You will remember that he won the battle of Tippecanoe over the Indians of the North West which gave him the sobriquet "Old Tippecanoe" as he was affectionately called during the campaign.

I think father must have been an ardent Harrison man for in "rummaging" in our attic store room I found a little model of a log cabin with a miniature barrel of "hard cider" by its door that he had carried in some of the political processions. It was a great find for me. I thought it a work of the highest genius and was made superlatively happy by having it turned over to me as my property "in fee simple."

Of the next Presidential election, that of 1844, my memory is clear. The Whig candidates were Henry Clay of Kentucky and Theodore Freelinghuysen of New Jersey, against whom James K. Polk of Tennessee and Geo M Dallas of Penna were nominated by the Democratic party.

Father was an "old-line Whig" a fact that necessarily settled the point as to which side my sympathies should be given. In the previous campaign it was said that Harrison had been literally sung into the Presidency and the Whigs attempted to repeat the same tactics now. Innumerable songs were written, adapted to popular airs, and at every political gathering all over the land they were roared out more or less musically by enthusiastic politicians of our side. I learned a great many of these songs and could be depended upon to sing them on all occasions whether invited to do so or not. My favorite was one of which the chorus is all that remains in my mind—

"Hurrah! Hurrah! the coons are rising
For Harry Clay and Freelinghuysen."

The word "coon" had a different significance then from that attached to it now. It was a name given to the Whigs in derision by their opponents and accepted by them as an honor. The possibility that my
candidate could be defeated, never entered my head so when the news finally came that Mr Polk would be our next President the disappointment was too great to be borne without the shedding of many tears.

Mr Clay was unquestionably the greater man of the two candidates. He had a national reputation as a man of statesman like views; his experience in matters pertaining to the government was great; he was recognized in foreign countries as a leader of American thought; and as an orator few have ever surpassed him. Mr Polk, on the other hand, while a most estimable gentleman was scarcely known outside of his native state and it seemed an act of folly on the part of the Democratic party to pit him against such a giant as Henry Clay. Yet the real issue of the campaign did not hinge on the relative merits of the two men—a far more important question of broad national policy was involved, one upon which depended in a marked degree the future prosperity of our country and its place among the nations of the world. It is true that all this was not clearly understood at the time, (though the passage of years has demonstrated the correctness of the view here advanced,) but there was a living question before the country, from the proper settlement of which the most beneficent results have flowed. It was settled by the placing of Mr Polk in the Presidential chair instead of Mr Clay. In considering the varied events that have conspired to make the United States a world power, the student of American history will rank, only second to Jefferson’s “Louisiana purchase,” the election over which I wept so bitterly sixty-six years ago.

Let me give my reasons for saying this.

The great state of Texas, formerly a part of Mexico had declared its independence of that country and achieved it by successful revolution, though Mexico had not formally acknowledged the fact. The new republic, the “Lone Star State” as it was called had made application to be admitted into the American Union and it was understood that whether the request should be granted or declined depended upon the result of this election. The Democratic party favored receiving the applicant with open arms, and well it might, for seldom in the history of any nation is opportunity offered for the acquisition at one stroke of such a commonwealth as the State of Texas. A magnificent empire in extent, in resources and in the promise and possibilities of its future. The Whig party opposed the admission for several reasons—it declared primarily that the act would certainly involve the country in a war with Mexico, which still asserted its claim to Texas and was prepared to maintain its rights by force of arms. Moreover, the Northern wing of the party feared an extension of the domain of slavery and a corresponding increase in the political power of the South. Well, Mr Polk
was successful and he went into office with a working majority in Congress to carry out the views of the party. Texas was admitted and the dreaded war with Mexico became an actual fact. It resulted in the accession of an immense territory to the United States. Not only was Texas added to the Union but, by conquest and purchase, (much as in the case of the Philippine Islands,) we also acquired from Mexico the country now forming the whole of California, Nevada, Utah and Arizona as well as a considerable portion of New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming. A little study of a good map will show what an enormous gain this was to us.

Shortly after the treaty was signed making the transfer and the country was fairly in the possession of the United States the discovery of gold in large quantities in California led to a great rush of fortune hunters to the favored land, the only inhabitants of which previously had been a few scattered ranch owners, brotherhoods of Catholic Fathers at sundry “Missions” and a native Indian population whose simple habits demanded little of life and received no more than they demanded. Probably there was never greater or more sudden change than that worked by the incoming of this army of seekers after gold. The old “Dolce far niente” state of existence passed in a night and in its place came bustling activity, tireless energy, keen appreciation of opportunity, inflexible will and resolute determination to succeed. With these virile qualities were mingled the faults and vices that seem ever to obtain when a great body of men is cut loose from the restraining influences of home life. There is a return to the ways of primeval man in a greater or less degree; the indulgence in habits and passions that had been held in subjection by the conventionalities of civilization; self springs into the saddle and rides rough shod over whatever opposes it and what was gentle and refined in the nature is lost sight of in the exercise of brute strength and force. Yet, in spite of such drawbacks, these men did a mighty work. To them and to their successors we owe it that the Pacific slope of our country is now one of the garden spots of the world and that we hold a dominating influence upon the shores of that great ocean: to them we owe so much material advance in the worlds wealth that the very name of their state is associated in the mind with fabulous riches. And that brings me around again to the point I started from. None of all these great results would have happened had Mr Polk failed of his election. At least they may be traced directly to that election.

It may interest you to know that I saw Mr Clay once and heard him speak. He arrived in Savannah by the Central Rail Road and was escorted from the depot to the house of Senator John McPherson Berrien by a great cavalcade of gentlemen on horseback, who would
halt every now and then and give cheers for "Harry of the West." I saw it all, for indeed in those days there was little going on in a public way that escaped my attention. The next day Mr Clay made his speech from the top of the porch of the old Pulaski House. I listened very attentively because he was my hero, but the subject matter must have been too high for me. Not a word of it remains in my memory. I do recall his features however very distinctly especially an enormous mouth that he opened wide in some of his oratorical flights. Senator Berrien, at those house he was a guest, lived on the North West corner of Broughton and Habersham Streets. The Senator was a most polished gentleman and scholar of whom the community was proud and with reason. His youngest daughter was Mrs George Anderson whom you know so well. She was one of the most beautiful girls I ever knew. Another daughter was Mrs Valeria Burroughs whom you may remember as one of the oldest members of the Independent Presbyterian Church. Still another daughter was Mrs Bartow the wife of Genl Francis S. Bartow who died so gloriously in the first battle of Manassas. I had also the privilege of hearing Daniel Webster speak on the occasion of his visit to the old town, though I have forgotten the date on which he came. A platform was built around the Greene Monument in Johnson Square and from that he addressed the citizens. Of his speech I remember but one thing; speaking of the friendliness of New England for the South he said in effect, "We may not be hewers of wood and drawers of water for you but we will be hewers of ice and catchers of fish." So they are—for a consideration. Webster, Clay, and Calhoun formed the triumvirate of the Senate; it has always been a great pleasure to me to have seen two of them. A funny little incident happened just as Mr Webster stepped out on the C R R platform on his arrival in the city. A great crowd had assembled to meet him and the Mayor and Aldermen were there to give official welcome. An open space was reserved between the Mayor and the honored guest and the speech making was about to begin when little Herman McNish, Cousin Tom's younger brother, a child of four or five, broke away from his nurse, dashed across the opening and held up his little hand for a shake, with the cry "Howdy do-o-o Mr Webster" uttered in the shrill tones in which he was accustomed to talking to his deaf grandmother. Mr Webster seemed surprised but took the hand and said kindly "How d'ye do my little man; but how did you know my name?" "My gra-a-a-nd moizzer told me" was Herman's reply in the same high pitched voice. The crowd laughed heartily and then the official reception went on. This little Herman

was an unusually bright child—he was known in the family as "Nummy," from his baby pronunciation of his own name. Auntie Greene, his grandmother, adopted him as her own after the death of her only son Herman and the smart, attractive little fellow by his sweet companionship did much to restore the serenity of her mind after her sore bereavement. She wanted him to grow up and enter the ministry and finding that it pleased her he used to say that was what he would do when [he] became a man. One day some one asked him "What are you going to be Nummy when you grow up?" He answered with great promptitude, "A cir-cus actor" but he added as he saw the reproachful look on Auntie Greene's face, "But a minister on Sundays, grand-mother." Alas! the promising young life was cut short—he died while I was a cadet at the Military Institute from a violent fever, the result of an all day tramp in the sun one summer with his brother Tom.

In writing of the Mexican war I am impressed by the smallness of the means by which such tremendous ends were attained. The American armies were small in every battle; indeed I believe that at Contreras, Cherubusco and Molino-del-Rey the fights that determined the fate of the City of Mexico Gen'l Scott did not have more than 4000 to 5000 men under his command. The national government called on most of the States for only one Regiment, a draft that seems ridiculously small when compared with the mighty demands of the Civil war fifteen years later. Savannah was required to furnish one Company to the Georgia Regiment and the Captains of the various volunteer commands met to decide by lot which of them should respond to the Governors call. The lot fell upon the "Irish Jasper Greens" of which Henry R. Jackson was Captain and John McMahon (who was afterwards with me in Fort Pulaski,) First Lieutenant. I went with Father to see the Company off on the Railroad, little realizing that in later years it would form a part of my own command.

The Regiment rendezvoused at Columbus Ga and there Capt Jackson was made its Colonel. I do not remember the name of the Lieut. Colonel but the Major was your Uncle Charles Williams, then a young lawyer in Columbus. Col Jackson and himself became warm personal friends; it was the beginning of a family intimacy strong and abiding. It may be well here to say something of the character and the career of Henry R Jackson. He was considerably my senior but I came to know him well and was honored for years by his close friendship. Descended from an old Revolutionary family, the best blood of the State, on both father's and mother's side was in his veins. Choosing the law as his profession he soon became a power at the Bar and in due time was made a Judge of the Superior Court. As already stated
he was Colonel of the Georgia Regiment in Mexico in which capacity he served with ability and honor. Under the administration of President Buchanan he was "Chargé d'affaires" for the United States at the Court of Vienna, the highest diplomatic post that our Government then supported in Austria. At the outbreaking of trouble between North and South in 1861 he was an ardent advocate of the Southern side, and his fiery speeches were potent in moulding public opinion in Savannah. Made a General of Brigade in the Confederate Army he served for a while in West Virginia, but resigned to accept a Major General's position in Georgia when the State troops were being rapidly organized after the fall of Fort Pulaski to meet the invasion which seemed inevitable, but which did not materialize until two years later, and then from the Northern frontier instead of the Southern. This danger over, he re-entered the Confederate Army with his old rank and served until the end of the war. At the battle of Nashville he was made prisoner and held at Fort Warren, Boston Harbor, until the surrender of Lee and Johnston ended hostilities. Returning to Savannah he resumed the practice of law with great success, built up a large fortune in a very few years and ended his days in the old town, honored and beloved by the entire community. I should mention also that during Cleveland's presidency he was the American Minister to Mexico.

To General Jackson more than to any other man with whom I have been associated the gift of genius belonged. The processes of his mind were brilliant and rapid, his intuitions like lightning, his imagination of that vivid character that saw the unseen as with the physical eye. His command of language was almost phenomenal, his oratory forceful and impassioned, his soul filled with poetic thought and feelings. His too were the infirmities of genius—a certain lack on the practical side of his nature and a tendency at times to suspicion and to moody depression. Yet these were but the motes in the sunbeam, for he was a rare man, the soul of honor, kindliness, truth and courage. This last quality was most conspicuously displayed in the following incident. In the early days of the rush to California when the General sat upon the Bench as Judge Jackson, a steamship sailed from New Orleans crowded with men enroute, via the Isthmus of Panama, for the new El Dorado. She was a wretched craft, poorly manned and poorly equipped in every way for such a voyage. For some mysterious reason the Captain put into Savannah for supplies, a port many hundred miles out of his right course. The passengers, a rough tumultuous lot, were outraged and rose in something like mutiny threatening to seize the steamer. The Captain appealed to the Court for protection giving the names of the ringleaders of the disturbance.
Warrants were issued for the arrest of two men and placed in the hands of the Marshall of the Court for execution. This worthy went down to the dock but finding himself confronted by a crowd of resolute angry men, all armed to the teeth, dared not go on board the ship but returned to report the state of the case to the Court. Then the Judge arose in his wrath, (and I can imagine the flash of his eyes as he looked upon the too timid officer,) "Give me the warrants," he said, "the Court will execute its own orders." At that he made his way to the wharf, walked straight up the gangway into the very heart of the riotous crowd, clapped his hands on the shoulders of the two ringleaders, saying "You are my prisoners" and alone and unaided marched them ashore and delivered them to the officer. I was an eye witness of this brave action.

Referring once more to "politics" in the old town: It may be said they were of the red-hot variety as I recall them. The lines between the two parties were rigidly drawn and everybody was a partisan on one side or the other; there was none of the indifference to these matters that characterizes so many otherwise good citizens now-a-days, to the detriment of the Commonwealth.

Every man felt that he had a personal interest in whatever issue there was before the people; an election always brought out the full vote. Political campaigns, whether municipal, state or national were lively affairs while they lasted. The Whigs had their headquarters in Lyceum Hall, an old two story, frame building that stood where Theus's jewelry store now is, while the Democrats occupied a smaller hall on the South West Corner of Barnard and Broughton Streets. There was vigorous speaking almost every night and torch light processions galore. In addition to the torches these last always carried transparencies upon which were inscribed most uncomplimentary allusions to the other side. No special care was taken in the selection of the language of these inscriptions to observe the proprieties, so whenever two rival processions happened to meet at night, Donnybrook Fair was childs play to what would happen.

I was quite a small boy when my first railway journey was made. Father had business that called him to Macon and to my great joy he planned to take me along with him. A trip around the world now would seem a very small matter in comparison with that run of one hundred and ninety miles then. I had always envied Sister the glory of a visit to Charleston that she had made with Mother two or three years before. The dear girl never boasted of her "travels" but I felt it had imparted a certain superiority to her and it was a great satisfaction to me to know that my opportunity had arrived and that I was to rise to the level she had attained.
It was a long days journey. We started at 6 o'clock in the morning and did not reach Macon until 6 o'clock in the afternoon—good twelve hours. The speed of the train was never more than twenty miles an hour and there were long waits at every station. Yet it seemed to me we were getting along at a terrific rate. At night fall I could scarcely realize that less than a day had put me at such a tremendous distance from home. Every detail of that ride is impressed on my memory, especially the two eating houses, one at the thirty mile station, where a leisurely and delightful breakfast was served, and the dinner house at Number Nine. At the latter I had an awful experience. After dining Father had put me on the car and went back himself to speak with a friend; the train started without his observing it and he was obliged to run quite briskly to catch up with it. I watched him in an agony of fright feeling sure that I was about to be carried off alone and that I should never see him again. I have been scared many times since but never more thoroughly. On the train were two men who had a great fascination for me—two prisoners in chains who were being carried off by an officer to the penitentiary at Milledgeville. I could not keep my eyes from them—they were the first men in that condition I had ever seen and I imagined, (without a shadow of reason,) that they were regarding me in a very sinister manner. It was quite a relief when they got off at Gordon. We stopped while in Macon at Washington Hall an old fashioned hotel which was then owned and kept by your grandfather Williams, as I have since learned, though I have no recollection of him.

Father's business in the town was at the Marine Bank, a branch of the bank of the same name in Savannah, and there were my headquarters made during the day. Our stay was only to be for three days but I was very ambitious to write a letter to Mother, and accomplished it after much tribulation and vexation of spirit. It was my first effort in that line I dare say you may have seen it for your grandmother kept it a long while. I think it was among her papers after her death. Mr I.C. Plant was the manager of the bank—a kindly, pleasant man, who ever after that extended hospitality to me whenever I have happened to be passing through Macon, as I did very frequently as a Cadet of the Military Institute. His full name was a singular one, Increase Cotton Plant; it certainly indicated a New England origin. Mrs Plant was a very charming lady, gentle and sweet in her manners and of unaffected piety. She was a Hazlehurst from one of the coast counties. My recollections of her are all pleasing and those of Mr Plant also. It was he who put Wilburn Hall in my charge at the Macon depot one night as I was returning to school after the long vacation. Wilburn was the prettiest boy you ever saw, clear eyed, rosy cheeked and
winsome both in appearance and manner; the other boys all fell in love with him. He had been promised an appointment to the Naval Academy at Annapolis and was going to Marietta for a year first to accustom himself to the discipline. At Annapolis his career was brilliant; he graduated at the head of his class and life was full of promise for him when the Civil War broke out. Like hundreds of other Southern youths he resigned his Commission to enter the Confederate service and when that ended in failure his vocation was gone. Had he remained in the United States Navy he would probably be high up on the list of Admirals today, for there was no more promising officer of his rank in the navy. I have often thought that conditions have been peculiarly hard for men of his stamp. The rest of us when the war ended had only to take up life where we left it, resuming the old callings of planter, merchant, doctor, lawyer &c &c but these men had cut themselves permanently loose from the profession they had been specially educated for and it was particularly hard for them to adjust themselves to a new order of things. I have in mind a number of them, pathetic figures, drifting almost aimlessly through life, round pegs in square holes, yet conscious of powers within themselves that under happier conditions would have given them rank, fame and fortune. Captain Kennard was one of these for whom I always felt the deepest sympathy. He too had resigned from the U S Navy and was serving in the Savannah River under old Commodore Tattnall when the Federal forces had succeeded in getting command of the river with their guns and had thus cut off the communication of Fort Pulaski with the city. The Fort was scantily provisioned and to Kennard was given the duty of taking down two barges loaded with stores, one on each side of his little steamer, while the other Confederate steamers engaged the enemy. He did this in the most gallant manner under a heavy fire, delivered the stores at our wharf and returned by the road he had come. He displayed qualities that day that would have made him a man of rank anywhere, yet after the war he never seemed to get along but I always thought in looking upon him of the brave true heart that beat beneath his sad exterior. Robert Anderson was another of these men; he also was a school mate of mine at Marietta and went from there to West Point. Shortly after his graduation there he married Miss Sallie Clitz the daughter of a prominent army officer. He brought his bride to Savannah and I was at a wedding reception given to them by the Hartridges. I thought them the handsomest couple I had ever seen. Then he went out West, the only field for the United States Army in those days, and I believe he was in Oregon when Georgia seceded. Of course he resigned at once and became a Confederate soldier. His first high rank was as Colonel
of the Fifth Georgia Cavalry but he was subsequently made a Brigadier General and served under General Wheeler in the Johnston-Sherman campaign. After the war he was, as you may remember, Chief of Police in Savannah, in which position he was very efficient and did good service to the city, but it was a small place for one before whom such large possibilities had once opened, for he had connections who would have assured his advancement in the army. He died in the very prime of life a disappointed man.

I find myself writing of things out of their chronological order—thinking of one thing leads me on to another which would probably be forgotten if not set down then and there. When about nine or ten years of age I developed a passion for climbing, the motto “excelsior” seemed unconsciously to have been stamped on my brain for I never saw anything high without being seized with a desire to get on top of it, a fence, a stone wall, the side of a house, a tree, it made no matter what, if there was a way to climb it, I was sure to try it. Scarcely a day passed without my coming home with one or two rents in my garments from the indulgence of this habit. I was punished for it repeatedly and really did try to avoid tearing my clothes, but the climbing and the tearing kept on. One Saturday night I came home after an arduous day with a nice new suit literally in rags though I had no recollection of how it had gotten into that condition. Mother and Father had gone out to tea with friends, so the evil hour was postponed for me, but I went to sleep with many misgivings as to what the morrow would bring forth. I awoke at the crack of dawn and a sudden inspiration prompted me to hop out of bed, seize the unhappy suit and stuff it between the mattrasses out of sight. Then I got in bed once more and slept the sleep of the just until the usual time for getting up. Of course there was a great wonderment then as to where the clothes could possibly have gone to, also a search for them in every direction, during which I calmly awaited developments in my night apparel. When Peggy turned the mattrass in making up the bed the lost was found. I can see the look of despair on Mothers face as she lifted up the jacket and trousers and said to Father “What am I do do with this child?” There was a certain humor in the situation which he saw—he replied “Well Eliza, whipping doesn’t seem to do any good; suppose you try making him wear the suit as it is.” I heard the verdict with mingled emotions, there was a certain sense of physical relief, yet also a feeling of shame at appearing thus arrayed in the dining room on a Sunday morning. I had it to do however and the mortification that it subjected me to worked beneficially in some mysterious manner, for while the climbing mania continued it was without ruin to my clothing. One very objectionable form of climb-
ing I took to with avidity—going up the masts of ships. The wharves of the city were always lined with sailing ships and it was my delight to go on board these and climb up the rigging until a point was reached where there was no longer a rope to hold on to. It was a very dangerous thing for a little boy to undertake, a fall to the deck would have meant death and a fall overboard, drowning, for I could not swim. I was frightened every time I went yet would keep on. Father never spoke to me about this but he must have had some knowledge of it and I think it was what decided him to send me away to school at an unusually early age, that I might be removed from such dangers. He had some correspondence with a Mr Hand who had a school at a place called Orange Bluff on one of the Florida rivers, but he finally concluded that was too far off to send so young a child. Then he was approached by Rev Benjamin Burroughs the Pastor of the White Bluff Church, who owned and lived in the house at the Bluff that the Habersham family have occupied for so many years. Mr Burroughs had two sons near my own age that he wanted to educate at home and his plan was to take a few boys into his family and teach them altogether. He himself was a graduate of Princeton (both of college and seminary) so there was no lack of scholarship. He was one of a large family, children of an old merchant of the firm of Burroughs, & Sturgiss that flourished in Savannah two or three generations ago. The boys were Joseph H. William H. Oliver P. Henry K and Benjamin and the girls, Catherine, who was the first wife of Mr Charles Green, and Elizabeth who married a Dr Law and afterwards removed to Cincinnati. Oliver and Henry were Captains of the Georgia Hussars at different times, the latter also served one or more terms as Mayor of the city. By the way it could safely be counted upon that all persons in Savannah named “Henry K” in the first half of the last century were Henry Kollock, living monuments of the love and reverence entertained in the community for the Pastor of our old Independent Church. It was decided that I should go out to the Bluff for two or three days to see how I liked it, so one Friday afternoon in the Winter previous to my eleventh birthday I was sent out and remained until the following Monday. It was my first glimpse of real country life and I have never ceased to love it from that day to this. Then too the Vernon River took possession of me; I had never seen any other river except the Savannah, with its yellow muddy waters, and the sparkling blue of the Vernon fascinated me. Two or three very happy days were spent at the Bluff and of them all Sunday was the best. It was beautiful, crisp cool winter weather and the walk of two miles through the woods to the little country church was a great delight because of its novelty, especially the taking
off shoes and stockings to wade a little salt water creek that ran across the pathway, (thus avoiding an immense detour of about fifty yards to a point where we could have crossed dry shod on a plank). No such adventures ever happened on Bull Street. Jimmie and Willie Burroughs were my companions, country-born boys who enjoyed initiating a green horn. At the church I was much interested in seeing the vehicles in which the congregation had assembled scattered around among the trees; the drivers rubbing down the horses; children hunting for hickory nuts under a grand old tree that I learned to know well in the days that followed; the men all grouped around a spring gossiping until the final ringing of the bell called them all in together. It was all new to me and charming. Of the sermon of course I remember nothing; but the choir, shall I ever forget it? half dozen or more stalwart fishermen—all Ritters and Keiffers—crowded into one pew and singing with an energy that made up for any artistic defects; the volume of sound was appalling.

When I returned home and made my report it was definitely determined that in the early summer I should be the first scholar in the little school.

IV

In reviewing my life nothing strikes me more forcibly than the tremendous advances that have been made in the knowledge and application of natural laws within the last fifty or sixty years. It is as though man everywhere had suddenly awakened to a sense of his intellectual powers and was pressing onward to the domination of all physical forces after centuries of living almost upon a dead level of ignorance concerning them. I cannot better illustrate this than by telling of an incident of my boyhood, though the date has passed from my mind. I was always fond of witnessing experiments with philosophical apparatus while at school, and so when a celebrated lecturer upon Natural Philosophy came to Savannah, (I think it was Dr Dionysius Lardner), my father took me to hear him. The lecture was given in old Oglethorpe Hall on Bryan Street. I found it interesting in spots only, for the most of it was too deep for me but I did much enjoy the various demonstrations that were given with the air pump, the electric machine &c &c. Finally the lecturer said “I am about to show you the wonderful instrument with which Professor Morse has recently sent a message in a second of time from Baltimore to Washington.” He then called attention to an old fashioned telegraphic machine that was upon a table on our side of the stage connected by wires strung around the hall to a receiver on the other side, and explained the principles of the invention. Then looking down
into the audience he pointed his finger directly at me and said "Will that little boy come up and help me." Much embarrassed by the publicity, yet proud of having been selected, I went up on the stage, was stationed at the receiver which the Professor instructed me how to manage. He then went to the transmitter and sent a message of a few words which I received at my end of the line. Thus I was the recipient of probably the first telegraphic message ever sent in the city of Savannah. The use of electricity before that day was confined almost entirely to the laboratory and the lecture platform; now, it enters into almost every interest of life; it furnishes light, heat and power for untold millions of people; it is the hand-maid of every art and science; by it we converse with distant nations, under the seas; and most marvelous of all, through its instrumentality we send thought pulsating through the air across the broad ocean without the aid of any other less subtle medium. And all of this has been done within the span of one human life. Really when one considers what has been accomplished in the last half century for the convenience and comfort of mankind it becomes a serious question how the race got along without the thousand and one things that are now counted absolutely necessary to civilization. I remember when the longest Railroads in the United States were those running from Charleston to Augusta and from Savannah to Macon; when the very names telegraph & telephone were unknown; when sewing machines and photographs were yet in the dim future; when the bicycle and trolley car and automobile might have been dreamed of by some wild visionary, (like the writer of Mother Shipton's lines,) but had no more tangible existence. And yet the world did get on very comfortably without such things and it may reasonably be questioned whether the sum of human happiness has been added to by these inventions. In commercial life while facility of communication almost in an hour with any part of the world has greatly broadened the sphere of mans activities it is equally sure that it has in large degree increased anxiety and solicitude. My mind leans also to the belief that the general tendency of the age, because of this ever widening of physical domain, is toward materialism at the expense of the spiritual and ethical side of man's nature. This would seem the natural result of an awakening to the limitless capacity of the intellect; but I regard the tendency as transitory rather than permanent and I believe that with the passage of time there will come a juster and truer sense of proportion, a realization that spirit is above matter and that man's noblest powers of mind can only be put forth in co-ordination with and in subjection to the divine essence breathed into him when he became a living soul. It is fascinating to meditate upon what the race might become and what it might accomplish under
such conditions of perfect harmony between every part of its being, but the subject is too big to be handled here, neither is it in accord with the aim of these memoirs. Since writing the above it has occurred to me that the Professor who introduced me to the telegraph could not have been Dr Lardner for his lectures, I now recall, were delivered in the Theatre. And thinking of him I am reminded that, great scientist as he was, he made the colossal mistake of prophesying that the difficulties in the way of crossing the Atlantic by steam would never be overcome. There used to be among my books “Lardners Lectures on Science and Art” and you will find this sage forecast there.

Early in the summer of 1848 the plan of sending me out to White Bluff to “live and learn” in the Burroughs family was carried into effect and about the same time Sister was entered as a pupil in the school for girls at Montpelier some twelve miles or so North of Macon. This celebrated institution was under the direct care of Rt Rev Stephen Elliott, Episcopal Bishop of Georgia one of the finest characters I ever knew. Of course I was not thrown with him then and had I been, my judgment was too immature at that early period of life to form any just estimate of him. But he lived until after the war of Secession and it was my privilege to be his acquaintance for several years after attaining my majority.

He was a singularly handsome man, very tall, straight as an arrow, broad shouldered and imposing in form, with a face in which one knew not which most to admire, the classic beauty of features or the winning expression of benignity that it habitually wore. Courteous and grave in manner yet with a sweet humor that made the humblest feel at ease in his presence; a scholar of high rank and above all a noble Christian gentleman who adorned the faith he professed. I have always thought of him as among the foremost products of our old Southern civilization; very much such a man indeed in general character as was Robert E Lee. The two were marked by the same simple dignity of bearing, the same perfect poise under all circumstances as though nothing could shake them from the serene possession of their own souls. In the pulpit the Bishop had a certain presence that none will forget who ever saw him there; the hearer was impressed at once with the sense of a combination in him of intellectual power and deep spirituality. He was not an impassioned orator, his delivery being quiet, almost conversational in its tone, but there was a scholarly elegance of diction, a felicitous choice of words, and a faithful setting forth of gospel truth that are tenderly remembered to this day all over the State of Georgia. Of his influence upon the young girls who were pupils of the Montpelier school it is impossible to speak too highly. He made God fearing, duty-loving women of them. It was an in-
fluence similar in character to that of Arnold at Rugby; the girls were made to feel the personal touch of his ripe mind and pious nature and through them, in their later role of good wives and faithful mothers, his impress has come down to the present generation. Bishop Elliott was President of the Georgia Historical Society at the time of his death and I remember hearing an address from him to the Society delivered in its old hall on Bryan street some two or three years after the close of the war. It was a time of deep depression all over the South; the old landmarks had been swept away; almost every home was a "house of mourning," society was in a chaotic condition; there seemed no future for our section and something like hopelessness was in many hearts. The good Bishop did not minimize the evils under which we labored but pointed out that relief from them was to be found only in holding fast to the things that are good and true, in keeping up the old standards of faith and honor and in resolutely determining not to swim with any current that would carry us away from them.

In my minds eye I can see him now as he sat in the Presidents chair reading this address to a deeply attentive audience; a grand old man, a mentor that any community might well be proud of. Among Sisters schoolmates at Montpelier were your Aunt Elizabeth Hardee, Bonnie Monroe of Macon (afterwards Mrs John M Kell) Miss Kitty Stiles, Mrs Fred Habersham, Mrs. Cann, (I think,) Miss Callie Sosnowski, to whom Susie went to school at Athens, and many others whose names would mean nothing to you, though I have clear memory of them. I believe most of them have her in their hearts to this day though she has been dead for fifty six years.

The day of my departure from home for White Bluff is vividly in my mind. I arose very early in the morning although the carriage was not to come for me until five or six o'clock in the afternoon. At first I was all excitement and eagerness to start but as the day went on some true idea of what the move meant began to dawn upon me. Early in the afternoon "Monday," the faithful Negro who always acted as mail carrier and freight agent between the Burroughs place and the city, called for my small belongings and as I saw them packed away in the wagon there was a sinking of the heart that I was careful to keep to myself. After all, it was only a little boy of eleven

years old who was thus leaving the nest where he had always been
tenderly sheltered and cared for and that there should have been
a slight shrinking when the actual moment came is not surprising.
At the appointed time the two Burrough boys, Jimmie and Willie,
drove up to the door, good byes were said, and I was fairly started
for four years of life in a family where there awaited me an affection
that almost equalled that of my dear parents. Our little journey
ended just about night fall and at the very last minute we came
near serious disaster. A black thunder cloud had followed us during
the last mile or two of the drive and as we reached the front of the
house, which you remember as very close to the river, there came
a terrific blaze of lightning and a simultaneous crash of thunder
that was appalling. Our horse was very much frightened and dashed
straight down the sloping bluff; we should have been in the river,
horse, carriage, boys and all, in another two seconds but for the
courage and readiness of Jimmie who never lost his head for a
moment but with great skill got control of old "State Rights" and
brought him back again to the level road. The lightning shattered
an enormous oak tree not very far from us and we three boys were
so severely shocked that we did not recover from a peculiar numbness
until the next morning. Later in life I was even closer to death by
lightning at Fort Pulaski having been thrown down and made
unconscious for a little while. It is not a pleasant experience and I
have no desire to repeat it. Both Mr and Mrs Burroughs received me
with the utmost kindness. She took me in her arms and kissed me as
I entered the room in which she was sitting. I loved her from that
moment and her memory will be dear to me so long as I live. In
spite of the warm welcome a great feeling of loneliness came over
me when my little room was reached and I cried myself to sleep.

At that time the Burroughs family consisted of the father and
mother and the following children: James Powell, who was about
a year older than I, Richard F Williams, a few months younger,
and then the girls Rosa Thirza, (whom you recognize of course as
"Aunt Rosa," ) Laura Isabella, and Clara Elizabeth. I thought myself
a marvel of erudition in pointing out to Mr Burroughs that his
daughters were all "nouns of the first declension, ending in a."

Mrs Burroughs was the daughter of old Mr Richard Williams,
(who owned Burnsides Island,) and the sister of Mr Tom Williams
whom you knew in his later years at Montgomery. She was a woman
of a deep and unaffected piety that governed every action of her
life; gentle and kind of heart she shed a sweet influence wherever
she moved. One of God's Saints indeed, whose dear face I hope to

35
see again. From neither her nor her husband did I receive a harsh word, nor even an impatient one, during the whole of the four years of my sojourn with them; they treated me as one of their own sons and my own parents could not have been more tender and kind. The Burroughs place was really a small plantation though nothing was sent to market except the products of the dairy. The fields and gardens provided nearly everything that was needed for the support of the establishment—corn, potatoes, pease, millet, sugar cane, vegetables of all kinds, melons, fruits &c &c. While from the river there was an abundant supply of fish, shrimp, crabs and oysters. Hogs were raised for the winter supply of meat. A well filled poultry yard was another resource, and a fine herd of milch cows stocked the dairy profusely. The cattle were lorded over by two magnificent bulls "Pippit" and "Billy Gibbons," deadly rivals who never came together without a clash of arms that was thrilling and awe inspiring to witness. Roaming over fields known as the Vaucluse plantation were a number of "marsh tackeys" the name given to a peculiarly hardy breed of ponies and these furnished elegant mounts for boys. Back of the home was a very large yard in which were many grand old pine trees that must have been part of the virgin forest, and on each side of it were the various farm buildings, barns, stables, carriage houses, sugar mill &c. Beyond was the woodland and in the shade of the trees the Negro quarters were located. These were presided over by two venerable old darlings, Tony and Lisette, whose children were Monday, Jim, John, Tony, Caesar, Billy, Phillis and Clarinda. Albert was the blacksmith and carpenter, also the general utility man—his wife Jane the laundress and manager of the dairy (though in my opinion, at that time, her most important functions were the making and setting of ginger cakes; all my spare money went to her in exchange for these delicacies). Leah and her daughter Emma, another Jane and Onesimus were the house servants and there were a number of piccannies whose names I have forgotten.

The system of government on the place was patriarchal the master at the "big house" being not only the fountain of authority, but the source of counsel advice and help as well. The Negroes were comfortably clothed housed and fed, proper medical attention was provided for them in sickness and the labor required of them was well within their powers. I have a very kindly remembrance of these humble people who were always good to me, ready to help any of us in our sports, responsive to any requests that were made of them. Albert, the blacksmith and carpenter, was the possessor of two notable "coon dogs" and on Friday nights during the winter season,
when the weather was clear and cold, we boys were permitted to go out with him coon and 'possum hunting. Fridays were selected because the next day was a holiday and we had no lessons to prepare. What joy there was in those excursions, such a sense of adventure and freedom in walking the dark woods at night, a little timid perhaps when the hooting of owls would break upon the stillness in the sardonic manner peculiar to that bird, but not willing to miss it for worlds. And then the wild rush through thickets and briars and tangled underbrush as the distant baying of the dogs proclaimed that the game had been "treed;" everybody excited, everybody whooping and yelling, the blood at fever heat in spite of the cold the whole body thrilled with an exhilaration that mine has been a stranger to for many a long year past. When the tree was reached under which the dogs were barking a fire would be built to throw light on the situation, and a council of war held to decide how to get at the game. If the tree happened to be small it would be cut down, but if, as was more frequently the case, it was a very large one the solution of the difficulty was not so easy. Albert was a very expert climber however, and up he would go in a way that always astonished me; he attacked the biggest pines, trees around which his arms could not go halfway, and somehow or other would worm his way up and shake his coonship from the limb on which it had taken refuge. As the animal touched the ground the dogs would be upon it and a most exciting battle royal begun, for the coon is a savage fighter, often more than a match for a single dog; a 'possum on the contrary makes no resistance but simulates death and the dogs let it alone. Long after midnight the hunt would be kept up and when we crept up to our beds in "the wee sma' hours" it may be imagined that we were all ready for the deep, dreamless sleep that belongs to youth. For quite a long while the Burroughs boys and I had no other companions, but later we were joined by Aleck Wright, Joe Weed, John Ferrill and Bob Campbell. I am not at all sure that my advance in studies at this little school, during the four years of my stay there, was as great as it would have been in a larger school. I was somewhat ahead of the other boys and lacked therefore the stimulus that competition would have furnished, but I received education in many ways that would not have been possible in a city and which have been exceedingly useful to me all my life long; I learned to ride and drive well, to swim with ease, how to use a gun safely, to work with tools, and to find my way through the woods. The powers of observation were quickened and a certain self reliance attained, than which nothing is more valuable. A love for nature grew and strengthened
within me. I gained a knowledge of animals and especially of birds. All these things while the moral influences about me were high and pure. Religion entered largely into the daily life of the Burroughs family; prayers were held morning and evening, attendance upon the church and weekly prayer meetings was strictly required and we were encouraged in learning many of the hymns of the church by heart. We used to sing one or another of these every night; they have remained by me to this day and have been a comfort and blessing to me always. Mr Burroughs took a great deal of trouble in teaching me to ride. He was an excellent horseman himself and would frequently make excursions about the country visiting the more distant parts of his lands, or calling upon his parishioners. On such occasions we boys would often ride with him and great fun it was for our leader never hesitated about leaving the roads and making short cuts through the woods. My special mount was a pony named "Whalebone"—no very great beauty but a good goer and I was very proud of him especially after your grandfather had sent me a fine outfit in the way of saddle, bridle and spurs. I was provided with a good gun too. Mr Burroughs had turned over to me an old flint-rock "fusee," (fusil,) that was about as long as I was, a weapon that had probably seen service in the old French war. I admired it greatly, but father thought it rather dangerous for me to handle so old a piece so he bought me a beautiful little double barrelled fowling piece with powder flask and shot bag to go with it and in so doing made me the happiest boy in Chatham County. A neighbor of ours was Mr Patrick Houstoun whose plantation, "Rosedhu," was about three miles from the Bluff. He was a lineal descendant of old Sir Patrick of colonial times, whose grave you may have seen in the old South Broad Street Cemetery. He was rather a rough diamond but good hearted, a "hail fellow," possessing the characteristics that always will attract boys. The finest watermelons in the county were grown on that plantation and when the right season came around a desire to visit "Sir" Patrick was pretty sure to seize us. A warm welcome was always given and each of us would be told to pick out the biggest melon in the pile. We were regaled too on molasses and water of a most delightful quality; it was different in taste from any brand that I was familiar with and was particularly agreeable to my palate. One summer afternoon at prayer meeting, which was held at the Manse, I had ensconced myself in a seat next a door opening out on the side piazza—(selected because out of range of the ministers vision in case of my getting sleepy). "Sir" Patrick had similar ideas, and standing just outside
of the door he whispered to me to let him have the seat. I was willing to do so "for a consideration" and sold it to him then and there for a bottle of that choice molasses. The debt was honorably paid when we next went over to Rosedhu.

Residing at the upper end of the Bluff was the family of the Williams, a daughter of old Mr David Adams of Skidaway and the widow of Mr Eben Williams. She was a woman of simple, dignified manner, with aristocratic features that irresistibly attracted attention in whatsoever circle she happened to be thrown. She must have been an exceedingly handsome woman in her youth; as it was, I always thought her beautiful for her face was ever the index of a kind and loving heart. She was related to the Burroughs boys, (a distant cousin-ship, I believe,) who called her "Aunt Margaret," and pretty soon I found myself claiming the relationship also. During the whole of my life at the Bluff she was very good to me and I liked nothing better than to spend a quiet hour in her little parlor talking with her and overhauling a fine old copy of Hogarths works that happened to be among her books. Her family consisted of one daughter, Margaret, and five sons, Frank, Henry, Edgar, Annello and Eben, all of whom have passed away. Looking back, as I am doing now, it startles me at times to realize how many of those with whom my life began have gone. Kindred and friends one after another have traveled the same road until now there are more upon "the other side of the river" than on this. I speak of it as a startling thought, yet that is scarcely the word to describe it, for there has come to me a sense of the naturalness of death and of its being only the point of transition from one stage of existence to another. Old age gives to me the comforting reflection that though a few more years may be granted me I am still not far from the blessed meetings beyond. I must tell you of a sad bereavement that was sent upon the Burroughs family while I was with them. Little Laura, the second daughter was a very attractive child with pretty features, a rich complexion soft eyes and a winsome disposition. She was the pet of the household, the very last for whom a tragic fate could have been anticipated. Yet it came upon her in a moment of time. Her parents had driven out to visit some of the church people who lived out on the Montgomery cross roads and in their absence the little girls had gone by permission to see the Creamer children whose home was on the upper reach of the river. Just there the bluff had been badly washed and was almost perpendicular. At its foot was a broad stretch of beautiful sandy beach and there the children went to play. While digging houses in the sand the bluff suddenly caved and fell upon them covering several of
them more or less. Rosa and Laura were entirely out of sight; the former was near the surface however and managing to get one hand out was rescued by Eben Williams and the other children but poor little Laura could not be found by them and when help arrived she was quite dead. I was reading on the piazza of the main house when I heard the commotion, and running to see what was the matter met a group of the neighbors bearing the dear little body. It was the first time the mystery of sudden death had ever been brought home to me and the shock of it was very great; it was difficult for the mind to accept the fact that the sweet little girl with whom I had played and jested but an hour before had ceased to be.

Leah, the head house servant was about the only one on the premises who retained any self possession for we were all in an intense state of excitement half beside ourselves with terror and grief. She took charge of things however; she hurried "Daddy" Albert off to the city, on horseback, for a physician, thinking the poor Mother would need one on her return and sent me on another horse to ride in haste to recall the parents. While she labored vainly with hot blankets and restoratives to bring back animation to the little form. I met the rockaway before riding a mile; it came flying, the horse on a full run, and the vehicle surging dangerously from side to side. Mr Burroughs had already received word of the calamity from Albert; he was plying the whip ceaselessly, his face fixed and ashy while his wife sat beside him weeping and wringing her hands. As they flashed by me he flung out the wailing cry, "O Charles is Rosa dead too?" Poor, poor people, how my heart bled to see their agony. I bowed over on the horses neck and wept and prayed for them as I had never prayed in my life before. Many, many years have passed since that unhappy day and the father and mother have been long in heaven with their sweet little daughter, but to this hour I cannot think of their sorrow without deep emotion. It was a sad household that night and for months afterwards yet Time, the great healer brings relief for even such wounds—a merciful providence that it is so for if sorrow ever retained its first sharpness the cumulative troubles of life would soon make it not worth living.

A sister of Mrs Burrough's was Mrs Kingsley Gibbs whose husband owned Fort George Island at the mouth of the St John's River Florida, and worked it as a plantation. She was kind enough to invite Jimmie, Willie and myself to spend one of our Autumn vacations there, an invitation that was accepted with cheerful alacrity. I doubt if there were ever three happier boys than we were during those two months. We carried our guns with us and a plentiful supply of am-
munition; then a fine boat was put at our disposal, each of us was furnished with a pony to ride and three or four little darkies were given us as retainers for a time, to their very great delight. They went with us on our hunting trips, took turns with us in rowing, carried the game bags &c &c. The truth is we were all “jolly vagabonds” together without a care in the world and nothing to do but to enjoy ourselves. The Island was a beautiful one, semi-tropical in its foliage and fronting the sea. There was a magnificent broad beach of firm sand about four miles long and this was the gathering place of innumerable aquatic birds—gannets, curlews, pelicans, gulls of many varieties, sheer waters, frigate birds and others that I did not know. Whenever we came upon one of these assemblages it was our custom to charge down upon it at full speed yelling like wild Indians. The birds would rise in a dense cloud frightened and angry and then such squawking and cries I never heard before or since. I do not exaggerate in saying that acres of the beach were covered by the birds. Yet it is said that now they have been so hunted and slaughtered to supply plumes and feathers for millinery that scarcely one of them is to be seen save in the most remote places. At one point back of the beach there was a shallow lagoon of brackish water where the sea had broken through at some time and filled a hollow in the sand. Here one day we saw an alligator of considerable size on the opposite side from ourselves. We let fly at him across the lagoon though the guns were only loaded with bird shot. One of these must have penetrated the eye, (it could have hurt him in no other way,) for he gave a great bellow and lashed the water with his tail. Then we three youngsters, fired by a noble ambition, went around to the other side of the lagoon, waded in the water nearly up to our middles until we were close enough to the ’gator to ensure the loads of shot going in wads like bullets, fired in a volley at his head and ran for the shore like good fellows. This notable performance was repeated two or three times until we were satisfied the prey was dead, when we hauled him out on the beach by the tail. He measured nine feet in length and why he had not destroyed or badly injured us I cannot tell. Certainly our action was foolhardy in the extreme and we were soundly scolded for it by Mrs Gibbs. I suppose boys always will take risks that grown people would never dream of doing—it’s their way of gaining experience. In addition to his planting interest Mr Gibbs had an extensive saw mill on the Florida main land called “Maypoint Mills,” that I understand is now quite a considerable place. Here he had a store for supplying the wants of the mill hands and when we first went to visit him there he said “Boys here’s the cracker barrel,
there's the butter firkin and there the sugar barrel, help yourselves when you want to." Could anything have been more soothing to three healthy boys who were always hungry? It goes without saying that there was no occasion to repeat the invitation. Mr Gibbs was an unusually quiet man with easy manners and a soft low voice but he was brave to an extreme degree as the following facts will demonstrate. Some three or four years before our visit in the midst of a terrific September gale, a passenger steamer, the "Mutual Safety," plying between New Orleans and New York, went ashore in the breakers off Fort George Island. Her boats were smashed by the waves and there was every prospect of an awful loss of life for the steamer was beginning to break up. Mr Gibbs saw the peril the poor people were in, and did not hesitate an instant in going to their relief. Manning a large boat that he owned with a crew from the plantation Negroes, he made his way through the raging surf, in the face of the fierce gale, out to the unfortunate vessel and brought boat load after boat load in safety to the shore, until every soul on board had been rescued. It was a deed of humane daring that could not be surpassed, requiring not only cool, uncalkulating bravery but a high measure of physical strength and nautical skill as well. He guided the entire company to his house and kept them there for two or three days providing for the wants until arrangements could be made to get them away. Mrs Gibbs told me that at night they all slept on the floors all over the house like sardines in a box. If course this incident did not come under my personal notice "I tell it as 'twas told to me" but I did see the beautiful service of silver, suitably engraved, that the grateful passengers sent to their deliverer after they reached New York, and I sat often upon a part of the frame work of the ship that had been thrown up on the beach.

Time passed all too quickly on this idyllic island; each day brought new pleasures and I remember the entire visit as one of the most delightful episodes of my life; there was a spice of romance about it that all surroundings helped to foster, and to which my nature readily responded. In one of our rambles through a jungle of tropical growth that bordered on the beach, we came upon a crumbling old tomb built of "tabby," (a concrete of oyster shells and lime,) that quite fascinated me. Only a few fragments of the slab that had formed the door were scattered about among the dense undergrowth, but over the gaping entrance was a stone bearing a coat of arms and, if memory serves me, an inscription in Spanish. Peering through the gateway we could see naught save the very blackness of darkness that we were much too cautious to attempt to penetrate. Perhaps
it was just as well that a wise discretion was exercised in this regard for only a few days afterwards a large cougar was seen on the island and it was thought that the old tomb had been its hiding place. Dogs were put on its trail but it escaped by swimming over to the mainland. No one on Fort George knew anything of the history of this old structure. Mr Gibbs said that his father who had owned the plantation before him was equally ignorant of its origin. It evidently marked the resting place of one of the early Spanish settlers of high degree perhaps of a follower of Ponce de Leon's in his search for the fountain of perpetual youth. I have often wished that I had made a drawing of the stone with its emblazonment—it would be interesting to try to trace therefrom the family name of him who lay beneath it.

I recall with pleasure a delightful trip we took on the St Johns River one day. Mr Gibbs had occasion to go to Jacksonville on some business and availed himself of the opportunity of sailing up in a fine brig that had stopped at Mayport Mills en route to the city. He invited us to go with him and a charming sail we had of it up that beautiful river. We reached Jacksonville just before dark, and one of the first things we heard was that there had been a big fire there the night previous in which "Mrs Maxey's house was burned." She was the mother of Mr Tom Maxey and the grandmother of Mrs Bell. I have no definite recollections of the town—it was a quiet enough place in those days very different from the thriving city of today. Nor can I remember whether we went ashore to sleep or remained on board the brig. The next day we returned to Fort George in the plantation boat rowed by Mr Gibb's negroes who sang the whole way down the river, a distance of over twenty five miles. I believe there was even more enjoyment in this way of traveling than in the larger craft. We were close down to the surface of the water and could better appreciate the great width of the lovely stream. In due time the finest vacation comes to an end and whether we three liked it or not we had to get back to our studies at the bluff before inclination would have taken us there. I left Fort George and the kind people who had been so good to me, with many promises to return, which circumstances never permitted me to fulfil. It was a Southern home of the old type yet having features peculiar to itself because of location. Life there was far away from the rush of the world; simple, unaffected, kind and happy I think it more nearly approached the ideal than any I have ever known. Let me speak of an incident that writing of this visit brings to my mind. Among the pilots and towboat captains who were generally congregated at Mayport Mills
was a certain Captain Willie who was, without exception, the most blasphemous and profane man I have ever been thrown in contact with. He seemed to exercise a devilish ingenuity in formulating the most horrible oaths that fairly made my blood curdle; he frightened me with them. Well I came away and certainly did not expect ever to hear his foul tongue again, but in the summer of 1863 I was carrying a force of 500 men under my command down to Morris Island in Charleston Harbor to reinforce Battery Wagner. As we drew near to the landing place something went wrong in the management of the steamer, and I heard in the darkness, from some one near me on the hurricane deck, a stream of the most dreadful profanity. It touched a chord in memory and walking up to the man, whose face could not be seen I asked him, "Isn't your name Willie?" "Yes," he replied "but how did you know me?" "I heard you swear when I was a boy," was my reply and it is good to know that it penetrated even that thick hide for not another word came from him.

There is little more to add of my stay in the Burroughs family which to the end remained as it began marked by strong affection and kindly regard. Its influence upon mind and heart, upon the physical and the moral nature, was all for good and I find as I draw near the evening of life there comes a clearer perception of the blessing it has been to me all my days. It would not do to leave this period without telling my one ghost story. I have always been fond of hearing and reading tales of the supernatural though without one particle of belief in them; many times I have taken part in attempts to get into communication with "spirits" through the medium of table tipping but not once has the table responded and I am forced to the conclusion that there must be something in me that disturbs the harmony always required by dealers in the occult for the production of such manifestations. On one occasion for a little while I thought myself face to face with an appearance not of this world and it must be confessed that I was a badly scared boy. All one Saturday I had been out hunting on the Vaucluse Plantation and just in the gloaming was taking a diagonal cut across a deserted field in which was an old tumbled-down overseer's house, standing about fifty yards off the road. On the other side of the road was the church with its graveyard and near by another private burial place of former owners of the Plantation. Under such conditions it was not possible for the negroes in that locality to refrain from calling the old house haunted and they had told me many stories of strange sights and sounds there. These all rushed to my mind as approaching nightfall found me near the awful place. I was entirely alone, two
miles or so away from home and only a little boy of 13 years, so it will be forgiven me if confession is made of a beating heart and a strong tendency to quicken the pace. Glancing up at a window in the gable end of the house it was a relief to see nothing but darkness but a slight noise induced another look and then to my horror I saw the thing. A little old man was standing with his head on one side looking gravely down upon me. He wore a high crowned hat flaring at the top, a long white beard came down to his knees, his legs were spindling the whole figure not more than three feet high, if that much, in every line the perfect form of the gnomes I had read about in fairy books. Can it be doubted that there was a panic stricken boy? My first impulse was to throw up my gun and shoot him, a blind instinct of self defence; the next was to run with all the power there was left in me; and then the old man tossed his head, stamped with his foot and bleated. He was the patriarch of a flock of goats that had taken possession of the house. Standing end on to the window his body had been hidden in the darkness, his horns made the hat, his beard and legs were real and my imagination supplied the rest. Had I run away before the explanation I should probably be holding the belief to this day that I had been in touch with the supernatural.

In the latter years of my stay at White Bluff your grandfather concluded to buy a house of his own. After considerable searching for one that suited to the family requirements he was fortunate enough to find the one that the family purchased on the South side of Broughton Street two doors east of Habersham. It was thoroughly renovated and furnished and a most delightful home it made for us all. The house was a large double one, two stories on a high brick basement. There was a large yard and a commodious stable and carriage house with bins for feed and a loft for storage. We had several fine orange trees in full bearing and a garden that was a joy to each of us especially to my dear father whose love for plants and flowers seemed to increase with this opportunity for indulging it. An added pleasure to the location was that Mr and Mrs Veader, (Miss Charlotte Reynolds that was) bought the house next door to us on the Corner of Habersham, so we had dear friends as neighbors from the very beginning.

In these congenial surroundings my parents looked forward to the evening of their days happily, in the companionship of their children, but it was not to be. They certainly were happy there yet the end of the family life was nearer at hand than any of us could have dreamed.
In the spring of 1852 my sojourn in the Burroughs household came to an end and I am glad to remember that parting from the dear people who had watched over and cared for me with tender solicitude for four long years, filled me with grief. As I got in the carriage to leave the house, Mrs Burroughs kissed me and put into my hands a lovely letter expressive of her warm affection, of her hope for my future, and full of sweet counsel as to my bearing toward God. Surely, when I come to reckon up the blessings that have been vouchsafed to me in life I should count the influence and love of that gentle lady as among the greatest. She lived only a year or two after that and Mr Burroughs died in 1854; neither of them more than middle aged.

After leaving the Bluff I spent two or three months at home before being sent off to a larger school. Sister returned from Montpelier at the same time so we were all united again and as happy as people get to be in this world. The question as to where we should go for further education was discussed in family conclave and it was decided that Sister should be sent for a year or more to a finishing school for young ladies in New Haven Conn. boarding meanwhile in the family of Miss Harriet Peck there (a friend of Father’s). I may say that the arrangement proved an admirable one in every way; the school was a particularly thorough one and Miss Harriet kindness itself. Sister met, too, a good many of the Professors of Yale College; she lived in a fine literary atmosphere and its stimulating effect upon her good mind was very great. Few girls of her age attain a higher degree of mental culture.

I was sent to the Georgia Military Institute that had been recently established at Marietta under the Superintendency of Major A. V. Brumby an old Army officer from Alabama. He was the father of the “Tom” Brumby who was in later years, under Admiral Dewey, to open the fight in Manila Bay that ended in the destruction of the Spanish fleet. Tom was born while I was at Marietta and I held him in my arms as a little baby many times scarcely realizing that he would grow to be a man of national repute.

Several Savannah boys were already at the Institute and two others went up with me, George Turner and Theodore McFarland. On the way we stopped one night at Atlanta at a famous old hotel that was kept by a Mr Thompson, or “Colonel” Thompson, as he was called from one end of Georgia to the other. He was quite a character, abounding in a certain rough humor and good fellowship. Finding out where we boys were going he entertained us by enlarging upon the hard times that were ahead of us; I think however that we were
not needlessly alarmed. His son Harvey was a Cadet at Marietta at
that time and he and I became quite good friends later on, though
he was one class above me. Atlanta was not then the bustling, thriving
city of the present day; indeed it was a sorry looking place and in my
mind, for years, it seemed always associated with rain and a super
abundance of red-clay mud. In the many times I passed through it
as a Cadet it was generally raining; of course it just happened so and
the city has as much sunshine and brightness as any other, but that
was the impression made upon me. I had little thought of what a
metropolis it would become nor that in a few years I would be com-
manding a regiment in it’s defence on the old red hills that surround
the town.

On reaching the Institute at Marietta Major Brumby received us
kindly and the three of us were assigned temporarily to a room
occupied by Alexander Butler and Tom Carmody, both Savannah
boys. The only hazing that I remember was in the form of a mild
practical joke on our first night in quarters. After “taps” at night
the rooms were all visited by inspecting officers to see that the Cadets
were in bed, lights out, water in the buckets in case of fire, &c &c.
Well—we three green ones were told that a formal standing, military
salute was required of each occupant of the room as the inspector
came in. So when he entered on this occasion his lantern shone on
three small figures standing erect at the “attention,” in their shirt-
tails, with hands raised to the forehead in salute. He snickered a little
at the sight but recovered dignity and with a gruff military air gave
the order, “Return to your beds.” That was the beginning and end of
our hazing—it was innocent enough. In fact I cannot recall a single
instance, during my four years at the G.M.I. of any joke played on
new Cadets that had in it anything more objectionable than the one
related; there was nothing to give pain to the body or mortification
to a sensitive mind; such as we have heard of in latter years at
West Point and Annapolis. How well I recall the thrill that came
over me at being awakened by the roll of the drums at the first
morning’s reveille; it seemed to so emphasize the fact of my having
begun a military life, and there are few boys who would not find
a charm in that. It is an inspiring “call” any way especially when made
upon the bugle. In army life I used to take delight in listening to it
as it broke out on the crisp morning air, first near by, then farther
and farther away as regiment after regiment took it up until the notes
would come like faint echoes, just as Tennyson so beautifully de-
scribes in his “Bugle Song.”
The G.M.I. was located on a high hill about half or three quarters of a mile away from the little town of Marietta. Beyond the town, some three miles or so, old Kenesaw Mountain reared its twin summit (a mountain that has many associations in my mind both of peace and war; some of my happiest days and some of the most trying were passed beneath its shadows.) To the North East was Black Jack Mountain, and far off on the distant horizon a faint dark line marked the Southern end of the Blue Ridge. Lost Mountain stood out clearly against the sky some eight or ten miles to the West while in the South East we could see the great rock known as Stone Mountain. I had been brought up in the flat country of the sea coast where the bluff at Savannah was the only thing in the shape of a hill of which I had any knowledge, so the grand outlook from the Institute grounds had always a fascination for me to the very end of my stay there.

The buildings of the school were not specially impressive yet my memory of them is tender and doubtless the sentiment is shared by many old gentlemen through the Southern states who there learned the lessons that were to serve us all in such good stead during the stormy days of our early manhood. The recitation halls were in a large brick building that crowned the summit of the hill and running at right angles from this were two streets of frame dormitories, the quarters of Companies A and B. The mess hall, cannon-house, commissary, hospital and Professors' house were conveniently grouped and in front of all stretched the great parade and camping ground.

Capt James W Robertson was the Commandant of Cadets at that time, and a very striking figure he was too. He was a graduate of the Citadel Academy at Charleston and one of the finest looking soldiers to be found anywhere; very tall, straight as an arrow, with black hair, piercing eyes and graceful carriage. He was the strictest of disciplinarians holding everybody under him to rigid accountability and not inclined to be at all mealy mouthed when a scolding had to be administered. We were all of us very proud of him admiring him greatly in that hero-worshiping way that boys are addicted to, though the admiration was mingled with considerable awe, especially among the youngest set. This was particularly true when we were called upon to undergo his scrutiny at the weekly inspection of arms and quarters. Woe, then, to the unhappy lad whose gloves or belts were soiled, whose shoes lacked the final touch of the brush or whose gun betrayed the slightest evidence of rust, inside or out. During Capt Robertson’s official connection with the Institute he married Annie Park who was a first cousin of your Mothers, a very
sweet and amiable lady whom I came to know well later on. My recollection of the wedding is quite distinct because of my having been one of a party of Cadets who serenaded the happy pair, and to whom a large waiter of wedding cake was sent out. It is needless to add that no fragments were left. Mrs Robertson had a sister whose name, I think, was Kate. She was the wife of Dr E. M. Allen a dentist of the town. The Doctor had known me as a child, having boarded at Cousin Platts house in Savannah some years previous to his removal to the upcountry. He was a genial man and a thoroughly good man respected by everyone in the community. As soon as he heard of my being in Marietta, he sought me out invited me to come frequently to his home and, in fact, was as kind as anyone could be. Probably these people have all passed away long since—the Captain, who became Colonel Robertson, I met once during the war at the siege of Charleston and we spent two or three hours together talking of old times. The ladies I saw in Marietta a few years after the war when I was making a business trip through North Georgia; but since that time I have never heard a word of them. They were of the Greensboro, Ga. family of Parks, children of one of your grandmothers brothers. Another family into which I was intimately admitted was that of Mr Dix Fletcher who with his wife had formerly lived in Savannah and were friends of my parents. Mrs F sang delightfully; she had a pretty daughter too, Georgia, whom I had known as a little child; so there was a double attraction for me at that house. Then I was invited frequently out to the home of old Col Myers the father of Mr Fred Myers who lived some miles out on the Roswell road. It was too far away for social evening visits but many pleasant Saturdays and Sundays were spent within those hospitable walls. The old Colonel was one of the Trustees of the Military Institute, so when ever an invitation came from him there was not much trouble in getting the necessary leave of absence. Of course as time passed my circle of acquaintances in the town enlarged. The people were friendly to the Cadets and anyone of them who behaved himself at all decently did not lack for social privileges. The Hansells, Frasers, Coombs’s, Barnards Trenholms, Stewartsons and many more, were friends of whom I have warm and pleasant memories. Speaking of the Stewartsons brings to mind a funny little incident that happened at their house. Jim Screven, (a younger brother of Col John,) and I with one or two other Cadets had gone there to visit Harry Stewartson one Saturday. At that time there was an Episcopal Convention in session in Marietta and Dr Stewartson who was an ardent Churchman, was attending it with two or three clergymen who
were his guests. Well, we boys were in the library having a friendly
and perfectly innocent game of “Seven up” together when suddenly
there was the sound of several footsteps in the hall. Harry, a great
stickler for the conventionalities, jumped up quickly and cried out
in a frightened voice, “Hide the cards boys, the ministers are coming!”
At that Screven gathered the whole deck in one swoop, threw them
on the sofa and sat upon them. In another second the Reverend gentle-
men were in the room and we all rose to our feet to salute them—all
except poor Jim who with a face like the setting sun stuck to the sofa
while beneath his spike-tailed Cadet coatee the cards peeped out on
every side; he reminded me of an old hen sitting on more eggs than
she could cover. The ministers saw the humor of the situation but
made no sign beyond a quiet smile from one to another. They were
merciful also and after a word or two of inquiry about our respective
families, went into another room and left us to ourselves. Jim Screven
was one of the noblest young fellows with whom I was ever asso-
ciated. Simple in his bearing, absolutely unselfish, sweet tempered
and brave, he would have been a man of mark in the community had
his life been spared. He was drowned only a couple of years later in
saving Miss Lizzie Richardson (who was afterwards, I believe, Pierson
Hardees first wife.) The two were sailing off the Screven plantation
on Whitmarsh Island when a sudden squall capsized the boat. She
could not swim but Jim supported her until help arrived; before
he could be taken in however he sank and did not rise again. He had
received a severe wound in the foot from an adze only a few days
previously and when the body was found it was evident that the
opening of this wound had incapacitated him for further effort to
same himself. He gave his life for her.

It is not possible for me to overestimate the benefits I derived
from the four years of training at the Military Institute. I learned
habits of order regularity and punctuality that have been of the
greatest service to me all through life. I was taught how to yield im-
plicit obedience to rightful authority and how to accept responsi-
bility if it were placed upon me, how to command as well as to
obey. I learned to love study and to find the highest pleasure in
the exercise of mental powers. My body developed with the mind.
At eighteen I had already attained full stature but constant and
regular exercise with plain food and unbroken hours of sleep made
me healthy, hardy and elastic, establishing thus the foundation of the
good health with which God has blessed me for so many years.
The rules and regulations of this admirable school were based upon those established for the government of West Point Military Academy and followed them as closely as the different nature of the two institutions would admit. The fixing of responsibility for good order upon the Cadets themselves was a cardinal feature that was managed so as to work with little or no friction. To Cadet Officers far more than to Professors was intrusted the discipline of the Corps and the strict discharge of this duty was a point of honor with all of them. This matter of responsibility ran all through the conduct of affairs. In each room, for instance, an "orderly board" was hung over the mantelpiece in which were slits for cards bearing the names of the occupants of the room. Every Sunday morning an Inspector came around—a Cadet Officer—who put the name that was at the top of the board down to the bottom and advanced another to the top. The Cadet whose name was thus carried up became the Orderly of the room for that week and to him the authorities looked for the good order of the room in every way. If there were disorder of any kind the orderly was reported and a specified number of demerits attached to his name unless a sufficient excuse could be given in writing. I never knew an orderly to be so reported, however, when the fault was in another, that the guilty man did not come forward and relieve him by confession of his own shortcoming. To fail to do this was considered in the highest degree dishonorable by the Corps—it was an unwritten law that was rigidly kept. In the same manner the man whose name headed a class list alphabetically, was called the "squad marcher"; he formed the class when it assembled on the parade ground, called the roll and reported absentees to the Officer of the Day, marched the class into the recitation hall and there awaited the arrival of the Professor. He was expected to maintain order, meantime, and if anything went wrong he was held accountable for it. In the Mess-hall Cadet Officers were at the head and foot of each table having the same responsibility put upon them. On Sunday mornings when the squads were formed for marching to the various churches of the village there was always a head to each squad—the boys were under authority everywhere.

Each day at guard-mounting a Cadet Commissioned Officer (always a man from the first class) went on duty as "Officer of the Day." He received his orders from the Commandant and then had charge of the hill until the next morning. He saw that the various signals were sounded for roll-calls, parades, class gatherings &c &c. Reports of absentees were made to him as well as reports for all other delinquencies; he visited all the dormitories repeatedly during
study hours, saw that the guard was properly posted, looked to the putting out of lights and fires after taps, received the reports of inspectors and, in a word, he was for twenty four hours the visible embodiment of law; the fact that he was one of our own number never detracted in the slightest degree from the respect and obedience rendered to him. During his tour of duty he was required to be in full dress uniform, wearing sword and sash. If a Cadet committed an offence for which the punishment was dismissal from the Institute, summary action was never taken—he received a fair trial by Court Martial—the court consisting of Cadet officers presided over by the Commandant. I remember many such courts and took part in a number of them, but I have no recollection of a single one in which the justice of its decisions was questioned. I cannot but feel that discipline of the character described is the best possible corrective for the inclination of youth to an over exuberance and heedlessness. Lads who go through such a course for four years unconsciously acquire a sense of the obligation that is upon them to respect all law. And if in after life they should rise to positions of place and power they will be prepared to meet responsibility with firmness and intelligence.

Attendance upon divine services was required once every Sunday. We could go to any church we might select but had to attend somewhere. Nevertheless it often happened that the sick list would be unduly large on Sunday mornings; singular complaints that rarely lasted beyond that evening would deplete the church squads greatly. The two physicians who had the care of our health were first, Dr Slaughter a gentle, kindly old man but without special force of character, and afterwards, Dr Connell who was a sort of rough diamond, good hearted and "easily entreated." The boys found it no difficult task to win from either of them a place on the list of those "excused from Church."

In my senior year at the Institute I was Adjutant of the Corps and as such was expected to be in the Commandants office every morning. Our Commandant at that time was Captain Thos R McConnell of the 4th Infantry U.S.A. and one day in looking over the reports he said to me, "We had a very large sick list last Sunday Mr Adjutant; have the sick call sounded in front of this office next Sunday and tell Dr Connell that I will attend to the applicants." Sure enough when the call was sounded on that day Captain McConnell appeared with a tin cup and iron spoon in one hand and a paper package in the other. "Instruct the orderly to bring a bucket of fresh water," he said and then waited for the appearance of the invalids. They were marched
down in due time and formed in front of the door, somewhat surprised at having the ailments inquired into there. The first man in the line was called and stepped up. “What’s the matter with you” was asked of him, while the rest of the afflicted looked on anxiously.

“I have so and so,” he mentioned, naming the most alarming symptoms he could think of. “You are excused” said the Captain, “but you must take something for that trouble.” With that he dipped up a cup of water, put in a heaping spoonful of Epsom Salts from the package and gave the dose to the Cadet to drink. It was swallowed with many wry faces, and then number two was called. He had listened attentively to his predecessor and accordingly was prepared to present symptoms that were diametrically opposed to those from which number one suffered. But it availed him nothing, for him too the cup was filled with the nauseous dose and he drained it to the dregs. So it went down the line, each fellow trying to invent symptoms for which Epsom Salts would be hurtful, but none of them escaped, though all were excused from church. The last man—on the extreme left—was Duncan Twiggs (my old army friend, and the Judge Twiggs whom you know.) The Captains eyes twinkled as Duncan came up for he knew the character of the lad and expected a little fun. Well Mr Twiggs and how is it with you?” he asked. Twiggs grinned and replied “The truth is Captain I’ve torn my Sunday trousers.” “You are excused” was the response “but I have here the best remedy for that complaint.” So the last portion of the Salts was measured out and swallowed and the sick list was completed for the day. It goes without saying that there was a clean bill of health on the following Sunday. Capt McConnell was a very fine man, a native of Liberty County and a graduate of West Point. He had served in the Mexican War with high distinction and was mentioned in orders for his bravery at the battle of Molino del Rey, where he was desperately wounded. His carriage always showed the effect of this wound and I believe he suffered from it to the end of his days. I was thrown very intimately with him and shall always remember with gratitude his kindly interest in me.

At the beginning of my second year I was made a Corporal advancing in the third year to Orderly Sergeant and Sergeant Major and in the fourth year to the Adjutancy of the Battallion. The first Captaincy was offered me but the many privileges attached to the Adjutant’s Office decided me to take that and I was never sorry for it. Familiarity with the many details of garrison life which it taught served me in good stead when in January 1861 Savannah troops that knew only the a-b-c of military affairs, were thrown into Fort
Pulaski. Of these various promotions the first was nearest and dearest to my heart; the little chevron of gold lace upon my arm seemed a badge of glory and I never tired of looking at it out of the corner of my eye. The office had advantages too, it relieved me from guard duty and in the Company formation my position was always on the right of the line, an easy place to march in. One duty it imposed, however for which I had very little relish—that of counting out the clothes that came in from the laundry every week. They were brought in great baskets, (a double horse team load) and put in one of the Section rooms of the main building. Then from each bedroom a chair was brought, with the names of the occupants upon it, and set around in a circle. This being done we poor little Corporals attacked the pile and distributed the clothes, (which were all required to be marked,) to the various chairs. When the tedious job was completed a signal was given on the drum and the orderly of each room came up for his chair. It was a primitive way of doing things though it answered the purpose in view. I was glad enough when further promotion put an end to this task.

The Fourth of July was always a great day with us, to be observed with ardent patriotism. An orator and a reader of the Declaration of Independence were selected from the two upper classes respectively and these two worthies were escorted to the Court House in Marietta by the whole Corps with drums beating and colors flying. There the oration would be delivered and the immortal “Declaration” read to the satisfaction of all concerned; then we would file out into the public square and fire a national salute, one gun for each State, from the battery of field pieces belonging to the Institute. I have a vivid recollection of the grandeur and importance of the orator on these occasions for in my Senior year I was the man. I do not remember much about my speech except that it was very “spread eagly” in character; doubtless the tail of “the British Lion” was twisted at a great rate. These gatherings were highly appreciated by the country people around who came in crowds to attend them. They were particularly impressed by the firing of the cannon—a sound, alas! with which many of them were to become far too familiar in but a few years.

The great event of our year was the Commencement ball and not for us alone but likewise for all the girls in Cobb County and the numerous female relations of Cadets who visited in Marietta during the summer. The ball was given in the upper story of the Academic building, all of the partitions being taken out so as to form one large hall; and a noble room it made for a dance on a summer night.

54
with its big windows opening out to every point of the compass. Recitation rooms were fitted up as dressing rooms for the ladies, a fine string band engaged and simple refreshments provided in abundance. We prided ourselves on the decorations of the ball room though I suppose they would be considered simple and inartistic in these more sophisticated days. There was always a big chandelier, a wooden frame work in which about one hundred bayonets were inserted each holding a candle in its shank and the reflection from the polished surface of the steel, really gave a fine effect. Similar lights were arranged around the walls and they were further adorned with wreaths, crossed swords and muskets &c &c. Months before the happy occasion every man jack of us had invited some girl as his special guest and also engaged at the livery stable in the village the very finest horse and buggy obtainable to bring his lady love to the festivities. There was one particular horse noted for style and action that we were all crazy to get and I secured him at my last ball in July, by booking the application in January.

Looking back up on those happy days I realize that our best possession was youth that saw everything through its own golden glow; youth that had no knowledge of the cares and anxieties of maturer life. There was too a vigorous vitality that felt no fatigue and enabled us literally to

“Dance all night 'till broad daylight
And go home with the girls in the morning.”

In my minds eye, (even now, after all these years with their weight of troubles,) I can see the colored band leader, Joe Hewson, standing erect on the music platform, his fiddle tucked under his chin, sawing away for dear life at “Billy in the low ground” or “Camptown Races,” while he roars out his orders to the dancers—“Honors to your partner”—“Sachey all—be sure and swing the lady in the corner”—“Lemon-ade all.” I suppose the old always think of their day as the best the world ever saw, so allowance must be made for me if I seem to paint in too bright colors that halcyon time. Nevertheless, I am ready to affirm that no generation of young people ever enjoyed the morning of life more than did ours. And, indeed, well that it was so, for there was ahead of us all in the very near future, a dark and bloody period the shadow of which has scarcely yet entirely passed from the land. Too soon were we to assume the responsibilities whose burden would have seemed in anticipation too great for us to bear; in less than a decade were many of those light hearted dancers to swell the dreadful lists of killed and wounded on many a stricken field from the Potomac
to the Rio Grande. A blessed thing it is for humanity that the veil of the future is impenetrable.

Every summer immediately after Commencement the Corps went into camp for two or three weeks and then the instruction was entirely military. In my senior year the camp was at Catoosa Springs a famous resort in those days, up in North Georgia not far from the Tennessee line. There was a fine hotel there encircled by broad piazzas, one eighth of a mile in their entire length, making a charming promenade for lads and lasses. The hotel was full of pretty girls from every part of the State and it goes without saying that they did not lack for beaux when the ball room was cleared for dancing in the evenings. We were given the liberty of that room and the piazzas, from Retreat, (which is the sunset parade,) until Tattoo, when soldiers young and old are supposed to wrap the draperies of theirouches about them and go to sleep. It was comical to see the rush that was made from the ball room every night when the drums sounded the call. The girls did not at first understand being left so unceremoniously, but they got used to military ways before the camp was struck and rather liked their inconventionality. During my four years at the Institute the Corps made various visits to other cities—to Atlanta, to the state fair at Augusta and twice to Milledgeville with a view of influencing the Legislature to larger appropriations. In our second visit to the latter place, after a brisk skirmish drill on the Capitol grounds, a number of Cadet officers were invited to meet a group of ladies who were assembled in the parlor of the old Milledgeville hotel. There I saw your dear Mother for the first time but did not happen to be introduced to her. Robert Stiles pointed her out to me as the sister of Fannie Williams to whom Charlie Way was engaged. "Bob" Stiles was my room mate for nearly three years and a fine fellow he was in every way. He and his brother Henry were two of the handsomest men I ever saw, both were tall, a little over six feet, but in other respects the very opposite of each other. Henry, the elder, being a pronounced blonde, while Robert was as swarthy as an Indian, though with clear olive complexion, and black hair. Their father, the Hon Wm H Stiles, was "chargé d'affaires" at the Court of Vienna during the Hungarian Revolution in 1848-49—he was a cultivated gentleman, prominent in the political affairs of his generation in the State; an orator of more than usual ability, and a delightful companion to all who knew him. His sons were with him in Vienna and they both returned to America speaking German as though it were their mother tongue. Mrs Stiles was one of the Mackay family, a sister of Dr Elliott's mother, and a sweeter lady
never drew the breath of life. In truth, that may be said of all of her sisters as well—to know Mrs Elliott was to love her, while the names of Miss Sarah and Miss Kate Mackay were synonyms for the Charity that "hopeth all things" and that "never faileth." One of their brothers was John Mackay who was the class mate and intimate friend of Robert E Lee at West Point. I believe he graduated in the Engineer Corps and gave promise of great usefulness, but he died early. In the summer of 1854 I rose to the second or junior class, and, as was customary at the Institute, received a leave of absence during the encampment of that year. Bob Stiles invited me very cordially to spend it with him at the family place "Etowah Cliffs" up in Cass County a courtesy that I was glad to accept. That visit was one that I have always looked back upon with the greatest pleasure. The house, a most commodious and roomy one was located at the top of a cliff overlooking the Etowah River, and there were the loveliest people in it. Besides the family proper, were Miss Kate Mackay, Mary and Carrie Elliott (the Doctors sisters,) Ned Stiles, the brother of Miss Kitty, who was also a Marietta Cadet, and Charlie Golding. Then a little later came Mary Anna and Florence Stiles, whom you have known as Mrs Habersham and Mrs Woodbridge. Mrs Elliott was building a residence near her sisters but meanwhile was occupying a two story log house known as the "Parsonage," about two miles away. With her were her daughter Leila, afterwards Mrs Fred Habersham and her sons John Mackay, Percy, Rafe and George. Doctor "Billy," our Doctor, was then a student at Harvard University. With so many young people thrown intimately together, it was a time of great enjoyment and the days slipped away only too fast. The river was a source of pleasure to us all; about half a mile from the house was an old Indian fish trap where the stream was narrowed by two wing dams of stone with an opening in the centre. Through this opening the current ran with much swiftness and it was great fun for us lads to swim out into the river just above the rapid and let the water carry us through like an express train. Or we would all pile into a big flat boat, boys and girls together, and float away gathering muscadine grapes from the vines that covered the trees overhanging the river. Once some of us took horses and rode several miles to visit Saltpetre Cave, one of the curiosities of the County. It was the only place of the kind I had ever been in and it interested me very much. The opening of the cave was a round hole about fifteen feet in diameter from which a pathway sloped downward amid boulders of rock in considerable depth. Reaching the bottom we found ourselves in quite a large vaulted room with passages leading away from
it in various directions. Bearing lightwood torches we explored several of these for some distance but were afraid to go too far lest we should have been lost. It is said that these ramifications extend far under the surface and there is a tradition that an Indian girl was once lost in them for days but finally came out through a hole on the river bank miles away. One of the objects of our trip was to get specimens of a very beautiful clay to be found in a certain part of the cave. Bob Stiles, who was familiar with the place, led the way and when we were face to face with what seemed a solid wall of rock, he said "here we are." I could see no opening at first, but it was there at the foot of the rock, and just high enough for us to wiggle through on our stomachs. We went some twenty or thirty feet in this way and finally emerged in a small room where the clay was found. The ceiling of this room was hung with masses of bats, that were startled by the torches and came flying around our heads in myriads. The smell was overpowering and I was glad to get away from them. The temperature of the cave is said to be undisturbed by outer changes, it remains the same the year round. When we went in from the warm sunshine it seemed like entering an ice-box, but after being in for two or three hours and accustomed to the cold the return to the outer air was very trying because of the sudden accession of heat. This cave derives its name from deposits of saltpetre that are found in it, which were freely used during the Confederate War in the manufacture of gunpowder.

At the end of my furlough I returned to the Institute and settled down to hard study much refreshed by the happy vacation among my friends. But the summer that was so full of brightness had a sad and terrible ending for me. It was the year of the great epidemic of yellow fever in Savannah and my dear sister, who had returned home from New Haven was one of its earliest victims. Early in September I had been several days without letters, and as reports of the existence of the fever had reached me I began to be very uneasy when a letter reached me saying that Sister had been very ill with the dread disease but they thought the crisis was passed. Confirmation of this came in a telegram from Dr Wildman, the physician. The relief was great though only momentary for later in the day another dispatch told that her gentle spirit had passed away. I also received word from my parents not to think of returning to Savannah as every one was flying from the city who could and that my coming home would only add to their troubles, it was likewise stated that

8. Sarah M. Olmstead, died September 7, 1854, aged 18 years and 7 months.
my father was confined to his bed from anxiety and sorrow. Mrs Stiles had heard of our bereavement and sent for me at once to come up to Etowah Cliffs. I went immediately and found it a precious haven of comfort and sympathy. In one week news came that father too was no more—he did not have the fever, (though the printed lists of the epidemic reported him to have died of it,) but literally died of a broken heart. Mother told me afterwards that he tried to rally and said to her "I must try to live for Charlie's sake," but the vital force was gone and I believe he was glad to follow the beloved daughter whose short life had ever been a blessing and joy to him—"They were lovely in life and in death they were not divided."

It would be impossible for me to exaggerate the kindness extended to me by the dear family at Etowah Cliffs in that desolate period of my life. Everything that loving and tender sympathy could do to alleviate my sorrow was done by every member of the household. I was ever conscious that I was one of them; their affection encompassed me from morning until midnight and in a thousand ways I was made to feel that God had given help according to my need. And so my dear children it has been with me in every sore trial through which in His providence I have been called to pass—no cloud has even been without its silver lining, no burden without imparted strength to bear it. I gratefully acknowledge that "goodness and mercy" have followed me "all the days of my life"; even my faults and imperfections, many and grievous though they have been, have not taken from my soul a sense of the Divine love and compassion and now, in old age, that is my great comfort and exceeding joy. I am poor, weak helpless, as we all are, but He is my Father; He is our Father—bless his holy name forever and ever.

I returned to the Institute very uncertain whether or not my career there was at an end for with fathers life ended the income, (at least the greater part of it,) that had cared for the family wants and I did not know if there would be money enough to continue my schooling. Then Mr L O Reynolds a distant relative and my fathers closest friend, asked of Mother that he might be permitted to defray the expense of finishing my education. She accepted his generous offer for he loved us all and she knew the affection that prompted the act. I may say here that Mr Reynolds died within the next year but in his will he provided for the carrying out of this wish. Another of fathers friends, Mr I. C. Plant of Macon, made a similar request, and Major Brumby the Superintendent of the Military Institute offered me a "State Cadetship" whereby I could have earned my own tuition and

support by pledging myself to teach in the State for two years after
graduation, but the matter had already been decided for me. Mother
came to Marietta to join me so soon as she [could] rally sufficient
strength to travel. Mr Reynolds came with her and upon meeting
me he hugged me in his arms and wept over me—dear big generous
hearted man that he was. He was a man of mark in the State—the Presi-
dent of the Central and South Western Railroads. You have doubtless
seen in Laurel Grove Cemetery the monument erected to his memory
by those Roads. Soon after Mothers arrival she too was stricken by
severe illness and for a time it seemed as though I were to be left
literally alone. Had she remained in fever-laden Savannah she probably
would have died, but in the pure, bracing up country air she pulled
through and recovered her health.

The next two years were spent in hard study. I had always been a
willing student but felt now that it was particularly incumbent upon
me to do my best. It was a special cause for gratification to know
that while he lived Mr Reynolds never had reason to feel that his
goodness was misplaced.

In July 1856 I was graduated—and graduated with honor and the
pleasure it very naturally gave me was much enhanced by the presence
of Mother, Aunt Eliza Hardee and Cousin Hattie who all came up
from Savannah for the occasion. I wonder if there is ever any other
time in a mans life when he is absolutely confident that “the world
is ‘his’ oyster” and he has only to go forward and open it. The future
looked so bright, shadowed by no misgivings. I felt like a bird about
to launch out in glorious flight on wings that could never tire. The
restraints of military discipline which I had borne with patience
and pride for four years, seemed all of a sudden as shackles to be
cast aside forever. I was to be my own master from that time on,
little recking that a man is under the authority of somebody as long
as he lives. Moreover, I was desperately in love and that of itself
gives a rosy glow to every prospect. Still, there was a tinge of sad-
ness beneath all this pleasurable excitement. I was leaving a circle of
friends whose souls were knit to my own by long association and
kindred thought. I realized that with most of them the parting was
final—that we should never meet again—and in fact this anticipation
was fully realized. I found too that the old hill with every feature
of the landscape around it had become dear to my heart and that I
hated to leave it. I saw it once again in after years under peculiar
circumstances which shall be related further on.

My closest friend at the Institute was John G Patton of Habersham,
a member of the class below mine, a noble young man, chivalrous,
brave, and with a certain solidity of character that impressed itself upon his rugged face. He was the best man at my wedding three years later, and when the war broke out he became a Captain in your Uncle Charles William's Regiment. He passed unscathed through the terrible days fight around Richmond but was killed in the fierce battle of South Mountain in the Maryland campaign. In that awful war the best and bravest seemed to be taken first.

Soon after my graduation I put into execution a plan that had been eagerly looked forward to for a long time—to wit: the making of an extended trip through the Northern States, not only to see a little of the world but also with a view to looking up relatives on my fathers side of the house. Two of my classmates arranged to go with me but failed me at the last moment, for some unknown reason though I strongly suspect *impecuniosity*. The money for my own expenses was provided by a savings bank fund that father had started for Sister and myself when we were very small children, and added to year by year so long as he lived.

I started from Savannah in the old wheel steamer "Alabama" and after an uneventful passage reached New York on the third day. I remember being deeply impressed by the beauty of the harbor as we sailed in: the forts on Governors Island interested me particularly, fresh as I was from military studies, but I hardly dreamed that six years later would find me a prisoner in one of them. It is well for us all that the gift of looking into the future is not granted to us.

The old Astor House, that gloomy looking pile on Broadway opposite the lower end of City Hall Park was then considered one of the most elegant hotels in New York and I felt much importance in writing my name on its register as a guest though it is probable the clerk did not take the same view of the matter for he put me in a small room on the very top floor and there was nothing in the way of an elevator to take me there except my own stout legs. My window looked out upon Broadway and my first act was to sit by it for an hour or two fascinated by the ceaseless stream of life that flowed along the street. At first I thought, like many other new comers that there must be something exceptional on foot—it took me some time to realize that it was just the ordinary every day traffic. There were no cars on Broadway then but an unending line of two horse omnibuses meandering along in both directions and carriages and commercial vehicles of every description, all rattling over the rough paving stones with a clatter and roaring noise that confused me. I did not think my brain would ever get accustomed to it.
The Astor House did not keep me very long however; immediately after dinner I got my bearings from a big map of the city that hung in one of the hallways, and set out relative hunting. I had the address of Cousin Eliza Hallock’s house on Broome Street and went there first—indeed it was the only address within my knowledge. The door was opened by a sweet looking girl, apparently about 14 or 15 years old, who looked enquiringly at the tall fellow standing before her. “Is this Mrs Hallock’s house and are you her daughter?” I asked. Receiving an affirmative reply to both of these questions I added, “Then you’re my Cousin,” and went on to explain who I was and where I came from. She knew all about the relationship for Sister had spent some time with the family three years previous. That was my first introduction to dear Emily whom I loved from that moment until the end of her life. A gentle affectionate nature was hers, self sacrificing and loyal to all who had claim upon her. As the first of the family to meet me she seemed to take me specially under her wing and it is not saying too much to add that she gave me confidence and love from the beginning, and extended it to my children also in after years.

Cousin Eliza was delighted to see me—as a little girl she had been a special pet of my father’s and held him in tender memory. She insisted at once upon my coming to them, sent to the hotel for my effects and before nightfall I was domiciled in her hospitable home. Her family consisted of her husband Dr Robert T. Hallock, Emily, Marvin and Waverly the latter a pretty little boy of 4 years. The Doctor I never specially cared for; he was a man of intellectual ability but brusque in his manner, a very pronounced abolitionist and not at all careful of my feelings as a Southerner in expressing his views of the extreme wickedness of our part of the country. “Doctor,” I said to him one day, “You have never been South and really you have no knowledge of affairs down there.” “Oh!” he replied “it’s not necessary to go to hell to know that it’s hot.” He was Cousin Eliza’s second husband Emily and Marvin being the children of her first, who was also a Hallock. The news of my arrival spread rapidly among the kinfolks and pretty soon there were so many introductions that for a time I found it rather difficult to keep track of the various degrees of relationship. Two of my Aunts were then living in New York, Aunt Esther West and Aunt Betsy Betts both of them your grandfathers own sisters. Aunt Esther’s children were John West (the father of Cousins Lou and Charlie), Mrs Hallock, Mrs Jane Demary, Mrs Mary Miler, Mrs Catherine Stagg and Mrs Laura Parker, all of whom received me as though I had grown up among
them. The Milner children of the next generation were James, Mary, Jennie, Josephine and Hamilton. The Staggs were Mary, Helen and Tom. Cousin Laura Parker had but one daughter Emily, who was a very beautiful girl, a brunette with regular features, rich olive complexion and a perfect little figure. Cousin Jane Demary was living in Chicago at that time and I shall speak of her family later on. Aunt Betsy's family consisted of four sons and two daughters Jonathan, Samuel, George, Eddie, Sarah and Hepzibah—all grown men and women but only one, the first name, married.

There was quite a jolly time when we of the younger set all got together as we did at every possible opportunity. We made little excursions to Coney Island, (then a very primitive place,) and elsewhere, danced and played and sang, besides making parties to visit all the theatres that were open. I saw Burton the great comedian and John Brougham and the Ravels a celebrated troupe of pantomimists who exhibited at a place called "Niblo's Garden" on Broadway. It was really an exceedingly happy time for me; the Cousins were kind and affectionate, my pocket was full of money, ample for all reasonable wants, and, best of all, I was in possession of healthy vigorous youth. Everything was "coeur de rose" and pessimism an unknown word. Aunt Esther, Emily Parker and I made a trip up to Ridgefield, Connecticut your grandfathers birthplace, and were the guests there of Cousin John Hyatt and his wife Mary, both of them rather distant cousins in the blood but very near in the matter of cordial kindness. Their son Philip Hyatt, a brilliant young physician had been out to Savannah some years before in an advanced state of consumption; father and mother had cared for him tenderly and now his parents remembering those ministrations could not do too much for me. Ridgefield then was not the fashionable summer place it has since become. It was a regular old fashioned country town, quiet, sleepy and sweet. There was one lone street lined with comfortable old colonial houses, beautiful elms and green grass, while in the vicinity, in every direction were typical New England farm houses, shingle covered and weather stained, with honeysuckle clambering over the little porches and old time flowers straggling about the front yards. On one of these farms lived my fathers brother, Uncle Seth Olmstead and his wife, dear old Aunt Nancy. On the day I was with them the old gentleman although eighty years of age had been mowing for hours in the hay field. When he came into the room and understood who I was he was deeply affected for he loved my father dearly; the old man took me in his arms, held me close to him and blessed me. I felt instinctively the tie of blood and have ever
kept him in loving remembrance. Uncle Seth's son was the Rev Miles Olmstead of whom you have doubtless heard your Mother and myself speak. He was the writer and compiler of several religious books some of which are now in my library. Aunt Esther took me one day to see the little farm house in which my grandfather, Samuel Olmstead had raised his family of thirteen children; she showed me the room in which they had all been born and you may be sure that my imagination peopled it at once with the little brood—(all of whom then living were old men and women.) The house was old and deserted, it has doubtless long since ceased to exist, but it had an interest and fascination for me that few buildings have ever had. Somehow I seemed strangely familiar with every part of it—the cellar where the winter apples and cider used to be stored, the family sitting room and kitchen, the quaint little bed rooms, the garret under the roof where the big boys slept. Father had told me so often and so particularly of all that I felt myself to have had personal knowledge of them as though they had been part of my life. I knew the surroundings too and the names of some of the families who had lived near by, the Keelers, the Picketts, the Goodriches, the Seymours. Some of the last named still dwelt in the queer old house they had occupied for generations—"Aunt" Biah Seymour, as she was called by everyone in the village, and her "darter" Delia.

Aunt Esther took me to call upon them. We knocked for a long time at the front door without response, then went around to the kitchen at the back where Auntie told me to remain while she returned to try and secure entrance at the front. I sat for a while in the old room so different from anything I had ever seen at the South. Everything in it interested me—the windows with panes of glass about 6 by 4 inches, the old time stove, the corner cupboard and its display of homely china, the little doorway leading to the woodshed, the broad, high backed rocking chairs and their home made cushions in which the two old souls had doubtless enjoyed many a comfortable nap during the long winter evenings, and the table of common pine but with its top scoured to immaculate whiteness. On the table was a womans wig and I speculated curiously enough as to who was its owner and how she was ever to get possession of it again with me sitting there. Pretty soon there was a slight noise from a stair case that ran from a corner of the kitchen to the upper part of the house, and turning suddenly I saw a picture that has remained indelibly photographed on my memory. A very old woman in short petticoats stood on one of the upper steps peering over her dress which was held up before her as a screen with both hands. Her head was ab-
solutely as bald as a billiard ball and a very funny sight she was. As soon as her eyes lighted on me she wheeled around and hustled up the steps with an agility that amazed me. I did not dare to laugh but found myself still further immersed in speculation as to the outcome. How was she to get the wig? However there must have been another source of supply for pretty soon the old lady came down the steps again, this time with her dress on and an elegant "Sunday" wig on her head. In a moment or so Aunt Esther returned, introductions were made and that was the way I came to know "Aunt" Biah. In a little while Delia, who had been somewhere on the farm, came in and her first action was to seize the wig on the table hide it behind her in a shame faced manner and rush out of the room. It must ever be counted to me for righteousness that this time too I refrained from an explosion of laughter, though it came later when Auntie and I were alone together. Delia herself must have been well on toward seventy years of age, so it may be judged what an old woman her Mother was. She was an old maid of old maids and of the extreme New England type that you read of in books. Her speech was full of such expressions as "Why I'm scart to death," "I want to know," "Do tell," "Sakes alive," &c and she could ask more prying questions in a minute than could be answered properly in an hour. Nevertheless she was a kindly soul who insisted on regaling me at once with blackberry pie made with molasses. I went to Ridgefield again just after the war and found both of these old people still alive and on that occasion I quite won Delias heart by demanding another piece of the same kind of pie. "Aunt" Biah then was in advanced senility—she had the idea that I had been fighting against the United States government, but her poor old head mixed up the civil war and the Revolutionary war, for she asked very hesitatingly, "You b'aint a tory, be you?" Cousin John Hyatt was very fond of horses and, being rather eccentric also, he loved to wake up the quiet little town by unexpected acts, so he took great delight in mounting me on one of his blooded horses without a saddle, hoisting Emily Parker up behind me with her arm around my waist and starting us to galloping up and down the main street. It was quite scandalous and, I dare say led to many criticisms and shakings of the head over "such doings." More or less distantly I found myself connected with a number of people in Ridgefield; among them Rufus Pickett who was a close neighbor to the Hyatts. His children were Eddie and Clara both near my own age. With these two, Emily and I had delightful drives about the beautiful country in a double seated spring wagon; Eddie was the driver and was permitted to have the front seat entirely to
himself while I ensconsed myself between the two girls with an arm around each to keep them from falling out. He was a taciturn country lad who generally sat with his eyes on the road ahead as though oblivious to every thing else but his powers of observation were by no means dormant. I said to him one day “Eddie just see how these girls are crowding me.” He did not crack a smile or turn his head but dropped the remark “‘pears as though you liked it,” and there the conversation ended. Poor fellow, when the war broke out he enlisted in one of the Connecticut Regiments and was killed on the field of Gettysburg. Clara I saw on my next visit to Ridgefield but have never heard of her since.

One place in the vicinity I was quite anxious to visit but did not have the opportunity—a certain hiding place on West Mountain known as “Old Mary’s Cave,” where a forlorn and half demented woman had taken up her abode during the Revolutionary war and had lived in it until some time in the early part of the last Century. “Peter Parley” (which was the “nom de plume” of Mr Samuel Goodrich of Ridgefield,) had told a story in one of his books of his having been lost with some other boys in a snow storm near West Mountain and of old Mary finding them and leading them to the shelter of the cave until the storm was over, then starting them home with their pockets full of old Continental currency. Mr Goodrich and father were friends as boys and he came once to see our family in Savannah. I was interested to learn from him that Mary was not a fictitious character. Her mind had been unhinged by the death of her lover, an officer in the Continental Army. She lived to a great age and was at last found dead in her cave. When I was with the Perrys in Ridgefield a few years ago I saw West Mountain apparently near at hand but the Doctor told me it was farther off than it seemed and I did not attempt to go to it.

From New York as a centre I made a number of trips to other cities and places of interest—West Point, Albany, Troy, New Haven, Boston &c &c. At Boston in riding from the depot to the old Tremont House I climbed up to the top of the omnibus so as to see the town and found myself right alongside of Billy Elliott who was then a student at Harvard. I wonder if he remembers it. New Haven had specially tender claims upon me—it was there that my dear Sister had lived for a time and everything about the town seemed associated with her, as indeed it still is. I visited Miss Harriet Peck and went up into the dainty little room of which Sister had written me such full particulars. She had only been gone from me then for two years and as I looked upon the spot that had been so dear to her and in which she had an innocent pride, a sense of loss overpowered me.
It has been with me all through my life and to this day I cannot think of her without deep emotion. Now, however, there is coming to me a realization of the truth that at longest our re-union cannot be far off. On returning to New York I found new relatives at Cousin Elizas—Emma Ward (Cousin Jane's eldest daughter,) with her husband and little Kitty, a baby just beginning to run about. They were anxious for me to return to Chicago with them so the following plan was arranged:— Cousin Eliza and I were to go to Niagara Falls together to visit the Symonds family, who were relatives of hers but not of mine; then I was to join the Wards at Buffalo and travel home with them. My stay at Niagara was very enjoyable, the Symonds were the soul of hospitality and did everything in their power to make me have a good time. I saw all there was to see, the Cave of the Winds, the pathway under the Horseshoe Fall, the rapids and the Whirlpool, and I went up in the little steamer "Maid of the Mist" up to the very foot of the Falls, a trip that was rather exciting and decidedly wet.

After several delightful days I joined the Wards and we took a fine steamer up the length of Lake Erie to Detroit. Here too there was nothing in "My prophetic soul" to forecast the summer that was ahead of me as a prisoner of war on the shores of that same lake. From Detroit the rest of the journey was made by rail and that part of the trip took almost as much time as is now required for the entire distance from New York. Cousin Jane and Mr Demary then lived in a cottage on the extreme edge of the city; beyond was the open prairie with only here and there a house visible. Cousins Kate and Helen were with them, the latter quite a little child with more mischief to the square inch in her than the law allows; not that she was bad only irrepressible from exhuberant vitality. The Wards had another cottage in the same enclosure.

The days were all too short and passed too rapidly on this visit; every member of the family was good to me and did all that was possible for my comfort and happiness. I took long horseback rides; went hunting for prairie chickens with Mr Demary, (without finding any,); roamed all over the city; romped with the girls; teased Cousin Jane and in a word was so well contented that I should have liked to remain there indefinitely.

One day Mr Ward said to me, "Have you any money at your command?" I told him "about Five thousand dollars." "Well," said he "just invest it in any land you see about here." I turned the matter over in my mind but nothing came of it. Perhaps I may have thought him over sanguine. Twenty eight years afterwards I went to look
where the little cottage had been and found block after block of solidly built brick and stone houses while the city stretched for miles beyond. The land that Five thousand dollars might have purchased was probably up in the millions at the time of my second visit.

This might be considered one of the lost opportunities for making a fortune; yet if the land had been bought the chances are that it would have been sold again when the transaction showed a profit by One or two hundred per cent. Moreover it might have been confiscated by the United States Government during the Confederate War, in which case my financial condition would have been just as it actually was when the war ended—for the money was put in Confederate securities and went “Where the woodbine twinth.” Doubtless it was never intended that I should be a rich man.

Chicago at that time was a different city from the one you know. Very few of the streets were paved excepting for a plank roadway in the middle with mud “ad infinitum” on each side and the houses were for the most part mean and unimposing. Yet the energy and belief in the future that have made the city what it is were even then strikingly apparent. It had been decided to raise the grade of many streets so they were filled in like railroad embankments twelve or fifteen feet above the level of the side walks, then the adjoining houses were lifted bodily in the air by jack screws, and basements built under them. I saw one large hotel in process of being raised in this manner, and its business did not appear to be interfered with in the least; guests were coming and going as usual while the whole building was on stilts, so to speak. It certainly required no mean engineering skill to accomplish a work of that kind without shaking everything to pieces.

On my return trip to New York I went part of the way through Canada, stopping again at Niagara to pick up Cousin Eliza, and from thence by the Erie Railroad. Early in November I turned my face homeward intending to make the journey by land to see something of the country. A young Alabamian named Billy Knox who had been at the Georgia Military Institute with me, was my companion. We had met accidentally on Broadway and were mutually pleased to know that we were to travel together. Now-a-days one gets in a sleeper at New York and in twenty four hours afterwards is in Savannah; then the journey took three days and nights with many stops and changes of cars. The train from the North would reach one side of a town, then the passengers would bundle into omnibuses and ride through the streets to the other side where another train would be waiting, and so on over and over again. There were no
sleeping berths and the old fashioned stove furnished the only heat for the cars. This was replenished spasmodically; at times we were half baked and again half frozen. So on the whole it could not have been called a very pleasant trip. One night the only seat poor Billy could find was immediately in front of the stove, which was cold at the time; a little later the porter started a roaring fire, and in one of the intense silences that follow the stoppage at a station in the middle of the night, my friend called out to me in a lugubrious tone of voice "Charlie you needn't stop for breakfast in the morning. I'll be done by that time," a speech that started a roar of merriment in the car. It had been arranged before my graduation that I should enter the counting room of Brigham Kelly also at the beginning of the winter's business so a day or two after reaching Savannah I entered their employment. The house was largely interested in shipping and the first duty imposed upon me was to go down on the wharf and check off a cargo of salt that was being landed from an English vessel. I took account of the number of sacks as they came out of the hold, (to tally with the record of the Custom House officers,) delivered salt to those who brought orders from the house for it, marked and shipped lots that were to be sent to the interior and made myself useful in more ways than I had thought possible at one and the same time. It was humdrum work, in strong contrast to the free and easy life of the few months preceding, but nature has blessed me with the disposition to make the best of things and I soon became accustomed to the new order.

Mother and I were boarding at that time with her nieces Cousin Jennie Miller and Cousin Maggie Wade in the large house that stands on the South West lot of the square corner of Habersham and President Streets. We were comfortably fixed, my Cousins were like elder sisters to me as they had always been, and I got rapidly in touch once more with the circle of old friends from whom my long absence at school had separated me. The first winter was made specially happy by the presence of my sweetheart who came down from Marietta to visit an Uncle and Aunt in Savannah. There was the usual round of parties and social gatherings in the old city, to all of which I had great delight in escorting her, but as the Spring came on picnics became the order of the day and to those I could not go, the inexorable demands of business forbade.

Whether this had anything to do with the "debacle" that followed I do not know; possibly so, and possibly because of the apparent come down in my position from Adjutant of the Corps and head of the senior class, to the humble post of wharf clerk and shipper of salt.
At all events the lady informed me one evening that she had made a mistake and that all must end between us. It was a dreadful blow that filled my mind with a sort of “Confusion,” as the darkies say, and my heart with a sarcastic bitterness that was very dramatic and that my dear cousins must have found exceedingly wearisome. It really did seem to me that the sun would stop shining and the heartlessness of people who could keep on talking and laughing over trivial things while such dire disaster had come upon me was fearfully oppressive and beyond comprehension. Yet, somehow, the sun did not go out of business and it was not long before the rally came and my own jest and laughter were as hearty as anybody’s. My relations with the lady were strained for a time but we remained friends, for I always recognised the many estimable points of her character. When I last saw her, about twenty years since, in Atlanta, she was a widow with a son nearly grown.

The two years following graduation were busy ones for me. I learned how to work and to work hard; the habits of order and method that had been drilled into me at the Military Institute were great helps toward advancement, as they have been in everything that I have undertaken through life. Promotion and increase of salary were given me and I became cashier of the firm with higher possibilities ahead. It was necessary to be prudent in the matter of expenditures but I had enough for all my wants as well as for simple pleasures. Books were always a great temptation to me and there was probably considerably more spent upon them than should have been. Yet to read good books is laying up Capital; they yield the best sort of interest on the investment as you, my daughters, have found out for yourselves long ere this. I enjoyed going to the theatre also; at that time there was an unusually fine actress, Miss Eliza Logan, who spent long seasons in Savannah and was a great favorite with all who heard her. She was a homely woman, being much too stout for grace and plain in feature, but both of these drawbacks were forgotten when she acted. I have never seen another woman upon the stage, excepting Charlotte Cushman, who could compare with her in dramatic power and complete assimilation with the character she represented. Her enunciation was perfect itself, every word was like a pearl and her voice had a carrying quality that made it heard with distinctness in every part of the house. What marvelous beauty there is in the English language when thus spoken. I doubt whether any other equals it as a medium for the expression of thought and feeling. There is an inclination on the part of some to claim for French a greater power
to convey subtle differences of meaning, but I am not of those, when considering the two languages in their entirety. In each tongue there are many words that have no exact equivalent in the other. French may perhaps be a more dainty language, more elegant its lovers may say, but there is a terse force, a virile strength, a pliant flexibility, a plentiful richness of reasonance in English that easily puts it in the first place. To hear it as Eliza Logan spoke it was a joy at the time and has been a pleasant memory ever since. Her repertoire included such plays as Lucretia Borgia, Adrienne the Actress, Ingomar the Barbarian, The Honeymoon, Evadne or the Hall of Statues, and others of the same character. They are rarely seen nowadays but I thought them very fine, and never tired of them.

About that time too the Hodgson and Durand Opera Troupe visited Savannah every winter giving in English such works as The Bohemian Girl, The Daughter of the Regiment, The Barber of Seville &c. I generally was in an impecunious condition when this company left the city; they carried most of my money away with them for it seemed impossible for me to resist the temptation of going to hear them whenever the doors of the theatre were opened. My standard of music was not so high as it has become since I have been familiar with the great voices at the Metropolitan. Writing of music reminds me of a close friendship I formed about that period with Miss Emma Elliott, a young lady from Bath Maine who came out to sing as first soprano at Christ Church. I forget where we first met but remember distinctly that we were friends very soon, though there was never a suspicion of anything else between us. She was an amiable, sensible girl, rather large in person, as is usual with girls from that State, and with pleasant features that were an index of character, though she was not beautiful. Her voice was a full, rich soprano, (clear and pure throughout her entire register,) that it was a great pleasure to listen to. Schuberts “Barcarole” was the first song I heard her sing and its beauty quite entranced me. In Mozarts Twelfth Mass she was particularly fine. I always went to Christ Church to hear her when that was to be sung. She went out to California a year or two before the war, married there, & became the Mother of quite a family, but I have not heard of her in many years now and do not know whether she is yet in the land of the living.

In the same counting room with me were J H Graybill and Horace Crane, the former being subsequently the father of Mary and Harry Graybill; he was rather erratic but I liked him and we went about a great deal together. Horace was a few years younger than myself, a handsome young fellow with rosy cheeks and dark eyes. He had
then the same equable, pleasant temperament that you know in him now; he has been a much beloved man all his life. He has been a true friend to me from that day to this. One whom I hold in warm affection. There are few better men or more worthy citizens. He had a sister, Julia, a beautiful young girl whom I used to visit quite frequently. She married Tom Charlton and was the Mother of the Charlton tribe with whom you are familiar. Horace’s elder brother, Willie Crane, went to Virginia with the “Oglethorpes” at the beginning of the War and was killed at the first battle of Manassas.

So passed a couple of years in a happy mixture of work and play and then I met my fate. The old custom of New Year’s visiting used to be very generally observed in Savannah. The Ladies always put on their best frocks, darkened the parlors from sunlight and lit the gas, set out a table of refreshments and then waited for the fray. The gentleman, rarely singly and often in groups of six or eight, would start in carriages at one end of the city and take it street by street until the other end was reached, calling upon every lady of their acquaintance within those limits. Some would begin at the Bay and work Southward, others at Gaston Street, (then the Ultima Thule) and make their way Northward. Where it would not be convenient for the ladies to receive, a basket would be hung on the front door knob for cards, but for the most part there was open house every where. On New Years day 1858 your Uncle Matt and I arranged to go out together. Cousin Maggie Wade lent me her rockaway and driver and a field day we made of it. We made about one hundred and twenty calls and were in a great state of good humored hilarity all day long, though there was nothing beyond youth, health and high spirits to account for it. Matt was temperate and I, until long after that time did not know the taste of wine or liquor. It was one of the happiest days either of us had ever spent. I dare say he looks back upon it as such though he had not the same reasons for so doing as myself. Just about nightfall we reached the house of Charlton Way on Jones Street near the corner of Drayton. Your Aunt Fannie was alone in the parlor when we first went in, but in a moment a troop of young girls came running down stairs, Eva and Corinne Way, one or two of the Walthour girls from Liberty County and your dear Mother, then Florence Williams. Once before we had been in the same room but it so happened that we did not meet; three years previous to this time the Corps of Cadets had given an exhibition drill before the Legislature at Milledgeville and at its close I went with one or two other officers to speak with friends in the parlor of the hotel. Your Mother has since told me that she was there and noticed my coming in, but I have no recollection whatever
of having been introduced. On this New Years day however my heart
went out to her at once. I felt that she was the one woman in the
world for me. I can give no reason for this, it was simply so, let those
who do not believe in love at first sight explain it as they will. I began
immediately to seek her society and on the 28th of February follow-
ing she promised to be my wife. She returned to Milledgeville in
April and later in the summer I followed to ask your Grandmother
Williams to give her to me. Your Aunt Fannie had told me how
I would be received and when the important interview came off
every detail of the dear old lady’s bearing had been so accurately
described in anticipation that, in spite of my trepidation, I could not
but feel an inclination to smile. She sat in state on the old horse-hair
sofa, a great turkey-tail fan in her hand, her best cap on her head
and with an air of dignified composure that would have badly fright-
ened me had I not already learned the sweet simplicity of her loving
nature. Outside, the sun was shining and birds singing. I could hear
your Mother and Kitty Bachelotte laughing and talking together as
they ran down the front steps leaving me to my fate; longer waiting
was useless and I plunged at once into the speech I had come to make.
“You are very young Mr Olmstead;” “Yes, Mrs Williams, but I am
getting over that every day.” “Your means are small.” “Yes Ma’am,
but Florie and I can live on what we will have.” I had an answer
for each half-hearted argument that was advanced. Well, the conver-
sation ended as such talks generally do when there is no real objection
to two young people coming together, and that evening I was re-
ceived by the whole family as one of its prospective members.

Milledgeville was a charming place to live in those days. It had
no commercial importance but was the Capital of the State and
society was made up of the State house officials and old families whose
roots ran way back to the settling of the town—the Sanfords, Kennans,
Williamses, Carringtons, Forts, Newells, Ormes, Jarretts, Grieves,
Du Bignons &c. The heads of most of these families were planters
whose plantations knew everybody else intimately and well, there
was a kindly atmosphere of friendliness and good fellowship that was
exceedingly delightful and all that brought joy or sorrow to one
household found tender, helpful sympathy in every other.

In this circle of friends your Grandmother was greatly beloved I do
not believe she had even an enemy or ill wisher, indeed it was not
possible to feel anything save affection for her. Simple unwordliness
and goodness were her predominant traits but with them was united
a fund of practical every day sense that made her a good manager
of the property your Grandfather had left at his death in 1854, and
a most notable housewife.
I have none but sweet and loving memories of her, she took me to her heart as a son from the very first and it has always been a happy thought to me that she knew the depth of my love for her. Her sons and daughters "rose up to call her blessed" and when she died there was but one expression—"a good woman gone to heaven."

Those were halycon days for me that summer. Your Mother and I were happy beyond expression, (for once "the course of true love" had "run smooth,"—brothers and sisters took me to themselves as though I were already one of them, and as "Florie's beau," I was invited everywhere. Some of the old people of the town, I found too, had been friends of my own parents in former days and it was a great pleasure to me to claim their friendship as an inheritance. I made the acquaintance of quite a number of young men who were students at Oglethorpe University. Among them Tom Newell who married General Colquitt's daughter, and Sidney Lanier who became so famous a poet in later years. As a youth he was singularly attractive and sweet, with dark hair and eyes and a winning voice that told of a refined and delicate nature. It was hard to leave all this and go back to the hard grind of the counting room but it had to be done. One cannot always live upon the mountain tops. Florie and I had not hoped for an early marriage; not until certain advancement that I expected in the following year should be realized, but it came to me within a month or two and then we fixed upon January 20 1859 as the day that should unite us. We were married in the parlors of the old home at Milledgeville on that day by Rev William Flynn the Pastor of the Presbyterian Church. Your Mothers bridesmaids were Kate Fort, Kittie Bachelotte, Hattie Hall, Lizzie Ingraham and one other whose name escapes my memory. My "best man" was John Patton of Marietta; George Turner, Isaac Avery, Fred Hull and Phil Yonge were the other groomsmen. The rooms were filled with the many relatives and friends, the back hall and rear piazza with old family servants who were loyally devoted to "Miss" Florie. A most notable supper was spread by your Grandmother in the big dining room in the basement of the old house, to which every one did full justice, except perhaps myself. I was too full of happy excitement to care for material things, but it was a lost opportunity for Middle Georgia had never seen a nobler feast. On the second day after the wedding we came down to Savannah where it had been arranged that we should board with your Aunt Fannie who with Uncle Charlie were kind in every way. But as time passed we felt the need of a little home of our own and in the autumn following I rented the
small house on Jones Street where Sallie was born some years later.\textsuperscript{10}

There we lived very happily until the War broke out, and there I left your Mother in going into service. In the summer of 1860 we took a trip North together visiting the relatives in New York and at Ridgefield and including Niagara Falls, The Thousand Islands and Montreal in our itinerary. The beauty of the Islands was a revelation to us and we determined to return to them in the near future but it was not until fifty years later that I saw them again and then she had passed away. That was a most fateful summer for the United States; the differences between the Northern and Southern sections of the country had reached an acute state and while no one could have foreseen the magnitude of the convulsion that was soon to shake the land, still there was grave foreboding everywhere, a feeling that we were upon the edge of a volcano. Without going into an elaborate account of what those differences were it might be well just here to speak briefly of them. They dated as far back as the very beginning of our government, having their origin in the first Convention that met for the drafting of a Constitution. Two parties were then developed, the Federalists, who believed in a strong Central government, to which the States should be subordinate, and the Republicans whose creed was that the independence of the States had been acknowledged to each separately by Great Britain and that all power should remain with the States excepting such as were parted with in express terms to the Central government for the conduct of interests that were common to all; such, for instance, as our intercourse with foreign countries, the establishment of the post office, the issuance of currency &c &c. There was hot debate in the Convention on the many delicate questions raised by these opposite views and the session was so prolonged that men almost despaired of definite results, but at last a Constitution was prepared and submitted to the States for adoption. It is a document that has received the praise of the world for its wisdom and moderation yet it represents a compromise between the extreme views of either side. Certain expressions in it lack clear definition of the powers granted and those reserved, yet undoubtedly it was the best possible under the circumstances. The general leaning of the document is toward the views of the Republicans and under their construction of it the country rapidly advanced on the road to prosperity. Alexander Hamilton was conspicuously the leader of the Federalists, and brought to the furtherance of his opinions all the resources of his brilliant mind. Thomas Jefferson was the exponent of Republicanism.

\textsuperscript{10} Sarah Olmstead, later Mrs. A. Pratt Adams; born 1862, died September 20, 1950.
The adoption of the Constitution made no change in the two parties, which subsequently went by the name of Whig and Democrat instead of Federal and Republican. The first represented Centralization, the latter, States rights and government for the people not for classes. Up to 1860 the great majority of the Administration at Washington had been Democratic and the South as a rule held to the views of that party.

Meanwhile however a new issue was being raised which drew a definite line between North and South. When the Revolution ended slavery existed in Northern as well as in Southern States. With the passage of years it was gradually abolished in the former being found uneconomical and not suited to conditions of soil and climate, moreover the tremendous immigration from Europe supplied the North with the labor necessary for the development of the Country a resource that was practically denied to the South by its semi-torrid climate and the disinclination of Europeans to compete with our slave population. The old Whig (or Federal) party had been defeated so often at the polls that it had ceased to exist but upon its ruins a new party was built up having for its avowed object the abolition of slavery. Many of the rank and file denied this, but it is only necessary to read the utterances of the party leaders to be convinced of its truth. The people of the South were denounced as "slave drivers" and the Constitution under which we held our property was declared "A league with death and a covenant with hell." A so called "Underground railroad" was established along the border line between the free and slave States by which runaway slaves were protected and spirited away from their owners. In a word this party, (which took the name that had formerly belonged to the Democrats and called itself Republican,) was absolutely and entirely sectional and by its acts really waged a quasi warfare against the South. In addition a large part of the territory acquired by the Louisiana Purchase and by the Mexican War—to which the blood and treasure of the South had contributed equally with the North—was denied to the people of our section, the Central government forbidding that slaves should be taken into North of a certain line. In 1856 the Republican party put up their first candidate—General Chas Fremont, (who by the way was born in Savannah, though he did not belong there). He was defeated, but only by a close margin and the campaign had been fraught with expressions and declarations that boded evil for the South should the party ever attain to power. In 1860 Mr Lincoln was put forward as the standard bearer and again there was a heated struggle. Great alarm was felt all through our section, it was felt that with the Republicans in complete control of the Federal govern-
ment, having the President, Congress and the Supreme Court with them there was no longer safety for the South in the Union.

Without touching upon the moral question involved in the slavery of the Negro, these facts seem indisputable: it had once been common to the whole country; the ships and men who brought the African to our shores were English and Northern; it came to an end at the North because of economic conditions and after a considerable number of the slaves had been sold to the South; it represented to the Southern people a capitalization of four thousand million dollars and any outside interference with the institution it was believed would absolutely upturn and destroy the industrial interests of every State South of Mason & Dixon's line. In the history of the world no brave people ever accepted conditions like these without doing all in their power to avoid them. So when the election resulted in the triumph of the Republican party Conventions were called in the various Southern States and one after another, as individual States, they formally withdrew from the Union, and, later on, were united in a new bond as "The Confederate States of America," with Jefferson Davis as President, Alexander Stephens Vice President, and its Capital at Montgomery Ala, (subsequently changed to Richmond Va.)

The right of a State to secede from a Union in which its interests are gravely imperilled is one that we believed in simplicity—it was not definitely stated in the Constitution but no one can read the record of the debates in the Convention that framed that document, and fail to see that the great body of the delegates recognized it.

When the Constitution was adopted by the States one or more [of] them expressly reserved this right and there can be no question that if it belonged to one it belonged equally to every member of the Federation. The question has ceased to be any more than Academic—it has been settled by the sword and it is scarcely possible that it can ever again be reopened. Yet it is well for future generations of Southerners to know that their fathers acted as they did from a profound sense of right and to avert perils that were not imaginary but very real. Secession in itself was not an act of war nor was any other than a defensive war ever contemplated by the Southern people. While for the Northern it was, first and last, a war of invasion to bring us back into the Union by force. Much is made by Northern historians of our "firing upon the old flag" at Fort Sumter, but, be it remembered that the very occupation and retention of Fort Sumter by an armed force was in itself an act of war ante-dating the effort of the South to recapture it. When South Carolina and the other States seceded the United States became in theory a foreign government to them and it was intolerable that a fort built for the protection
of the principal Southern sea port upon land ceded by the State for that purpose alone, should be held by aliens. How long would England submit to the domination of the lower Thames by a German fortification? So long as Major Anderson and his garrison held Fort Sumter the city of Charleston was under his thumb and the vaunted freedom of the State a mockery. There was no other alternative than a resort to arms when the demand for surrender was refused. The capture of the fort, though availed of to fire the Northern heart, inflicted no injury upon any part of the United States, interfered with no interest beyond Southern limits. Had not war been predetermined upon Major Anderson would have been instructed by his government to retire from a position that had no military value save as a point from which to coerce the South.

After all that can be said for each side, however, the fact remains that the people of both sections were keyed up to the breaking point and it is comparatively unimportant which committed the first overt act. The South, as has been said, had no thought of offensive war, yet nevertheless the probability of having to defend its political course by its own strong right arm was freely anticipated from Virginia to Texas, and, I am bound to add, with a wild enthusiasm. All military commands were recruited to their full limit, new companies were formed everywhere and night after night found the drill rooms and armories filled with high spirited youth preparing for the inevitable. Despite the gravity of the issue and the forebodings of the thoughtful it was a period of exaltation, when, for once, materialism went to the wall and considerations of self were lost in patriotic ardor and earnest desire for the welfare of the commonwealth. How little could any of us have foreseen the bitter ending of it all—and yet with full knowledge now of the price that Fate exacted of us I am glad to have lived in a time when the whole body politic had risen above all that was low and sordid and met the call of country with a cheerful alacrity, an uncalculating zeal a noble courage, that commanded and received the admiration of the world.

In the early part of 1860, (I think it was,) the Adjutancy of the First Volunteer Regiment was offered me by Col A R Lawton, who was then its commander, and I very gladly accepted it realizing that if trouble came the office was one in which I could be particularly useful since I had been trained in its special duties at the Military Institute. The Regiment then was rather an anomalous organization including all the commands in the city excepting the Hussars. The Guards and the Chatham Artillery both belonged to it so that it was really more of a Legion than a Regiment until it went regularly into the Confederate Service when it was put upon the proper basis
of ten infantry companies. For several months the duties were more or less perfunctory. I took part in two or three public parades, transmitted whatever orders the Colonel wished to give, kept the roster of the companies that were detailed for "fire duty," and attended several balls and parties in a handsome staff uniform that I was very proud of. But on the 2nd day of January 1861 this holiday business came to an end. I was at my desk in the counting room busily occupied with commercial affairs, when a note was brought to me from Col Lawton requiring my "immediate" presence at his office. Obeying the command at once I found the Colonel in earnest consultation with Governor Joseph E Brown. A moment after the latter left the room saying "Colonel I have determined upon the step and you will carry it into execution," (or words to that effect.) The Governor feared that Fort Pulaski at the mouth of the Savannah River might be seized by United States troops as Fort Sumter had been occupied in Charleston harbor and he had arrived at the conclusion to forestall such action by promptly taking possession with Georgia soldiers.\footnote{See his "Fort Pulaski," in \textit{Georgia Historical Quarterly} (1917), I, 98-105.}

A number of gentlemen were waiting upon Col Lawton among them Capt John W Anderson of the "Blues," Capt John Screven of the "Guards," Capt Joseph Claghorn of the Chatham Artillery, Capt Francis Bartow of the "Oglethorpes," Mr Prioleau Hamilton and several others whom I did not know. These all stood around conversing in low tones, with grave and serious faces, for indeed it was a momentous step without precedent and one that might very justly have been called "rebellion." The State of Georgia had not seceded as yet, was still an integral part of the Union, and was about to take violent possession of property that unquestionably belonged to the United States. Still under all the circumstances it was a justifiable act and I never heard its wisdom doubted by either Northern or Southern writers.

Col Lawton sat at his desk and formulated at once the rough draft of an order for an extraordinary force of three companies, the Artillery, the Guards and the Oglethorpes, to proceed at an early hour on the following morning by steamer to Fort Pulaski, to seize that work. This draft he handed to me to put in shape and distribute to the commands interested, which I did without delay, then returned to the counting room, handed over my books and papers to the firm and began the life of real soldiering.

Your Mother and I, as you have heard, were then living in the little Jones Street house very happily and cosily. When I brought
the news home to her that day she seemed to realize far more than
myself what it meant to us individually. I think she felt from the
first a prophetic sense of the trials and sacrifices that were before us,
but she said not a word that was not sympathetic and encouraging
and at once began the necessary preparations for my departure the
next morning. How many families like ours there must have been in
the old town that night, where husbands and sons and brothers were
elated by a joyous sense of adventure, while wives and mothers and
sisters hid in their hearts the dim foreshadowings of sorrow and dis-
aster.

With the dawn the air was filled with the sound of martial music
and by eight o'clock the commands that had been designated for the
service were down at the wharf ready to embark on the little steamer
"Ida" that was to take them to the Fort. Col Lawton was there in
person and of course the Adjutant had to be with him. We started
down the river receiving the salutes from every craft we passed
while the balconies of the various stores and counting rooms over-
looking the water were filled with people waving their handkerchiefs
and cheering. What a morning it was for all of us; how full of an
exhilaration that I have rarely felt since. Yet as I look back upon it
two very opposite emotions are awakened. One, of amusement at the
enormous amount of baggage that our little force carried along; the
other a deep sadness as I remember how many of the gallant young
fellows who gloried in their manhood on that brilliant winter morn-
ing were so soon to lay down their lives on the field of battle.
Fortunate, indeed, it is for us all that the future is a sealed book
into which we may not look. We reached Cockspur Island in due
time, the little battalion was formed upon the North Wharf and then
with drums beating colors flying and hearts swelling we marched
over the drawbridge, under the portcullis and into the Fort. I can
shut my eyes and see it all now, the proud step of officers and men,
the colors snapping in the strong breeze from the ocean; the bright
sunlight of the parade as we emerged from the shadow of the arch-
way; the first glimpse of a gun through an open casemate door; one
and all they were photographed on my mind and will never be for-
gotten. Once as a little boy I had been with father on an afternoon
excursion down to the Fort and my imagination had been strongly
impressed by all that I saw there. Now, as I marched in, that long
ago visit came back to me and I found myself wondering if it pos-
sibly be true that I was there as an officer of the garrison to defend
it against all comers. But there was little time to indulge in reflection.
My duties as Chief of Staff began immediately and were the more
arduous because of the fact that, with the exception of one or two
old Cadets from the Military Institute, none of the officers nor men were familiar with the routine duties of garrison life. We soon settled down into them however; the men were assigned to quarters in the casemates; officers chose their rooms according to date of commission; guards were mounted; police squads detailed; the cooking squads installed in the kitchens &c &c so that in a day or two order emerged from chaos and we began to look around upon our capacity for defence.

The armament of the Fort then consisted of only twenty 32 Pounders, long naval guns mounted on cast iron carriages and all in the casemates. On the ramparts there were platforms for barbette guns but no guns were there. The 32 Pdrs, their carriages and chassis were stiff and almost unworkable from rust and disuse, there was a small supply of powder in the magazines and a fairly good number of solid shot but no shells. One company of the garrison had some knowledge of light artillery service, but none had experience with heavy guns. I incline on the whole to the belief that if a vigorous attack had been made upon the Fort by the U S Navy at any time within the first month of our occupation it could not have been successfully resisted. But in that month neither the garrison nor the State authorities were idle—the guns were put in first class order and the men habituated to their use, the magazines were replenished and strenuous effort put forth for the casting of new and heavier guns to increase the armament.

As time went on the original garrison was replaced by other troops until all the companies of the Regiment had gained experience in what was required of them.

I did not remain at the Fort continuously but would go up to the city from time to keep "encourant" with what was going on there. On one of these visits I attended the first secession meeting that was held in Georgia. It assembled in old Masonic Hall on the corner of Bull and Broughton Streets but the Hall though packed to its ultimate capacity did not hold a tithe of the people who had gathered for the occasion—the streets around were filled with cheering thousands; brass bands were playing, rockets soaring, bonfires blazing; in fact the old town seemed to have gone crazy. Strong Secession resolutions had been prepared which were supported by Gen Henry R Jackson, Capt Francis S Bartow, Col Tom Foreman, (the father of Mrs Robt Wayne) and others in impassioned speeches that made the people wild. The culminating point of the evening however was when the venerable Judge William Law rose to speak. He was known not only as a man of pure and stainless life, but also as one of great ability, absolutely conservative in temperament and with calm judicious mind
that could not be thrown off its balance by clamor or prejudice. As he came forward on the platform intense silence reigned in the Hall. Other speakers had been received with loud acclamations but the seriousness of the moment hushed all these now, for it was felt the decisive time had arrived and that upon the utterances of this man depended whether or not the voice of Savannah should call upon the State to withdraw from the Union. Quietly and without attempt at oratorical effect the old Judge reviewed the political situation in all its bearings; he summed up the dangers that would arise from the contemplated action, and on the other hand the wrongs and loss of liberty to which the South was exposed by existing conditions were fully portrayed. Warming with this branch of the subject he closed by declaring that a free people should not sit passively while their rights were being trampled upon. “Therefore,” he cried, “Therefore, I give to these resolutions my hearty endorsement.” Then came pandemonium—a wild roar went up from every voice in the hall, and its echo came back from the street as men called from the windows “Judge Law has endorsed the Resolutions.” There seemed no end to the excited expression of deep feeling; it went on as though it would never stop. Men shouted until breath was gone, and hugged each other with passionate embraces while upon many faces tears ran down of which the shedders were apparently unconscious. I am not exaggerating but telling of what I saw and heard in what was probably the most thrilling gathering in my life’s experience.

When quiet was finally restored the Resolutions were adopted without a dissenting voice, and were read from the balcony to the people in the street by your Uncle Charlie Way, who was Secretary of the meetings. This, as has been said, was the first Secession meeting; its action was published far and wide and I have little doubt that its influence upon the movements of the other states was very great. Soon after this the Ordinance of Secession was formally passed by the State of Georgia. One of the first steps taken by the Legislature was the organization of two regular Regiments, one of which your Uncle Charles J Williams was Colonel. This Command relieved the Volunteer Regiment of the duty of occupying Fort Pulaski and Tybee Island until later in the summer when it was ordered to Virginia, and the 1st Vol Regt again took charge of both posts as well as of Thunderbolt, Fort Jackson and Green Island. Meanwhile the Regiment was preparing for service in the war. Col Lawton had been made a Brigadier General and Col Hugh Mercer became Colonel; W S Rockwell was made Lieut Col and C H Olmstead Major. This was a
very decided promotion for me and beyond question I owed it to the opportunity that the seizure of Fort Pulaski gave me for becoming known to the officers.

My first service as a Confederate Officer was at Fort Pulaski to which post I went as second in command to Col Hugh Mercer in the Spring of 1861. The life there was monotonous with little to do save to study Heavy Artillery books and Army Regulations, to drill the men at the guns and to perfect them in Infantry tactics. The higher officers had likewise to pay close attention to matters pertaining to hygiene, the proper preparation of food and the disposal of garbage, regard to scrupulous cleanliness in the quarters of the men and to their regularity in bathing &c &c.

Matters like this may sound strangely to you as a part of an officer's duty but looking after them most closely at a Mixed Post where a large number of men herd together in narrow quarters, is absolutely essential to the preservation of health. Even where troops are out in the open, attention to such details is of the utmost importance, indispensible in fact; the efficiency of a command depends upon them to a degree you can scarcely imagine. At the Fort Col Mercer made them my special charge and it pleases me to remember that all through that summer we had no sickness to speak of.

Every morning there was an inspection of the quarters of each Company by its Captain, but on Sundays the Colonel with his staff in full uniform took a hand at the business. The battalion was formed on the parade and condition of every man carefully looked into, his person, his clothing and his arms. Then they would be dismissed to the Casemates to await inspection of quarters while the Colonel started on an entire round of the Fort beginning with the Quarter-Master, Commissary and Ordnance departments, the Hospital and the Company kitchens. At that time our cooks were all Negroes and it goes without saying that strong measures had to be used to keep them up to the mark. If a kitchen did not meet the requirements of Authority the Cook was promptly laid over a brass drum and a good paddling administered with a shingle while his associates stood grinning around. The efficaciousness of this plan is shown by the fact that it had to be resorted to only twice that I can remember; it broke no bones but ensured clean kitchens. I recommend the method to housekeepers with inefficient or careless servants.

The river was free all that summer and autumn so there was no difficulty in the way of getting food supply in plenty from the
city. Our water was from cement lined cisterns deep down in the
foundations of the Fort; they were supplied by the rain that fell
upon the parapets and filtered through to the valleys between the
Casemate arches and thence by pipes to the cisterns; it was very pure
and sweet never occasioning any sickness that I was aware of.
Consideration of the question of adding to this supply came perilously
near causing the loss of my life. Immediately in front of the officers
quarters was a long colonnade the roof of which was covered with
metal, and from this leaders ran down some of the columns to dis-
charge rain water onto the parade. One afternoon during a heavy
downpour the Colonel and I were sitting in this colonnade discussing
the subject of increasing the flow to the cisterns as we watched the
countless gallons of good water going to waste. He said to me

"We ought to make some arrangements to save that; suppose you
catch a little of it Major and let us see how it tastes." Complying
to his request I stepped into my room picked up a tin dipper and
had nearly gotten to the door when an undefinable impulse made me
turn back, go to the washstand again, put down the dipper and take
up a glass tumbler instead. I call it an "impulse" for there was no
thought about it; it was just as though some power had guided me
without volition of my own - as I reverently believe to have been
the case. At all events, the act saved my life. As I stopped to catch
in the glass some of the water pouring from the leader, a terrific
stroke of lightning shattered the flagstaff on the parapet above into
a thousand fragments, then made its way to the tin roof and down
the leader tearing up the ground within a foot or two of my body;
had metal been in my hand instead of non-conducting glass I should
certainly have been killed. The shock was very great, depriving me
of consciousness for a while. On coming to I found myself lying
upon the pavement some ten feet from where I had been standing
but whether thrown there or whether I jumped and fell is more
than I can say. A severe stomach trouble came upon me instantly
and kept me in bed for three or four days but there were no other
ill results.

The First Georgia Regulars of which your Uncle Charles J Williams
was Colonel, was stationed on Tybee Island that summer and I went
down one day to see him; the last time we ever met. My very dear
friend, John Patton, was a Captain in that Regiment and him also
I saw no more; he was killed at South Mountain Maryland in the
following year. When the Regulars went to Virginia, Tybee was
garrisoned by Companies from our own Regiment. On one occasion
I was sent to take a Company of the Guards to relieve the Phoenix
Riflemen who had been on duty there for some little time. We went down in an old steam lighter that used to ply about the harbor, the "Robert Habersham," a craft whose engines were pretty well worn out. She was of what we used to call "the wheelbarrow pattern" with one big paddle wheel at the stern; about as cumbrous and slow a boat as could be found. There was no wharf at Tybee so the steamer was anchored out in the Roads and the men were rowed ashore in a small boat a few at a time. This took quite a while but the Guards were all safely landed. Meantime however the afternoon had slipped away and when the Riflemen were ready to embark night was falling. The tide was running out like a millrace and a strong wind blowing in from the ocean caused a heavy sea to rise that made the process of embarkation distinctly dangerous. I went out on one of the first boats reaching the steamer in safety, as did two or more boat loads besides. At last there came a boat in which the men were so much alarmed that they lost their heads completely. As they came alongside of the steamer they all sprang to their feet each trying to get on board first. In an instant the little craft careened, filled with water, turned bottom upwards and the men were all struggling in the water. Some were saved by ropes thrown from the steamer, some were drowned before our eyes, and yet others who were good swimmers made for the shore while the boat with one figure clinging to its bottom floated off in the darkness toward the sea. Among the swimmers was a man named Charles Law who was a perfect duck in the water; he had divested himself of his coat and heavy accoutrements and was easily assured of safety for himself when he heard a faint voice calling from the dark in the direction of the boat. "Charlie dont leave me." Without a moments hesitation the gallant fellow turned his face outward once more, swam out where the voice of his friend had called, took place beside him on the bottom of the boat and floated with it in the darkness out to the sea, facing what appeared to be certain death rather than desert a comrade. Meanwhile there were anxious hearts upon the "Habersham" for the prospect of getting her started out on the rescue search in time to save life, appeared slim enough. The anchor was down, steam was low in the boilers the fires nearly out and the old craft at best slow and unwieldy. But willing hands went energetically to work, soon the fires were blazing on the grate-bars, the gauge marked rising steam, the anchor was lifted, and in a little over half an hour we were under headway pointed for the ocean. It was black dark and progress necessarily slow and careful for there were no lights or beacons to guide the mariner on the Southern coast at that time. Moreover we
could not go too far out because of the danger of being captured by blockading vessels beyond the bar. The keenest lookout failed to discover any sign of the missing men and we were upon the point of abandoning the search when the moon arose and cast a broad beam of light over the surface of the sea. Right in that shining track a black speck was visible which, as we approached it, proved to be the boat with the two men clinging [to] it. A cherry answer came from Law as the two were hailed, but the other man (whose name I have forgotten) was silent, almost exhausted by his long immersion in the water. He was of frail physique, unable to swim, and but for the comforting and helpful companionship of his friend would certainly have perished long before we could reach him. In a few minutes both were lifted on board and taken to the warmth of the engine room and we made our way back to the anchorage.

I have always thought this incident unsurpassed as an exhibition of unselfish and uncalculating bravery and I am glad that it fell to my lot to witness it. Mr Joe Solomons the druggist was on board the Habersham with me at the time; it would be interesting to know if he remembers these details as vividly as I do. For half a mile, as the boat floated out, her course was parallel to Tybee beach and at any point in that distance Law could easily have swum to shore had he chosen to consult personal safety rather than the promptings of his own brave and generous heart, but it was a case of "noblesse oblige"—a nobility imparted by God which he could not betray. I asked him as he sat by the furnace fire drying his clothes, "Law, did you not know that if you passed Tybee Point there was no hope for you?" "Yes Major," the gallant fellow replied. "I knew that we were as good as dead men if we went by there, but I couldn't leave the old chap." And so he remained cheering, sustaining, helping, until when hope had vanished relief came.

Shortly after this I went to command the Post at Tybee Island and remained there two or three months. Your Uncle Charlie Way was stationed there then; he was captain of a battery of Mountain Artillery that it was thought might be useful in repelling boat attacks. I cannot recall the regular name of the organisation but it was known on the Island as "The Jackass Artillery"—a soubriquet that was bitterly resented though vainly so.

Tybee was my first independent command and I carried to it an anxious heart for it was an extreme outpost and news was rumored all through the summer that an expeditionary force was being formed at the North to attack some point on the Georgia or South Carolina coast. The garrison consisted of only a few companies and
we had but two or three heavy guns in position near the old Martello Tower at the Point. The men were camped close by and pickets were kept up along the whole length of the beach down to the Southern end of the Island. I used to ride that beach at every hour of the night and I do not know that I have ever felt more lonely than in the performance of that duty. The pickets were about a mile apart and as I rode from one to the other in the black night, with the bare sand dunes on one hand and the rolling waves of the ocean upon the other I seemed to be the only person in the Universe. It was necessary however to let the men see that they were under supervision. There were other nocturnal visitors to the beach besides myself—the men of your Uncle's Company captured one night a huge turtle weighing something like two hundred pounds that had come out of the sea to lay her eggs in the sand. Of course we all had turtle soup and turtle steaks galore but the meat was coarse and oily, not comparable to that of the smaller species.

In the early autumn Col Mercer was appointed a Brigadier General by the Confederate Government and put in charge of the Military District of Georgia while I succeeded him in command of Fort Pulaski.

Not long after this change we heard from the Northern expedition, which attacked Port Royal on the Carolina coast the first harbor north of the Savannah River. The firing was very heavy; we could hear it very distinctly as it went on for hours and there was high hope that the fleet would be repulsed but the Confederates were driven from their batteries with a heavy loss in killed and wounded the remnant of the garrison retreating to the other end of Hilton Head Island where they were taken on board steam boats and carried up to Savannah. Port Royal was then held by the enemy until the end of the war and became a centre from which many expeditions went out to harass the Georgia and Carolina coasts.

The loss of Port Royal convinced the Confederate Authorities of the uselessness of attempting to hold an isolated Island like Tybee with the force at their command, against such a naval force as would probably soon be sent against it. Accordingly it was determined to evacuate the Post and the danger seemed so pressing that the withdrawal was made with something like precipitancy, the heavy guns not being removed or made useless in any way. After waiting a few days and seeing no signs of an advance of the enemy an expedition was sent down from the fort, the guns were dismantled, loaded on a barge and successfully brought up as an addition to our own armament. Not very long after this was done two or three vessels appeared
off Tybee Point convoying transports loaded with troops some of whom we could see with our glasses disembarked upon the Island. I was anxious that the tall lighthouse should not be used by the Yankees as a point of observation, also that a house that stood at Lazaretto Creek, on the Western end of the Island, should not serve as a blind for operations against the Fort. That night therefore I sent Captain J B Read of the Irish Volunteers with a squad of his men over to destroy both of these buildings by fire. He did the work faithfully and well; after he had been gone about an hour we saw flames bursting from the summit of the lighthouse and its narrow windows. At once the gun boats opened fire and began shelling the woods, causing us considerable uneasiness for the safety of the gallant Captain and his men, but ere many minutes had passed the King house at Lazaretto began to burn also and in a short while after the little party returned, muddy, smoky and very tired, but safe. This expedition called for considerable nerve on the part of Captain Read as he could not tell at what moment he might find himself in the very middle of the enemy. Had he been discovered nothing could have saved his party from capture or death. We were disappointed about the lighthouse however, for although the fire entirely destroyed all the wood work of the interior the solid brick shaft was left standing like a chimney and in two weeks or so the enemy had rebuilt the stairway and established a signal station at the top.12

12. In this connection the following exchange of letters from the files of the Georgia Historical Society is of interest.

San Diego, Cal.
Aug. 25, 1921

Georgia Historical Society,
Savannah, Georgia.

Please inform me where and under what circumstance was the first U. S. flag raised on the State of Georgia in the Civil War.

The writer was one of the boat crews that landed on Tybee Island from the U. S. S. Augusta Sunday, Nov. 25th 1861. When I got to lighthouse I found there was a flag-staff but no hallards. I thought it would be fine to have a flag, and returned to the beach and got my boat flag and raised it on Tybee Light-house.

Commander E. G. Parrott brother of the maker [of the] Parrott gun comm[and]ed the "Augusta" and Commander Drayton brother of the Gen. Drayton who commanded at Hilton Head were present on this occasion.

I have reason to remember this incident when I returned on board at sundown was put in double irons for 10 days for doing the little trick without orders.

Respectfully,
Francis McCarten
520 25th St.

Late
U. S. S. Navy
Charles H. Olmstead as Colonel of the Regiment
(Courtesy of Alexander A. Lawrence)
In thinking over what has been written I find my memory much at fault as to dates, and there are no records at hand for me to refer to. Of the exact time when Col Mercer was made a General I am in doubt, but I believe it was in December 1861 that the Regiment elected me to Colonel and my commission was sent me. You have the document framed with my Adjutants and Majors commissions. This advance gave me two steps at once skipping the Lieutenant Colonelcy, in which office W S Rockwell remained. Edward Lawton had been the Adjutant of Col Mercer. He was a younger brother of Gen A. R. Lawton's and one of the most companionable, genial men I was ever thrown with. He was almost womanly in the gentle refinement of his nature yet at the same time he possessed strong will power and resolution as was shown in his short career afterward as Adjutant General of his brothers brigade in Virginia. He shared my quarters at the Fort and a warm friendship sprang up between us which ended only with his death at the battle of Fredericksburg. No finer spirit than his yielded up life on that bloody field. The vacancy occasioned by the promotion of Edward Lawton I filled by the appointment of my dear old friend Matthew H Hopkins to the adjutancy. At that time he was an officer of the Guards, stationed

(Copy) in hand of C. H. Olmstead
Savannah, Georgia
Aug. 31, 1921
305 Gwnnett St East

Mr. Francis McCarten,
520 25th Street,
San Diego, Cal.
Dear Sir:-

Mr. Otis Ashmore, the Secretary of the Georgia Historical Society, has handed me your letter of the 25th inst.

I am specially interested in your account of the placing of a U. S. flag on Tybee Light-house, on Nov. 25th 1861, for the reason that at that time I was in command of Fort Pulaski and watched from its ramparts, with natural anxiety, the landing of a party on the Island from a Federal gun boat and the subsequent flying of a flag from the light-house.

The incident is clearly in my memory, though it happened nearly sixty years ago, but I can not recall the exact date, beyond the fact that it was in November 1861, and shortly after a Confederate garrison had been withdrawn from Tybee.

It seems highly probable to my mind that you are correct in supposing this was the first U. S. flag erected in Georgia during the Civil War, though I cannot speak with certainty. The actual taking possession of Tybee did not take place until some time later.

Trusting that the world has used you well through all these long years.

Very cordially yours,
Chas. H. Olmstead,
Formerly Colonel
1st Vol. Reg. of Georgia.

89
on Green Island, but he accepted the position, came to me at once and from that time until the end of the war we were never separated except for a month or so in the Spring of 1864. No man had truer, more loyal friend or stauncher comrade in every vicissitude through which we passed. All memories of army life are associated with him and the tie between us, which was strong before, knit our souls together indissolubly. The other staff officers at the Fort were Capt Robert Erwin Quarter Master, Capt R. D Walker, Commissary and Theodore McFarland Surgeon. The company Captains were Jack McMahon, F W Sims, Lawrence J Guilmartin J. H. Stegin and M J McMullen. The latter did not belong to the Regiment but volunteered to bring his Company, (the Wise Guards, raised near Oglethorpe Ga.) as a reinforcement when the occupation of Tybee by the enemy made it tolerably sure that we were to be attacked. Then the Quarter Master and Commissary Clerks were Edward Hopkins (Matthews eldest brother) and Ned Drummond. Major John Foley was the second in command. I give all these names that you may know who were some of the men who stood by me in the hard trial that was soon to come upon us. I would like my daughters to remember them.

In the autumn of 1861, Genl Robert E. Lee was in command of the Military District of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. He had not then attained the great fame that came to him afterward, yet his reputation as a brilliant soldier in the Mexican War led men to expect large things from him. All over the South he was considered the rising man. He came one day to inspect Fort Pulaski with a number of Army and Navy men as a staff. I was curious to meet him having heard much of his personality from members of the Stiles and Mackay families with whom he had been associated from his early Cadet days. He was escorted by a Company from the wharf to the Fort and I met him at the Sallyport to do the honors of the occasion. He would have been recognized any where in the world as a man of mark, one upon whom Nature had set the stamp of greatness. Tall in stature, straight as an arrow, well knit and vigorous in frame yet graceful and easy in movement, a well shaped head just beginning to be touched with gray, and a face in which kindliness and sweetness of temper blended with firmness of purpose and a dignified and grave reserve; he met my highest conception of ideal manhood. The impression made upon my mind at the time has been confirmed in every statement concerning General Lee's personality that I have since read. A great and good man if God ever made one. He made a careful inspection of the Fort, gave many instructions as to increasing the protection for the garrison
in the event of a bombardment, and in leaving said to me “They” (the enemy) “will make it pretty hot for you with shells, but they cannot breach your walls at that distance.” I have remembered his words particularly because of subsequent events which proved how mistaken they were. The nearest point of Tybee Island was a little over seventeen hundred yards, something under a mile; while at that time all military writers coincided in stating 800 yards as the greatest distance at which walls of good masonry could be breached by artillery. But for the first time a fortification was to be subjected to the power of rifled guns, a new force the power of which was as yet unknown. The orders of General Lee contemplated the formation of heavy blindages of ranging timber around the entire circuit of the fort to guard the casemate doors from fragments of shells, the digging of ditches and pits in the parade to catch rolling projectiles and the building of sundry traverses, (or mounds of earth) upon the parapet to check a flanking fire. All of these instructions were faithfully carried out and they gave unceasing labor to the small garrison until the very hour that the bombardment began. Large rafts of heavy timber were floated down to us by way of the South channel of the river and were brought close up to the Fort by the canal which supplied the moat with water. Then the great logs would be dragged out upon the bank, slung to the sling carts and trotted into the fort by twenty or thirty men at the ropes, there to be put in proper shape for the blindages. It was a busy time for all of us—every man was at work from early morning until night fall at the hardest kind of labor. No one was excused except the sick and the guard. Some were bringing in the timber, some digging the ditches others building runways to the parapet for the wheel barrows to ascend with the earth for the traverses, others again digging that earth outside of the fort, and yet others bricking up certain embrasures through which it was thought stray shells might reach our Ordnance room and magazine. A ship had been sunk in the river just above us by the Confederate Authorities to block the channel; she was resting on the bottom with her two upper decks out of the water and I went out to her to see if some of the wreckage might not be used in the defence. Organising a force for the purpose I brought away all the spars that could be handled and all the loose chains we could find. The former were placed along the inner side of the parapet wall to throw down upon scaling ladders and the chains were cut into small pieces and packed into bags attached to wooden sabots to be used in lieu of grape and canister shot, of which there were none among our supplies. These latter precautions were
to provide against a possible attack by a storming column. Aside from the necessity of every preparation to meet what was coming and the obligations upon me as a commanding officer, all this bustle and work was very congenial to me and, I believe, to all the officers and men of the garrison. I would lie awake at night planning out what was to be done on the following day and had ever the consciousness that the best that was in me was being given. Looking back upon it all it is difficult for me to realize that I was then not quite twenty five years old, only three years past my grandson's present age, but responsibilities were put upon us early in those stirring times. Moreover the work that I was doing was simply the carrying into practice the things I had always been fond of studying and reading about; it was the natural bent of my mind.

In the month of January 1862 as the enemy seemed tolerably quiet on Tybee, I came up to the city by Gen Lawton's permission, to be with your Mother at the time of Sallies birth but when that dear baby was only two days old word came to me from the General that there were signs of some movement on the part of the enemy and accordingly I took the first boat to the Fort on the following morning. Most fortunate it was that this action was so prompt for that was the last uninterrupted trip of the little steamer 'Ida.' On the very next day as she was making her way down the South Channel of the river she was fired upon many times by a battery which the enemy had succeeded in erecting on the Marsh at Venus Point on the South Carolina shore. Two or three gun boats had also made their way into New River a shallow water course on the Carolina side and these joined in the attack on the "Ida." The firing was heavy and brought us all to the walls of the Fort from whence we looked with grave concern upon the cockle shell of a steamer as she came flying down the river with shot and shell churning up the water around her. Happily her Captain (old Capt Circopeley), had chosen the South Channel that morning and a broad expanse of marsh lay between him and the enemy. Moreover the tide was low so the body of the steamer was hidden from the men at the guns and their aim was imperfect. At all events not a shot struck her and she arrived at the wharf of Cockspur Island in safety, much to the satisfaction of all on board.

It looked as though the "Ida" were booked to share the fortunes of the Fort, for it would have been madness to attempt the return to the city by the way she had come; but old Circopeley was thoroughly familiar with all the creeks and inlets in that quarter

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and had mapped out a course for himself. Just below Fort Pulaski Lazaretto Creek runs into Savannah River. It is the stream that makes Tybee an island and its upper part connects by narrow channels, navigable at high water for vessels of light draught, with St. Augustine Creek which, in its turn, empties into the Savannah at a point considerably above the location of the enemy's battery. By this circuitous route Captain Circopeley determined to attempt escape and made his arrangements to start at an early hour on the following morning when a high spring tide filled all the water courses to the brim. Soon after sunrise the old man started from the South wharf with a full head of steam in the boilers and the engine putting in its best work, (indeed it makes me smile now to remember how that walking beam moved; there was a celerity about it that we who had been going up and down the river in the old boat for many months had never observed before.)

To enter Lazaretto it was necessary to go far below its mouth in order to turn a sand spit that lay there, and to those of the garrison who were watching from the walls it appeared as though the "Ida" were heading straight for the Federal ships off Tybee Point. With our glasses we noted a commotion on these vessels; it was an anxious moment, for there was every reason to expect that the little Confederate steamer would be riddled by the fire of the ships before she could make the turn into the creek; she was fairly in range of their guns. I have never quite understood why the enemy did not open fire, but at all events they did not; possibly the audacity of Circopeley's action took them by surprise and they were unable to make out what he was after. We stood with hearts in our mouths as the little boat went nearer and nearer the guns that might destroy her by a single shot. Straight as an arrow she kept her course toward them, then there was a sudden turn, at right angles it seemed, a burst of speed, and in two minutes the Ida was safely in Lazaretto, hidden from the fleet and well on her way to safety. None but a brave and determined man could have managed that escape and that Capt Circopeley did it gave him the right to be so considered. He was a fine old fellow for whose memory I cherish a warm regard. In youth he had been coxswain of the barge that carried the young Lieutenant of Engineers, Robt E Lee, between the city and Fort Pulaski when that work was being built. On the day that General Lee visited us and was on his way up from the wharf, the Captain told me afterward, he took his stand by the outer bridge that gave access to the demi-lune, and stood there at the attention with his right hand raised in salute. The little procession was about to cross the bridge when
General Lee saw him and came forward with both hands extended, a bright smile on his face and the exclamation "Why Francis! Is that you?" "Just like I was one of his best friends" said the old Captain. "You will tell it to your children," I remarked. "Yes," was the reply. "And to my gr-r-r-and children too." It was a little incident but one that showed the native kindliness of our great leader.

We were now definitely cut off, an isolated post, having no communication with the city except for an occasional messenger who would slip through the passageways of the marshes at night to bring us a mail. One of these couriers brought me the news of your Mother's extreme illness and of the death of your Uncle Charles Williams. You can easily imagine how this added to the burden that was upon me.

The question of food supply began to loom up as a very important one in the near future, but it soon found satisfactory solution. One morning there was the sound of heavy firing up the river—old Commodore Tattnall with his "mosquito" fleet had engaged the battery at Venus Point and the gun boats in New River, while one of his boats under Captain Kennard dashed straight down for the Fort. A barge load of supplies was lashed on either side, both of which were brought safely to us removing one source of anxiety. Kennard had to return at a slower rate than he came down for the tide was against him and fight his way up. I have heard since that this steamer was struck several times, but we were too far off to see clearly. His action all through that day required resolution and quiet courage qualities that he exhibited in a marked degree. I have always felt grateful to him for the help he gave at great hazard to himself and his officers and crew.

For the next two months we were literally left to our own devices and had nothing to do but to get ready, to the best of our ability for the struggle that was rapidly drawing near. The usual drills could not be held with the parade ground torn up by ditches and pits but there was work enough to keep us all hustling from morning until night. In the evening the officers would assemble together to discuss the situation while enjoying a quiet smoke and there were many theories advanced as to how and when relief and reinforcements might reach us from the Confederate Authorities; it was generally felt however that we were permanently blockaded. These meetings had nothing gloomy about them though; jest and song ran all through them. In imagination I can yet hear Charles Umbach's fine voice trolling out 'Bonnie Eloise' or old Capt John McMahon giving us "The Cruskeen Lawn," that jolly Irish song
of long ago, or perhaps Bill Sims in some rollicking song with a lively chorus in which all would join most heartily. On one occasion as we were thus assembled and expressing our several opinions, a squeaking little voice broke in upon the conversation with the memorable words "If Gin'ral Lawton or some other gentleman would only build a plank road—" that was as far as the speaker got for he was promptly squelched. I suppose, though, the "plank road" was to be built across the broad marshes and rivers that separated us from the main road. It was a little Irishman that had broken in upon us, a man named Wallace, a private in Captain Guilmartins Company, who had drawn near to hear what was going on and thought he would add his mite to the discussion of ways and means. Wallace was a very funny fellow at all times, not intentionally nor consciously so to himself, but to those who heard the quaint twist in his ideas and language. He had charge of a brass field piece in the demi-lune and took great pride in polishing it until it shone like a mirror. I said to him one day "Wallace, you keep your gun in fine order." "An' well I might yer honor, for me fither was a bombardier." From which you will see that there is something in heredity.

All through the months of February and March we saw little or nothing of the enemy at the end of Tybee Island nearest the Fort. Occasionally one or two men might be seen strolling along the beach but during the day time there was no sign of any work going on. At night, however, the picket at the South Wharf could hear noises near Lazaretto that indicated considerable activity in that direction and we now know that the enemy were building, behind the sand dunes, the batteries that subsequently breached our walls. I did not open fire upon them for the reason that there was nothing to be seen to fire at even in the daylight; and it seemed to me a waste of ammunition that could not possibly be replaced, in our isolated position, to shoot out into the black darkness on the chance of inflicting damage on men who were working a mile away behind a natural parapet such as the sand dunes afforded. Yet I have always regretted this decision. We could not have prevented the construction of the batteries, for their erection under the conditions that existed was an easy task to any trained engineer officer, as the history of all sieges of fortifications sufficiently demonstrates. At most we might have earned a few days delay, but I wish that it had been done though it could have had no effect upon the final result.

One Sunday afternoon three of the "boys in blue" came down to Kings Point and standing on the ruins of the house that had been burned there made defiant and indecent gestures toward the Fort.

95
I wanted to get the elevation of our 32 Pounders for that particular spot, and accordingly had one of the guns trailed upon the group, but without the slightest thought that there would be anything more than a scare for the men. But the shot hit the middle man and probably tore him to pieces. Through my glasses I could see the two others crawling up to the body on hands and knees, and then getting up and running away as fast as their legs could take them. It was a very extraordinary shot; the probability of its being made again with a smooth bore gun at that distance, (a few yards short of a mile), is infinitessimally small.

In one of Marryatt’s books he tells of a similar incident when a gun was fired from an English ship at a man walking on the beach, somewhere on the Spanish coast, and cut him in two. Marryatt speaks of it as one of the most remarkable events in his experience with the old-fashioned smooth bore Artillery.

Early on the morning of April 10th a sentinel on [the] rampart reported that a boat from Tybee, bearing a white flag was approaching the South Wharf. It was evident that a summons was on its way from the enemy and I realized at once that the hour had arrived for which we had been waiting for months. Capt F W Sims was sent down to meet the officer who accompanied the flag and he soon returned with a formal document demanding the surrender of Fort Pulaski “to avoid the effusion of blood” that would follow my refusal. The letter stated that in the event of non compliance with the demand the enemy’s batteries would open fire upon us in half an hour. You may well imagine that it was a busy half hour for us; the assembly was beat and the men posted at the guns, ammunition was served, the magazine squads sent to their positions, the surgeon and his helpers made ready for the wounded &c &c &c

Punctually at the expiration of the time limit the first gun of the enemy was fired, its shell bursting high in the air above us, and this gave us the first intimation of the exact location of the battery of rifled cannon that was to prove our ruin. The response from the Fort was immediate our first shot being fired from a 32 Pdr under the command of Lieut Henry Freeman of the Oglethorpe Light Infantry, Co B (an elder brother of Mr George Freeman). Soon the firing spread up all along the shore of Tybee Island from half a dozen or more batteries that had been masked up to the moment they opened, batteries that mounted 13 inch mortars, 10 inch Columbiads and 6 inch rifled guns. From these last came Parrott shells and a peculiar form of shot called the “James projectile.” The power of these two to cut into and destroy masonry very soon became
alarmingly apparent. In the very first hour of the firing I saw the bricks under one of the embrasures bulged inward by a shot that struck the outer wall while it was yet intact; a very disquieting fact to one who understood its significance. One after another during the day our guns were dismounted, and when night drew near more than half of those that bore upon Tybee Island had ceased to be of use to us. I was near one of the casemate 32 Pdrs when a shell came through the embrasure and burst under the gun letting it down on the chassis like a log. A man named Shaw was handling the sponge staff at the time and was terribly wounded; his right arm was taken off at the elbow, the left arm and one or two ribs broken, the flesh of his body lacerated and his face badly burned by the flame from the shell. I did not think it possible for a man to survive the shock of such injuries yet this man did and was alive, out in Berrien County, many years after the war. When about to leave the fort as a prisoner of war two days after the engagement I went into the hospital to bid adieu to the wounded. Shaw lay there swathed in bandages, his face covered by a cloth. I said, "Shaw old fellow do you know me" "It's the Kunnel," he said. "And how do you feel now" I replied. The answer was astounding under the circumstances—"Right peert." Surely there could be no doubt of the recovery of a man who could say that. Recover he did, as has been said, and when, after an exchange, the Regiment was reorganized for service he enlisted again and did duty as an orderly.

But to return to my story. After the firing had slackened about twilight Adjutant Hopkins and I made the detour of the Fort outside to inspect its condition. I think we were both overwhelmed by what we saw and that from that moment neither of us expected any other result than that which came. The outer wall of the Casemate at the South East Angle was entirely shot away revealing the whole interior; the two casemates on either side were so nearly in the same condition that evidently a few hours firing would complete their destruction; the parapet wall above the breech was gone and one of our 8 inch Columbiads with its muzzle shot off hung trembling on the verge as if about to be precipitated into the moat. The most alarming part of the situation was that the projectiles that had wrought this ruin now had more or less free access in a straight line to the traverse that protected our magazine in the North West Angle.

I cannot remember that Uncle Matt and I said much to each other as we looked at what one days work of rifled guns had done for us. Probably we each tried to keep up a stout heart and thought the less we talked about the matter the better. All through the night a desul-
tory fire was kept up by the enemy, as they afterward declared "to keep the garrison from sleeping," but I think our men were too tired to be kept awake by a little thing like that, though individually I needed nothing to banish sleep from my eyes. It seemed to me that daylight would never come and that I heard the explosion of every shell. It was a heavy burden of responsibility for a young man.

Long before sunrise the roar of Artillery and the crash of falling masonry began again and continued without intermission, but our power to reply became rapidly less. Only three of the parapet guns that bore upon Tybee could be used, and of these only one, a 24 Pdr Blakely bore upon the particular battery that was working us the most harm, and the same state of affairs existed in the casemates. During the morning I started with the Adjutant to examine the breach from the interior. I was walking a little in advance of him when a shell struck the cheek of an embrasure behind me and I turned to see him stumbling and falling in the midst of flying bricks, powder smoke and mortar dust. It was a bitter moment for I thought he was killed, but he rose to his feet, to my great joy, before I could reach him. A fragment of brick had entered his eye and he thought the sight had gone from it forever. Fortunately such was not the case though I believe that the sight of that eye has been impaired all his life, the scar is there to this day.

About two o'clock in the afternoon of this second day I heard a commotion in the casemates at some distance from me and sent Capt Guilmartin to ascertain the cause. He returned with the report that a shell had exploded in the passage way to the North West Magazine filling the magazine with smoke and lighting it from the flame of the explosion. The Ordnance squad who was serving there had fled in a panic to the adjoining casemates.

Then there came to me the conviction that we had reached the end, and with anguish of soul that returns to me even now in dreams, I ordered the display of the signal of surrender. We were absolutely isolated, beyond any possibility of help from the Confederate Authorities, and I did not feel warranted in exposing the garrison to the hazard of the blowing up of our main magazine—a danger which had just been proved well within the limits of probability and which might now be sprung upon us at any moment. There are times when a soldier must hold his position "to the last extremity," which means extermination, but this was not one of them, there was no end to be gained by continued resistance. That the Fort could and would be absolutely destroyed by the fire of the enemy was a demonstrated fact and the time in which to do it was theirs
without any interference from outside, while our own power to harm them had been reduced to a minimum. These were the considerations that moved me and turning them over in my mind as I have done a thousand times since, I am still convinced that there was nothing else that could be done. At the same time I knew the general belief in the invulnerability of the Fort and that the actual facts would be long in finding credence in the public mind. This knowledge added to the sharpness of the pain that filled my soul. I can remember feeling that was the end of my career as a soldier, at least as an officer, but that I might yet serve the country in the ranks, if we ever got back from Northern prisons.

When the white flag was waved from the wall of the Fort a boat put out from Tybee. I sent an officer down to meet it and he soon returned accompanied by General Q. A. Gilmore of the Federal Army, a fine looking man who made a great name for himself as an engineer in the siege of Charleston in the following year. The terms of surrender were discussed between us and finally agreed upon and signed by both of us. The garrison was to be protected in the possession of their private baggage and the sick and wounded were to be sent to Savannah. All the rest of us were prisoners of war. I wish here to put on record the fact that the provision for the sick and wounded was flagrantly violated by the Federal Authorities. They were not sent up to Savannah; several of them died at Fort Pulaski as prisoners of war, whose lives might have been spared had they been taken to their homes, while others were sent to prison at the North so soon as their physical condition would admit. When this matter came to my attention some time later I wrote to Mr Stanton, the U S Secretary of War, reciting the terms of the capitulation and demanding the release of these men. Stanton referred my letter to Genl Gilmore who wrote me that he had been called away from the Southern coast and supposed the terms had been carried out in good faith. I replied that they had not been carried out at all, that it was a matter in which his personal honor was concerned and that I looked to him to make the wrong right. There it ended, nothing more came from him and the men remained prisoners until the garrison was exchanged the following autumn. A good many years after the war Capt Carter, who had charge of the work in the Savannah River, said to me that he would like to arrange a meeting between Genl Gilmore and myself but I declined it.

The first Federal troops that came into the Fort were the men of the 7th Connecticut Regiment under command of Col Alfred H Terry with Joseph Hawley as Lieut Colonel. Both of these men
occupied distinguished positions in after life. Terry who had been a lawyer when the war broke out, definitely adopted the profession of arms and became a Major General in the regular army. He commanded in the final assault upon Fort Fisher on the North Carolina coast, and some years after was in charge of the operations against the Indians in the North West in which Gen Custer's command was destroyed. Hawley rose to be a Senator and also Governor of his state. Susie and I met him when we were at Lakeville at the reunion of the 7th in /'88. The officers and men of this Regiment were courteous and kind to our garrison in the two or three days that we remained at the Fort.

There comes to my mind rather a dramatic scene when the Confederate officers were all assembled to give up their swords. We were grouped around a table in the Head Quarters room and one after another laid the swords upon it. Many made remarks as they did this, but I can only remember that of old Captain McMahon, who unbuckled his waist belt and threw it with the sword upon the table saying "Take it! I wore it in Mexico." The Federal officer who presided at this function was, if I recollect aright, Capt Horace Porter, a staff officer at the time, afterwards a General and later still U S Minister to France. He it was, you may remember, who discovered the burial place of Paul Jones our first naval hero and had the body removed to this country. He has been much in New York since my residence in the city and I have often felt that I should like to meet him again, but the opportunity has never offered.

On the afternoon of the second or third day after the bombardment we prisoners were put on the steamer "Ben De Ford," and taken over to Hilton Head, in Port Royal Sound preparatory to being shipped to the North. In the few days that we were there we were in the keeping of the Provost, a Captain Campbell of the 76th Pennsylvania a man of kindly feeling who shared his individual quarters with me. The officer in command at Hilton Head was General Hunter, an uncle, I believe, of Mrs. Willie Gordon. I was sent for to his office one day and my sword returned to me with a complimentary remark.

The necessary arrangements being all completed we were finally put on board the Steamer "Oriental," Captain Tuzo and started for our destination which we found to be Governors Island New York harbor.

The voyage was uneventful, about the only things I remember about it being, first, the Captain's extreme devotion to a number of lady passengers, and, second, a dense fog that we plunged into during
the last night of the trip. This lasted until well along in the morning when it lifted and we found the Steamer going head on for the beach at Long Branch and only a mile or two from the shore. Some two or three weeks after this I read in a New York paper of the loss of the "Oriental" and I have always wondered whether she would have met that fate under a more careful captain. She went ashore and was broken to pieces near Cape Hatteras. Of course though I had no knowledge of Captain Tuzo's seamanship and my judgement of it was doubtless entirely superficial. We were rather harsh critics at that time of everyone who wore the blue, as I have learned since in regard to many other people.

Early in the afternoon of the third day the Steamer reached her wharf in New York and the Confederate prisoners were transferred to a tug to be taken to Governors Island. I shall never forget the hearty manner in which a number of little street Arabs who had gathered on the wharf shouted out "I wish I was in Dixie," while this transfer was being made. It is more amusing to think of now that it was to hear at the time.

Arriving at the Island the officers were carried to barracks inside of Fort Columbus and the enlisted men to Castle Williams. In our quarters we found already domiciled Col Avery of the 33rd North Carolina, and a number of other officers who had been captured with him at New Berne. They were pleasant gentlemen with whom we affiliated readily, each helping to bear the misfortunes of the other; it did not take long to be on the footing of old friends. Col Loomis the Commandant of the Island then, was quite an old man, too old I imagine for field service. He was a martinet in the matter of discipline but none of the Fort Pulaski garrison have the right to think of him other than as a kindly gentleman carrying out the orders that were given him. To our officers he gave the run of the Island, within certain limits, between "reveille" and "retreat," (this last being the sun set parade). So between those hours there was ample opportunity for exercise and fresh air. At retreat we had to go to barracks and remain there. Each of us was given a small soldiers cot and mattrass and we were to mess in the mess rooms of the garrison, a soldiers ration being allowed to each officer. This ration was ample for sustenance but the preparation of it by the garrison cooks left a great deal to be desired. It is quite probable however that we would not have been quite so fastidious later in the war. After a little while some of us made a much more com-
fortable arrangement with some of the soldiers' wives who were 
acting as laundry women for the post. We divided up into little 
messes, a woman looking after each and to her the Commissary 
would issue our rations in bulk. She would cook them and spread 
a table for us adding such things as we would authorize her to 
purchase. Of course we paid for her services though the charge 
was moderate. To many of the officers this plan was not open 
because of lack of funds. Our special mess consisted of Capt Robert 
Erwin, Captain Larry Guilmartin, Edward Hopkins and myself. 
Curiously enough I cannot remember if Uncle Matt was with us or 
not but the probabilities are very strong that he was. Mrs Murphy 
of the Emerald Isle, wife of the Post Tailor, was the lady who took 
us in charge and I am sure most of us longed many times afterward 
for the comfort found under her management.

The Fort Pulaski prisoners were specially fortunate in many mat-
ters. Commercial relations between Savannah and New York had 
been intimate for many years and there [were] few among us who 
had not some friendly correspondent who was ready to respond to 
a request for help. Mr Andrew Low of Savannah, himself then a 
prisoner in Fort Warren Boston harbor, sent me a draft on Liver-
pool for £300 for our joint use—and this at the rate of exchange 
then current netted us between $1500.00 and $1600.00. Cousin Miles 
Olmstead, my Uncle Seth's son, came over to see me one day, as did 
several other of my relatives. He however was the only one who 
was permitted to speak with me as he brought a permit from Wash-
ington. He asked what he could do for me, and it seemed to me 
that I needed nothing more than something to occupy my mind, 
and also facilities for personal cleanliness. Accordingly I asked him 
for a copy of Davies' Descriptive Geometry and a foot tub, both 
of which he very kindly furnished me; they added immensely to 
my comfort. George Betts sent me a chair, and his mother, Aunt 
Bessey, used to send over some home made cakes and crullers every 
now and then. Then we found a friend indeed in Mr A Neely, a 
Southern gentleman who was living in New York. There was no 
end to his kindness to the Fort Pulaski prisoners; his time and his 
money were freely spent to provide for our wants and there was 
no demand made upon him that he did not endeavor to meet. Your 
little Sister Neely14 was named for him, in recognition of his good-
ness. He came to Savannah after the war and nothing pleased him 
more than to have the dear little child sent to see him. It will be seen

14. Florence Neely Olmstead, born 1866; died June 5, 1868, aged 1 year, 
and 8 months.
that there was really nothing to complain of in our imprisonment on Governors Island, beyond the simple fact of being prisoners. I think indeed that we were finally sent elsewhere because there were so many people over in the city taking a special interest in us that it excited unfavorable comment among the "truly loyal".

Among the various devices we adopted for passing the time, was the establishment of a newspaper, "The Dixie Discourser," devoted, as its prospectus indicated to setting forth "the benefits of involuntary emigration."

Captain Sims was made the Editor in Chief and the publication of the paper simply meant his gathering and arranging the various articles contributed by one and another of us and reading them aloud some evening in the week. I wrote a lot of doggerel rhyme for the first number of which I remember only the following lines:

"The Dixie Discourser's the name we choose,
Devoted to Art, politics, the news,
And such other themes as we may think on,
From Jeff Davis down to old Abe Lincoln."

Which goes to show that my estimate of the great Northern war President was somewhat different from what it has since become. A little fun was poked at everyone in the Discourser. No one was spared but each one took the jest made at his expense in great part. As a sign of "Advancing Civilization" it was stated in one number that "Dr Langren," (a Florida surgeon who had joined us,) "has recently adopted the plan of removing his trousers before he goes to bed." Under the head of "Amusements" the public was informed that "Lieut. John Lymans had a tooth pulled yesterday." And there was a grave letter purporting to come from Rev Emanuel Heidt, a Methodist minister in Savannah, taking good old Capt R. D. Walker to task for his devotion to euchre. Old Capt Stegin of the German Volunteers was reported as having been over-come by the whiff of a good dinner as he passed the "Restaurant de Murphy," &c, &c. Trifles all, but they helped to keep up the spirits and prevent despondency. In addition to studying mathematics I got hold of a French book some where and worked a little every day at translating though it was rather slow work without a dictionary. I did some drawing too and played chess and cribbage with Matthew, in which games I generally came out second best. The all absorbing theme of conversation was the prospect of an exchange of prisoners between North and South. Every little rumor on that subject would be nursed and magnified as it made the rounds, filling us all with hope until
its falsity became apparent, when the whole company was immediately sunk in deepest gloom until a new rumor came along. A little orderly attached to the Island Head Quarters used to amuse me very much. He was a man who had been in the army thirty years or more, spare and angular in form, as erect as though he had a ramrod for a spine, neat as a new pin and steeped in army manner and tradition. Do you remember Sergt Bagnet in Bleak House? Well he was just that kind of a man. He used to bring in our letters and papers every morning and he never entered the room that some one did not greet him with a jesting question which the old fellow invariably took with great seriousness. On one occasion as he came in the door Sims called out "Well, Orderly, what can you tell us about exchange this morning?" The little man halted saluted in precise style, put his hands before his mouth with a deprecatory cough and replied, "That is a matter for future consideration." He was right; we had to wait many a day for any definite information on that point. Some time in the late spring or early summer another batch of prisoners was brought to Governors Island who had been captured in some of the earlier operations around Richmond—all of them North Carolinians belonging to Branch’s Brigade. The officers were bunked in among us and the men sent to Castle Williams.

I speak of these because their coming was the occasion of an incident that has always seemed to me a very beautiful demonstration of what genuine religion means. Father Peter Whelan a Catholic priest had come down to Fort Pulaski as a volunteer chaplain for Captain Guilmartin’s Company, "The Montgomery Guards." He was a man somewhat past middle age, large in frame, simple in manner and, it must be said, untidy in dress. It was his custom to take a walk around the ramparts every morning a little before sunrise and as I was generally there at the same time we saw a good deal of each other and became quite friendly. After we had been prisoners for some time Father Peter’s one suit of clothes became so decidedly shabby that it hurt us all to see him so apparrel. Accordingly his measure was taken surreptitiously and sent over to Catholic friends in New York who in due time returned an elegant new suit for him. That night as he slept the old clothes were hidden away and the new ones put in their place by the side of his cot. The old man was perfectly delighted with them showing a little harmless vanity in their possession that was really touching. Later in the day I met him with the old suit on once more, and this was the explanation of it. He had gone to Castle Williams, which was permitted
him as a priest, and had there found one of the new arrivals who had been captured while swimming a river with only his underclothing on. The poor fellow was in wretched condition and to him Father Peter had given the new suit. I remonstrated with him for the act asking "why not have given the old clothing?" His reply was, "When I give for Christ's sake, I give the best." Years afterward with a number of the old garrison I followed this good old man to his grave with a sense of exultation as I thought of the welcome that awaited him from the Master whose spirit he had caught and made the rule of his life.

One of the North Carolina officers I became very intimate with, Captain George B Johnston of the 38th N C Regiment. He was a man about my own age and, when the war broke out, was an Assistant Professor of Greek at the University at Chapel Hill. He was quite tall and well shaped, with a complexion like a girl's, of clear red and white, topped by a suit of curly chestnut hair. A most attractive personality to look at but secondary to the bright intelligence of his mind and the sweetness of his nature. His Company was recruited in the neighborhood of the University and fathers and mothers brought their sons and confided them to his care. On the day of his capture an unexpected advance of the enemy had penned the Company on a peninsular formed by a bend of a river (the Pamunkey, I think). He ordered the men to abandon their arms and escape by swimming, plunging in himself to lead the way. Reaching the other side in safety he found however that only two or three of the men had been able, or dared, to follow, and immediately he swam back to share whatever fate was in store for "the boys" who had been entrusted to his individual oversight. I have heard the act spoken of as "Quixotic," but it was the impulse of a brave and noble soul. Johnston was a man of deep piety, he told me in fact that if he lived through the war it was his intention to enter the ministry. He spoke earnestly and often with me upon the subject of my duty as a man to make open acknowledgement of my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet it was done without forcing a decision upon me; it was rather as one would drop a seed in the ground to await the germinating power of warmth, light and moisture. I believe God works upon every human heart through the instrumentality of other persons and were I called on to name those who most influenced me to become a Christian I should speak of dear Mrs Burroughs, George B Johnston, and John D Hopkins. The first left deep impression upon my nature in tender youth by the loveliness of her own character and the faithfulness of her teaching. I remember her looks and her words
to this day. The second came when I was removed for a time, as it were, from the reach of the world and could ponder on what was set before me as obligatory upon me as a simple duty. The third, when in the course of time I had been restored to wife and child, to home and kindred; pointed out that gratitude to God should lead me to serve him.

Johnston had a young wife of whom he never tired of talking; she had been a Miss Johnson and he wittily said he had "invited her to take 't' with him." I parted from him at Vicksburg when we were exchanged later in the year, as will be told, and I never saw him again. In the winter of 1864 during the hard retreat from Tennessee, a letter reached me from Mrs Johnston telling of his death. The hardships of campaigning in Virginia had broken him down, rapid consumption had supervened and the end had come. Before dying he had asked her to write and tell me that he "died in the faith."

It is good for a man to have enjoyed intimacy with a spirit like his, to have seen the inner workings of a soul so pure, so gentle yet so full of virile strength. I have never spoken much of him to you my dear daughters but his memory has been one of the precious things hidden away in my heart.

Toward the middle of the summer rumor reached us in some indefinable way that a change was to be made in the disposition of the prisoners. How these reports start no one knows—"the grape vine telegraph" is the source to which they are generally attributed. They are always exaggerated yet often having a grain of truth in the bushel of chaff. Hope was high with us that the long looked for exchange was at hand; the little orderly beamed with importance as we eagerly questioned him, though he never gave information one way or the other.

At last the truth came out; we were to be moved to the prison on Johnsons Island in Sandusky Bay, Lake Erie. It was a sad ending to our hopes, but there was nothing to be done save to face the situation with such equanimity as we could muster. We went by way of the Erie Railroad in comfortable cars, leaving New York about noon on one day and arriving at Sandusky at about the same hour in the next. A tug took us over to Johnsons Island where it became immediately apparent that conditions were essentially different from those that obtained in the old quarters in New York harbor. Landing from the tug we were lined up before Col Pierson's office, (the Commandant of the Island,) and required to surrender whatever money might be in our pockets. It was explained that this would be held subject to our checks for such supplies as we might desire

106
to buy from the sutler, nevertheless the experience was not a pleasant one. Thinking it over since however, I have reached the conclusion that it was a precaution which it was proper for the Federals to take. No prisoner should have it in his power to bribe the guards who may be set over him. What troubled me more than this question of money, was being deprived of the sword which had been returned to me by Genl Hunter at Port Royal. Col Pierson promised that I should have it again should an exchange of prisoners ever be effected, but that was the last of it, to my continuous regret.

We were marched at once into the stockade in which there were already something over one thousand Confederate officers most of whom had been at Shiloh, at Island No 10, and at other points along the Mississippi River. These all saluted us with the cry “Fresh fish, Fresh fish,” as we entered the gate, a joke there was no way to take except good humoredly. In my little sketch, “The Story of a Rebel,” I have told of the details of our life at Johnsons Island and will now only repeat a description of our surroundings. A broad stretch of water, about three miles across, separated us from the main land, pretty effectually precluding all chance of escape even if other obstacles could be overcome. The stockade, which was formed of stout logs, was some ten or twelve feet high and enclosed several acres of ground. Around the outside, ran a gallery overlooking the area upon which sentinels were posted day and night, and at the corners were small blockhouses containing field pieces or howitzers pointing inwards. A double row of two story barrack buildings housed the prisoners; framed houses unceiled. The weather boarding was of unseasoned lumber which had shrunked so that wind blew freely through the cracks. This was pleasant enough in summer time but I used to shudder to think what it would be in winter when zero weather would come swooping down across Lake Erie from the great North land. I am thankful to know that we were spared that experience. A soldier’s ration was issued to each prisoner; it was uncooked and we had to make our own arrangements for rendering it palatable. We divided up into messes and took turns at the cook pot. I cannot recall having served in this capacity myself more than a day or two nor can I remember how the duty was escaped though it is quite probable that I was excused in the interests of humanity; it was doubtless, for the mess, a case of “One such fun is enough.” Within the barracks were rough sleeping bunks, one above another, in each was a sack of straw and a blanket. A post sutler brought

15. Published in Addresses Delivered Before the Confederate Veterans Association, of Savannah, Ga. (Savannah, 1893), 1-10.
his wares inside the stockade every day, and from it was possible to buy, at pretty steep prices, sundry additions to our personal comfort. We had to respond to a roll call at reveille in the morning and again at the tattoo at night but were undisturbed at other times. One of the strictest regulations of the place was that which forbade prisoners approaching within twenty five or thirty feet of the outer wall; there, what was called "the dead line," was drawn and whosoever crossed it did so at the peril of his life for the orders of the sentinels were to shoot him down instantly.

The aimlessness of the life of a prisoner of war is one of the first impressions made on the mind of the individual who may be called upon to fill that role. What to do with oneself during the long and weary hours of the day. At first the case seems hopeless but soon occupation is found in unexpected directions, not always of the character to which we may have been accustomed but still sufficing to keep the body healthy and the mind from brooding.

One Colonel whom I knew, unlike myself, had developed capacities as a cook that had been entirely latent until this opportunity offered for showing what was in him. A body of officers organized a company to conduct a laundry business for their companions in misfortune. Some carried on the trade of tailoring or watch repairing and almost every one within the limits of the stockade dabbled a little in the making of rings brooches and other trinkets from soup bones, shells, vulcanized rubber &c &c.

Then there was the never failing resource of the daily papers, sold by the sutler, from which we gathered information as to the progress of the war. It need scarcely be added that there was endless discussion not only of campaigns that were over and done with but likewise of plans for the future. We all knew exactly how the Confederate Armies should be handled, were very severe in criticisms of commanders in the field, dismissing as trifles the difficulties and obstacles that they found appalling, and, in a word, manifesting a genius for war that, somehow, did not materialize when we were once more free and with our respective commands.

On the day that news came of McClellan's defeat in the seven days fight around Richmond we were like a lot of crazy people. For several days the newspapers had been withheld from us but the facts could not be kept secret forever and when they did reach us we were wild with excitement. Not a man failed to see in them the end of the war and the near recognition of the independence of the Confederacy. But, as is generally the case, enthusiasm had gotten the better of judgement—the war was to last a little longer yet and its
termination to be far different from what was hoped for.

A very tragic incident marked the latter part of our stay on Johnsons Island. A Lieutenant of an Arkansas Regt whose name I have forgotten, a quiet inoffensive man, became ill during the night and stepped out of his quarters. On his return the sentinel hailed him and without waiting for a response shot him dead in the doorway of the room. There was absolutely no shadow of excuse for the act, it was deliberate murder. The poor fellow was far away from the "dead line" and it was plain that he was not trying to escape for he was going into the room when the shot was fired and fell with his head and shoulders inside.

I was afterwards told that this particular sentinel had sworn to "kill one d-d rebel" before he left the Island but I do not know how true the statement was; it came from one of the Federal soldiers. All the next day the prison was like a seething pot—men gathered in groups talking of the sad event with knitted brows and savage hearts, and everywhere there was the expression "we had better die like men than be shot down like dogs." A dangerous feeling was in the air and it was difficult to say what the outcome would be. Shortly after dark Col Avery of North Carolina took me aside and said "Colonel, the men are going to make a break for it tonight—we cannot stop them so we must lead them." The proposition appeared so wild and reckless to my mind that it took my breath away. It could have led only to bloody slaughter for hundreds of us with no possible chance of escape for the remainder. We were without weapons of any kind yet we were to attack a thoroughly equipped force that could only be reached by climbing a stockade over which not one man in twenty could have made his way had there been no hindrances to the attempt. But with artillery firing from the blockhouses and the gallery around us lined with infantry, it was the craziest scheme ever thought of—indeed there was no thought about it, nothing save impulse. Even a success would have found us on an Island three miles from shore in one direction and the broad width of Lake Erie on the other while almost in hail was the gunboat "Michigan" guarding the waters around us. I suggested to Col Avery that before anything was decided upon the ranking officers should get together and confer freely on the matter. He said that such a meeting had been called at the quarters of old Colonel Battle of Mobile. We went there together and found some eight or ten assembled, all of them field officers carrying grave and anxious faces. Lieut Col Avery of Memphis was the spokesman for the hot heads; he advocated attack in vigorous language. Almost from the beginning, however, it was
evident that he represented only a small minority and when Col Battle and Col Quarles in well considered words set forth the exact state of affairs and demonstrated the absolute hopelessness of the proposed attempt it was unanimously decided that it ought not to be made and that we should at once do all in our power to quiet the excitement. This was not so difficult a task as it first appeared, for sober second thought had come to most of the officers. Col Battle wrote a letter to Staunton the U S Secretary of War, setting forth the facts of the shooting and asking that an investigation be made and the sentinel punished if what we charged were substantiated. The letter was signed by all of us who were at the meeting but nothing ever came of it; indeed I seriously doubt whether Secretary Staunton ever saw it. I do not believe that it ever got beyond Col Pierson. I met Col Quarles during the Tennessee campaign in 1864 when we were both under Genl Forrest operating against the town of Murfreesboro. We had a long talk together upon the incidents just related and he told me that in all of his war experience nothing had ever alarmed him more than the possibility of that wild uprising on Johnsons Island. I had not taken it quite so seriously for the friends who were immediately about me while outraged by the poor Lieutenant's death had not shared the frenzied feeling of the Western men. But Quarles said the latter were ready to make the charge at the drop of a hat and would not have hesitated about it if the higher officers had been willing to lead.

A quaint character among the Pulaski prisoners was Lieutenant Theodore Montfort of Oglethorpe Ga. An ideal Georgia cracker in general appearance, thin almost to emaciation, hollow in the temple, flat chested with sandy hair and beard that were always dishevelled he did not make much of a figure as a soldier. But his heart was true and brave, his intellect keen and searching. Full of funny stories of past experiences and of thoughtful reflection upon current events, all sweetened by genial kindliness, it was a pleasure to hear him hold forth on any subject. He was a devoted fisherman and no more humorous picture arises to my mind than his appearance on the days when the water gate was opened and the prisoners allowed to bathe in the lake. While others bathed he fished and his “get up” on these occasions was unique. An old slouch hat on his head, a shirt and soldiers packet covering the upper part of the body, the slim legs bare and brogans on the feet, he would gravely wade out to his middle in the water and try conclusions with the fish. On one arm he carried a basket of bait, (worms dug up around the kitchens,) and with the other he wielded the rod and line purchased from the
sutler. No one ever heard of a fish being caught or of even "a bite" rewarding the sportsman's patience but he repeated the performance each week with unflagging zeal and seeming enjoyment. Poor Montfort his health broke down entirely toward the last and he died at Vicksburg on the way home.

Toward the end of September rumors of a general exchange began to thicken and take more definite shape. Handbills were freely scattered around the prison offering immediate freedom to those who would take the "Oath of Allegiance," and we felt assured from this that what we had unutterably longed for was close at hand. Three men from one of the border states availed themselves of this offer and the scorn and contempt that was heaped upon them by their former comrades, as they marched out of the gate, must have remained a bitter memory for them to the end of their days. At last the order came for us to be ready to move on the day following. I believe each of us was prepared to start five minutes after the order was received but we had to wait with what patience could be mustered until the appointed hour. A bright October sky ushered in our last morning on Johnsons Island—a "red letter" morning among the many of my life. We were ferried across the waters of Sandusky Bay, some eleven hundred or more of us, and in the early afternoon were all entrained for Cairo Illinois at the junction of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers, from which point we were to take a steamer for Vicksburg where the exchange would be consummated. Our train was not one to be proud of in the way of accommodation, made up, as it was, of box, platform and cattle cars of varying degrees of age and dirt yet that was a trifle to men who were leaving a military prison for home. I very much doubt if any engineer ever pulled out from Sandusky with such a load of concentrated happiness behind it as did the one that tugged away at us and our fortunes.

The journey to Cairo was uneventful; we reached the town some little time after nightfall on the following day and at once went on board of the old Steamboat "Henry Chouteau" that was provided for the passage down the River. For one I was thoroughly fatigued by the long railroad trip, so selecting a soft plank on the deck I stretched out upon it, closed my eyes and knew nothing more until awakened by the bright sunlight beaming on my face. What a wonderful elastic season is Youth and how I should groan over such a hard bed now if called upon to occupy it! We were delayed about three days at Cairo awaiting the arrival of some ten thousand Confederates, enlisted men, who had been confined at Camps Morton and Douglas.

The reason for the delay was an entirely satisfactory one yet,
nevertheless, we were filled with uneasiness until the actual start was made; so many plans for exchange had come to naught on one technicality or another that we were miserably afraid lest this would share the same fate at the last hour. At last, however, the belated ones arrived and were embarked, then we were fairly off—quite a little fleet of river steamers with one Federal iron-clad bringing up the rear like an old hen escorting her brood of chickens. I was never quite able to see the necessity of her being there at all for it was very certain that none of the prisoners would dream of breaking away while on a homeward journey. It was, though, probably the correct thing from a military point of view that the fleet should be guarded.

The trip down the river was wearisome the speed being regulated by that of the slowest boat. Moreover, no progress at all was made at night, the fleet coming to anchor at dusk and remaining so until sunrise in the morning. Quite a number of the men from Camps Morton and Douglas were in wretched physical condition and several of them died on the trip. It was pathetic to watch the little burial parties who carried these poor fellows ashore for interment each morning; the pity of it always filled me with melancholy; to die but a step from home and freedom.

The Commissary arrangements in the Chouteau were rather primitive—musty hard tack and raw bacon being the ration. No cooking places were provided so those who did not like their bacon in that shape had to take their turns at the furnace doors and manage as best they could there. But this was a minor trouble, we were bound for “Dixie” and that fact made everything else bearable.

Many of the officers who were on our Steamer were from the States of Kentucky, Tennessee and Arkansas and some of them had gone into the war from homes located just on the banks of the great river on which we were traveling. One of them, a Kentuckian, I saw one day in a great state of excitement on the upper deck. His home, I was told, was immediately on the other side of a point of land to which we were approaching. He had written a letter to his family, put it in a bottle and stood ready to throw it on shore as we swept by his door. In another moment we were around the point but no smiling homestead met the view, no loving wife awaiting a husband’s return, no little children; nothing save two blackened and ruined chimnies where a happy home had stood. The grounds were overgrown with weeds and absolute desolation reigned over all. The poor man gazed as one distraught then muttering some words that I did not catch, fell back in a faint upon the deck. It was a sad incident but Alas! in those days there were many similar ones all

112
over the land, and toward the end of the war they became so familiar as scarcely to excite comment.

Far happier was the experience of another comrade. As the boat swung in near a bold bluff a lady was seen mounted on a spirited horse, watching us intently but apparently unable to discern some particular one, the object of her search. “Why! It’s Tom’s wife,” came from half a dozen voices. “Get up on the wheel house Tom, so she can see you.” Then when Tom was a little slow in following the suggestion, he was hoisted up by willing hands and stood out in bold relief against the sky. There was the wave of a handkerchief in recognition and then the little woman dropped her head in her hands and sobbed for joy. Surely I need not be ashamed to add that many other eyes were wet with tears. Of course there was no hope of having speech with “Tom” but she seemed determined to keep near him as long as possible so she galloped along the bank in sight of the steamer for a mile or two until further progress was prevented by some obstacle and then stood waving adieus until we lost sight of her in the distance. Tom was beaming, he had as a certainty knowledge for which we only hoped as yet.

At Memphis the flotilla stopped for coal. That City had recently been captured by the Federals and blue coated sentinels stood on the wharf to prevent any of us from stepping ashore and from having communication with the citizens. But some of the latter were not to be so debarred. Immediately behind the line of sentinels was a throng of the beautiful women for whom Tennessee is so noted. They had heard we were coming and were determined to give us a welcome whether the authorities liked it or not. They brought baskets and boxes filled with choice provisions of every kind—home made biscuits, fried chicken, pies, cakes, apples and other fruits all in great profusion. But unfortunately there was the line beyond which they could not pass and we unhappy ones saw these good things almost within reach and yet so far away as to banish the hope of ever enjoying them. The situation was desperate, the ladies were about retiring in despair when one bright-eyed young girl found a solution to the difficulty. She put her basket on the ground and then, with all the skill of a practiced base ball pitcher, began to hurl the contents through the air to the expectant crowd on the decks of the “Chouteau,” right over the heads and bayonets of the sentinels they sailed and were caught by those for whom they were intended. Instantly every other woman began the same tactics and for about ten or fifteen minutes there was the liveliest kind of a bombardment amid laughter and cheers and clapping of hands and waving of handkerchiefs. The
sentinels looked on grimly for a while but at last the fun of the scene was found too contagious to be resisted and they too broke into smiles and laughter. I can recall nothing that ever warmed my heart more than this unique greeting from Southern women. One needs to have been a prisoner in an enemy's country to realize what it meant to each of us.

Just how long our journey lasted I cannot now remember. It seems to me to have been of about ten days duration and very monotonous days they were. Commerce on the Mississippi was practically non existent at the time. Occasionally we would meet a transport laden with troops or stores, but not often. For the most part we had the river to ourselves and there was little to see save long stretches of muddy water and interminable forests of cotton wood trees. We were glad enough therefore, when the anchor dropped one evening, to learn that the next day would see us at Vicksburg. That historic city was then the centre of attraction all over the land. It had just passed through a terrific bombardment from Porters Mortar boats but its powers of defence were still unimpaired and while they remained so, access to the lower river was sealed to the Federals alone. Possession of Vicksburg also gave to the Confederates free communication with the Trans-Mississippi Department from which Section a large proportion of the supplies for our armies in the field was brought. The value of the City, therefore, was beyond estimation; its fall in the following year was a blow from which the South never fully recovered. It will readily be understood with what deep interest and strong emotion we watched its bristling fortifications as we drew near to the wharf on the following morning.

The details of the exchange seemed very long drawn out to me though they were probably no more so than was actually necessary—a little impatience was pardonable under the circumstances. The Federal prisoners who were to be given up for us had been sent to some other point and our names were simply checked off against theirs on prepared lists, rank for rank. We were called alphabetically and as soon as the commissioners were satisfied as to our identity the gangway was opened and captivity ended. My own name was rather low down on the list. I thought it never would be reached, but at last it was called, after dark, and with a beating heart I once more set foot on Dixie, a free man. The first step was not a fortunate one, blinded by the glare of a fire on the bank I missed the solid ground and went up to my knees in red Mississippi mud. Scrambling out of that I met my dear old Matt Hopkins patiently waiting for me; he had come ashore some hours earlier but would not start out to explore until I joined him.
The people of Vicksburg had made every preparation for our reception that the state of affairs at that time would permit; the ladies, as usual being foremost in the good work; the sick were tenderly cared for, the hungry fed and the ragged clothed. Nearly all of us came under the second head. It had been a long time since we had had a chance at Southern cooking and we were ready to do ample justice to the bountiful tables that were spread in various parts of the town. The Confederate authorities notified all of us that it would be some days before we could leave the City many formalities having to be complied with first, and necessary arrangements made by the Quarter Master Department for transportation. Rations were issued and we made ourselves as comfortable as possible. Several of us who hailed from Savannah took possession of a vacant house, hired an old darky to cook for us and then sat down for a little period of solid enjoyment. Mr. Wm M. Wadley the President of the Central Railroad happened to be in Vicksburg at the time and bunked in with us. He was considerably older than any of our party, but was a jolly good companion who laughed heartily at our experiences and seemed to feel as young as the youngest. The house was bare of furniture, there were simply the walls and floors and our sleeping arrangements were made by picking out the first unoccupied spot and curling up in it. One of Porters Mortar shells had descended on the roof gone through each floor and burst in the cellar thus providing perfect ventilation and adding piquancy to the situation. We were certainly very happy without reference to surroundings.

Vicksburg bore many marks of the bombardment in the way of partly shattered houses but we learned that the loss of life had been very small. When the firing was particularly hot the citizens would retire to caves that had been dug in the sides of the hills on which the City is built, where they were perfectly safe. I saw a number of these caves that had been comfortably fitted up with flooring, carpets, furniture, and, in one of them, even a piano. Some ladies with whom I conversed told me they had been urged to leave the City when the attack became imminent but that they had preferred to remain and take the chances which they [were] very glad to have done as it had given them quite an unusual experience.

In due time arrangements for the homeward journey were completed and we started in a rather round about route by way of Mobile and Montgomery, Ala. At the former place we stopped for one night at the Battle House where a young Georgian named Butler met us. One of the first things he said to me was "I was at the Williams's house in Milledgeville last week and saw Mrs. Olm-
stead. She was looking very well.” This was a great relief to my mind for during the whole term of my imprisonment not a line from home had reached me and my last news of your dear mother was seven months before when she was very ill. Then came the thought of the precious little baby daughter whom I had left when she was three days old—had she been spared to me?

For a long time I was afraid to ask about her, dreading what the answer might be; but mustering courage at last I put the question and anxiety was ended. In my soul I felt that God had been very good to me.

At Macon my dear old mother met me at the depot with Eliza Hardee and Mr. Dan Baldwin. I spent that night with them and on the next day reached the old homestead in Milledgeville and received a welcome that made amends for all the perils, hardships and anxieties through which I had passed. But it was a sad household in spite of this joyous reunion. Of my four brothers-in-law, brother Charlie had died in the previous spring, as has been stated, Gus also passed away, succumbing to the hardships of the field in Virginia. Peter was in wretched health (he died in the following winter) and Willie had been wounded terribly, almost unto death, at the battle of Malvern Hill. This was the toll taken from one family by that dreadful war.

I was the recipient of many courtesies in Milledgeville but could not remain there. After a few days I went on down to Savannah and reported for duty to Genl Mercer who commanded the military District of Georgia. Steps were taken at once to reorganize the Regiment and we went into service again with the following Field and Staff: Colonel C. H. Olmstead, Lieut-Col. W. S. Rockwell, Major Martin J. Ford (Vice John Foley resigned), Adjutant M. H. Hopkins, Quarter Master, Edward Hopkins, Commissary, Edward W. Drummond, Surgeon, Wm. H. Elliott, and Chaplain L. Edwd. Axson. During the winter Edward Hopkins was sent to North Georgia where he died. His place as Quarter Master was filled by the appointment of Fred M. Hull.

Very great changes were apparent in Savannah on my return thither. Oglethorpe Barracks, that stood where the DeSoto Hotel now is, was the centre of all activities and few men out of uniform were seen upon the streets. Commerce was dead; the counting rooms on the Bay were for the most part closed or occupied as offices by the various military departments, Quarter Master Commissary or Ordnance. Upon Broughton and Congress streets some stores were
still open but with depleted stocks and many empty shelves. Coffee, tea, the finer sugars and all other table delicacies were not to be had for love or money. Only the plainest food was procurable. The purchasing power of Confederate currency had declined tremendously with the tendency still downward. How people got along at all has always been a mystery to me. Yet they did and were buoyant and hopeful of final success.

When your mother and the baby joined me a little later Sallie was just beginning to walk and it became necessary to find shoes for her. Accordingly I measured the size of the little feet on the flap of an old cartridge box and cut the soles of a pair of shoes for her from that. Cloth from an old pair of trousers of mine furnished the uppers. Both your Mother and I were very pleased with our handiwork though I dare say it would not be thought of highly now in these luxurious days. At all events the shoes kept the precious baby feet from cold and wet. I have often wished we had preserved them as mementos of those troublous times.

That winter and indeed until the North Georgia Campaign, the Regiment was badly scattered; two Companies were at Fort Jackson on the Savannah River,—two at Fort Bartow at Caustons Bluff,—two at Fort McAllister on the Ogeechee River and four remained with me in the lines around Savannah. We were encamped near the Catholic Cemetery at Camp “Neely”—so named in honor of the good friend whose kindness at Governors Island was so fresh in our minds. The winter was comparatively quiet, we went once to meet a landing of the enemy on Whitmarsh Island and once again as a supporting force to Fort McAllister when that place was attacked by the Monitors. As no troops were landed however we were not called into action. Major Gallie the commander of the Fort was killed in this engagement which resulted in the Monitors being beaten off. He was, I think, the grandfather of Florence’s friend, Julie Trippe, a fine old gentleman who would surely have received promotion had he lived. While out in the vicinity of Fort McAllister a long continued rainy spell set in and as we were without tents we had a decidedly uncomfortable time of it until Captain Wetter\(^{16}\) happened to come along and invited me to march the command to the Telfair plantation some five or six miles down the road. There we were well sheltered in the barns and plantation buildings until ordered to return to the lines. As the warm weather began several commands were sent down to the Isle of Hope for

sanitary reasons, the 18th Battalion, Savh Vol Guards Major Basinger, the 12th Ga Battalion, Lt-Col H. D. Capers, and the four companies of the 1st Regiment; the Island being put under my command. (Susie and Florence will remember meeting Col. Capers with me once, when we were passing through Atlanta). Through the kindness of Mr. Goodwin I was given the use of a part of his home at the Isle of Hope for my headquarters and your mother came down to be with me. Mrs. Goodwin and Annie, then a child of 12 or 13 occupied the rest of the house. We had a very happy time of it for a few short weeks though they came too soon to an end. As the Island was an outpost I was ordered to keep a sharp lookout for vessels that might attempt to run the blockade, in or out, through Warsaw Sound and Wilmington River. One day I received a note from District Headquarters saying that Mr. H. L. Schreiner purposed a run for Warsaw in a small craft laden with cotton and that I was to permit him to pass out, also to give him any assistance in my power. I do not know whether you remember Mr. Schreiner or not; he was a German, an amiable easy man, who used to keep a book and music store on Congress Street—the very last man in the world for deeds of adventurous daring, and I wondered how he had ever brought his courage to the sticking point. In a day or two he made his appearance and reported to me. It was hard for me to keep a straight face as I looked at him for he had gotten himself up in the most approved nautical style for the trip. Sweet William in “Black Eyed Susan” or Bill Deadeye in “Pinafore” could not have done better. He wore a tarpaulin hat, a pea jacket, a low turn down collar with black silk neck handkerchief, the ends of which fluttered in the breeze, trousers tight in the hip and flowing from the knees down and low quartered shoes. Under his arm was a long spyglass and he looked an ancient mariner from stem to stern; the only incongruity in the “tout ensemble” being a pair of gold boned spectacles that topped his nose, through which his prominent eyes looked triumphantly into mine. I did not laugh for I did not care to wound the innocent vanity of a man in whom I felt a warm friendly interest, but in after years we had many jokes together over that melo-dramatic costume. Mr. Schreiner did not go out after all, but returned to the City with his cotton. Very likely his heart failed when he got to the actual point of making a start on the dangerous journey.

One morning in the early part of July we woke up to find that our cook with several other servants had run away during the night. We afterwards learned that they had taken boat and gone over to Skidaway Island from which they had gone on board a Federal
gun boat that was cruising nearby. Not knowing this, I ordered my horse to ride on the road toward the City to see if any trace of the fugitives could be found in that direction. While standing by "Lady Gray" she kicked at a fly and struck me squarely on the knee. The blow was so severe that I fainted for a minute or two as the men were carrying me into the house. I thought myself laid up for days but in those times minor bodily ills could not be nursed as they would be now. Circumstances often demanded that they should be disregarded. Later in the morning news came of the fall of Vicksburg, most disturbing, disquieting news, and still later a courier brought a dispatch from Headquarters ordering me to march at once with the battalions to the City, there to take train for Charleston. In truth events were crowded together on that particular day. Within an hour after the receipt of the order the command was on the road plodding along through a terrific thunder storm and in due time reached the depot and boarded the cars. Arriving at the terminal just across the river from Charleston early the next day. We remained there awaiting orders until night fall. The courier who brought instructions to this effect told of a sudden attack on Morris Island at daylight that morning. Under a heavy artillery fire from batteries which up to that moment had been masked a heavy Federal force had been thrown across Folly Inlet defeating the small Confederate force that guarded the lower end of the island, capturing a front and driving the remainder back upon Battery Wagner, a fortification that stretched across Morris Island about three quarters of a mile from its upper or northern end. It was evident that we were to be a reinforcement for this fort. Meanwhile we had only to sit and wait. The picture of Charleston harbor on that bright July day in 1863 remains very vividly in my memory— in the near foreground the spires and roofs of the City; far off to the left, across a shining expanse of waters, Sullivan's Island and historic old Fort Moultrie; to the right James Island, Fort Johnson and the low lying sand dunes of Morris Island; at the harbors mouth the Federal fleet of gun boats and monitors swinging to its anchors; and midway, guarding the ship channel, with its three tiers of guns rising one above the other from the water, grim Fort Sumter from whose barbette batteries all through the day, at regular intervals, came a puff of smoke and the roar of a heavy Columbiad.

About eight or nine o'clock in the evening orders came for embarkation, we went aboard a steamer that arrived at the landing nearby and started down the harbor. It was on this trip the incident occurred that has already been related: my recognition in the dark, by
his swearing, of the steamboat captain whom I had known when a child. Landing at Cumming's Point, the three battalions formed on the beach for the march to Wagner. Just before starting Adjutant Hopkins and I had an interview with a much demoralized South Carolina officer who was decidedly pessimistic in his views and did not hesitate to speak of the situation as hopeless. "We have only got a handful of men" he said, "and there are nine thousand Yankees on the Island who will attack us at daylight with the fleet to help them." It was not a very encouraging welcome, yet I think we took it "cum grano salis" making due allowances for the speakers nerves. I remember however expressing the wish to Matthew that it might sometimes be our lot to fight on the main land.

It was nearly midnight when we marched into the Fort and I reported to the Commanding Officer, Colonel R. F. Graham of the 21st South Carolina Regiment. He was very glad to see us for while he had force enough to man his artillery we were nearly his entire reliance for infantry. He asked the date of my commission, and I rather suspected that he was my junior in rank, as subsequently proved to be the case, but it was a question that I did not care to raise at the time, knowing absolutely nothing of the situation or the surroundings. Battery Wagner was an earthwork of bold profile that stretched across Morris Island at its narrowest part from the ocean on the left to Vincent's Creek on the right, facing due South.

Beginning at the sea there was first a flanking parapet that commanded the approach up the beach, then a face armed with heavy guns that looked upon the ship channel, then a salient and finally a long curtain reaching to the creek.

In the black darkness the battalions were guided to their several positions and warned to be ready to spring to arms at a moment's notice, the 1st Regt. on the left, the 18th Ga. in the Salient, and the 12th Ga. on the extreme right. The men formed along the parapet where they rested their guns and each laid down to rest in his place in line. Capt. Werner of Co I was made the officer of the night, but in a few minutes all the rest of us were sound asleep. Matthew and I had chosen the top of the parapet for our sleeping place and it seemed to me that I had just closed my eyes when a rolling volley of musketry out in front awakened me and I heard Werner's voice shouting, "Up men! up! the pickets are firing." Springing to my feet I could see the picket running rapidly in toward our right, while in the dim gray of the morning, a dark column of the enemy came up the beach at the double quick cheering as they advanced. In an instant the men were ready and a hot fire was poured upon the column from the entire front of the fort; yet still it came gallantly
on, some of their men even reaching the ditch and beginning to climb the outer slope of the parapet. But the density of their formation made them an easy mark and their dead and wounded covered the ground. They could not deploy into line because a tongue of marsh from Vincent's Creek ran along the right of our position far over toward the beach, thus narrowing the approach to about one third the length of our front. So into their masses swept a storm of Confederate bullets, while the supports to the column failed to push forward. Individual men began to drop to the rear and soon the entire body was in full retreat—the battle was over. The charge had been headed by four companies of the 7th Connecticut, many of whom had advanced so far that they could not retire and these became our prisoners. It will be remembered that this Regiment had fought us at Fort Pulaski the year before.

The Confederate loss was very small. If I remember rightly it did not exceed fourteen or fifteen even when the slightly wounded were counted. Of these few poor Werner was one, a bullet pierced his chest early in the engagement and killed him immediately. We all felt his loss for he was a good and true man, simple and unobtrusive in his manner, yet faithful in the discharge of every duty that was put upon him. My boyhood friend, Fred Tupper, an officer in the 18th Battalion was shot entirely through the body. I bade him “good-bye” as he was about to be carried up to Charleston, never expecting to see him again. Contrary to all expectations he recovered and entered service again on the staff of Gen. Taliaferro in the following winter. So many instances of this kind I have seen where desperately wounded men have pulled through with every chance against them, while, in other cases a seemingly trifling injury has produced death.

The Federal loss was relatively very heavy, the ground in front of us was strewn with killed and wounded, some hundreds of them. In the absence of reports for definite reference I will not attempt to give exact numbers, but to the best of my recollection we buried about one hundred of the slain and the wounded were several times as many.

It was a sight that moved my heart to a deep feeling of pity and to a sense of the awful horror of war. I met some of those wounded in after years and found them genial, warm hearted men, just such as would make good neighbors and kind friends. Yet we had been trying to kill each other, and that without a spark of personal animosity. The illogical, wasteful and wicked characteristics of war as a settlement of human differences, impresses itself more and more
upon my mind as I grow older. Surely the time will come when the teachings of Christ will be heeded and an end put to such strife forever. I have written elsewhere of the service at “Wagner” and will not go into it at any great length now. It was most arduous, combining hardships and dangers that only those who endured them can fully appreciate. I often dream of it even now after forty-nine years and the dream is always disturbed and unhappy.

We remained in the fort one week after the first assault, being exposed every day of that time to an unceasing fire from the heavy guns of the fleets, which did so much injury to the parapets and bomb proofs that it was necessary to work pretty much all night to repair them. There was but little rest and it was found during the siege that seven or eight days at a time was about as much of such service as a body of troops could stand without breaking down. At the end of such periods therefore the various commands would be sent up to James Island for a short session of rest and refreshment, after which they would return to Wagner for another tour of duty.

On the morning of the 17th day of July (which was the last day of our first tour) I was standing at the sally-port watching the incoming of a splendid regiment of infantry, the First South Carolina, when I recognized in one of the Captains an old Marietta school mate, “Pos” Tatum, as he was familiarly and affectionately known by all of us. He was no less delighted to see me than I was to meet him—it warmed the heart of each of us. As soon as the Regiment had broken ranks he joined me and the two of us sat snugly up against the parapet while the heavy firing was going on, talking of old times and old friends at the Military Institute. During that night our command was sent up to James Island reaching it just about day light. We had scarcely gotten ashore when a most terrific bombardment was opened by the enemy upon the fort we had just left. It continued without intermission throughout the entire day, with a fierceness that was appalling. There was not a moment of time in which the ear was not deafened by the roar of the guns and the bursting of huge shells over the devoted battery. Great columns of sand would be thrown into the air as the shells exploded in the parapets and there were times when Wagner was hidden from view entirely by the clouds of battle smoke that settled upon it.

You will readily understand with what anxious hearts this spectacle was watched by all upon the Confederate side. The Battery in

17. See his Reminiscences of Service With the First Volunteer Regiment of Georgia, Charleston Harbor, in 1863 (Savannah, 1879).
Charleston was crowded with citizens who could not remain at home with this nightly thundering at the outer gate to their fair harbor. Yet I do not think there were many misgivings as to the final result there. People were stouthearted in those days and did not yield readily to fears and forebodings. Just about night-fall the cannonade terminated abruptly and a strong Federal column emerged from behind the sand hills and charged gallantly upon the Confederate lines. It was too dark for us to see them but there was a burst of musketry fire from the entire front of Wagner that told of the fierce grapple going on there. The issue was seriously in doubt for a time for a considerable number of the enemy succeeded in effecting a lodgement in a salient where they were so protected by traverses from Confederate fire that it was found difficult to attack them, but their main body was unable to follow up their success. It had met a bloody repartee and was in full retreat down the beach leaving great numbers of their dead and wounded behind them. Those who were in the salient held their position for a time but were finally made prisoners. Many good men gave up their lives on the Confederate side, and among them was my friend Tatum. The circumstance of our meeting the day before with its revival of old scenes and memories made his death quite a shock to me. Alas! there were numbers of the old Marietta boys whom that cruel war claimed as its victims. It saddens me to think of them even now though the probability is that in the ordinary course of events, without a war, most of them would have passed away ere this.

While the defense of Wagner continued (and it lasted fifty-one days) every effort was being made by our Commander, Genl. Beauregard, to strengthen our inner lines. He was an engineer officer of highest rank and how well he discharged this duty is shown by the fact that the enemy never got a foothold beyond the outpost of Morris Island. Not until the last month of the war when Sherman's army came from the rear did Charleston fall. New batteries were erected at every available point and to these were given the names of gallant officers who had been killed in the earlier days of the siege—Cheves, Haskell, Wampler, Tatum, Simpkins, etc etc. It gave grateful recognition to the memory of brave men, yet most of us were glad that our own names were not on the list.

Fort Johnson where we were stationed was made very strong, huge bombproofs were built and heavy guns and mortars mounted, while a supporting force of infantry was kept close at hand. These troops were hidden during the day in the woods so as not to attract
the enemys artillery fire, but at night they were brought down to the vicinity of the shore in readiness to repel any boat attack from the fleet.

Our second tour of duty at Wagner was devoid of special incident beyond the increasing and unceasing fire from the ships and batteries of the enemy which had to be borne all day without much ability on our part to return it. All of our heavy guns were mounted on the sea face of Wagner so no response at all could be made to Gen. Gilmore’s land batteries while against the monitors and the great “Ironsides” one 10 inch Columbiad was the only gun of sufficient calibre to make any impression whatever. This particular gun was dismounted several times by shots that wrecked the carriage but it was always mounted again, and I believe that it continued in service until the end of the siege. The gunner who had charge of it at this time was a young South Carolinian named Fraser Matthews whose cool bravery excited the greatest admiration in all who saw him. Again and again he could be seen standing erect upon the chassis of the gun while the squad sought shelter behind the parapet as the great 15 inch shells of the Monitors came ricocheting over the water and burst in the fort. Then with perfect quiet and composure he would call the men to attention again, aim the huge Columbiad and send its projectile smashing into the sides of the ironclads. And this for hour after hour all day long. I never knew a man whose courage was of finer quality, and it was with great sorrow that I heard, a few years after the war, that he had been murdered by negroes over in Beaufort District, a sad ending for such a hero.

The bombardment of the fort continued at night though with abated vigor as the fleet invariably retired to its anchorage as dark came on. There was opportunity therefore between night-fall and dawn to repair the damage that had been done during the day. The cavernous holes that had been blown in parapets and traverses were filled with sand bags and morning would find us ready for another days’ poundings; but of rest and sleep there had been little or none. When we returned to James Island after this second tour I was detached from the Regiment and placed in command of Fort Johnson, which position I held as long as we remained at Charleston. Uncle Mat Hopkins was likewise detached as Post Adjutant and we had also the companionship of Johnnie Howard, your Aunt Ann’s brother, who was the engineer officer in charge of the work that was constantly going on there.

After Wagner was finally taken by the enemy it became, of course, a point from which to attack James Island and Fort John-
son had to undergo its daily ordeal of heavy artillery fire, to which our own batteries replied both day and night. The constant roar of cannonading we got strangely accustomed to and would sleep soundly through it all at night but more than once I noticed that the crack of a musket would awaken me when a false alarm would be given by a sentinel on the beach, who would mistake a wave for a boat and crack away at it. It has always seemed to me that this was fairly good proof that the mind is not entirely oblivious during sleep. This indifference to the heavy guns was not shared by occasional visitors who had had no chance to get accustomed to it. Cousin Charlie West came over from Savannah once to see me; when bed time arrived he spread his blanket alongside of mine, we told each other “good night” and then I knew nothing until morning, but poor Charlie had a woeful tale to tell. He had heard every gun that was fired and every shell that had burst. Your Uncle Charlie with his Regiment, the 54th Georgia was stationed a few miles from me at a place called Manigault’s Point and I rode over to see him once or twice, but I did not feel easy in absenting myself from the Post even for an hour or two, so we did not see very much of each other. He was in a skirmish in the vicinity of Secessionville—and the Regiment, which was a large one, was kept where it was to guard against flank attacks of the enemy, thus he was spared the severe service of Wagner. While at Fort Johnson I made the acquaintance of a number of attractive South Carolina gentlemen of which I have very pleasant memories. Chief among these was a Colonel Elliott, a man of most distinguished gallantry, who subsequently won his way to a Brigadier Generalship by pure force of merit. He was one of the Elliotts of Beaufort—I think a cousin of our good friends by that name. I was very much drawn to him by the frank courtesy of his manner and a spirit of friendliness that was thoroughly genuine. My Chief of Artillery was a Lt. Col. Yates of the 1st So Ca, and he too was a man to take to. I saw a great deal of him in looking after the mounting of guns and other work appertaining to his arm of the service. He was a Charlestonian and had a good deal to tell me of ante-bellum days in the old town. I thought it would be pleasant to follow up the acquaintance after the war, but we never met again. Another interesting man, Major Ormsby Blanding, was considerably older than myself but he seemed to like to talk with me and we frequently conversed far into the night. He had been in the famous “Palmetto” Regiment during the Mexican war, and of his experiences at that time he never tired of talking, nor I of listening. The old gentleman was much chagrined
by a recent happening that he would dilate upon whenever the matter was broached. His woes all centered about two enormous rifled cannon that had been brought in by one of the blockade run-ners. They were intended to aid in the defence of the harbor and were mounted on the Battery where they attracted a great deal of attention from military men. Genl Ripley who commanded the Dis-trict instructed Major Blanding to prepare cartridges for a trial of these guns and the latter in getting ready to do this noticed an unusual formation in the bottom of the base where the cartridge would be placed when the gun was loaded. Instead of being cylindrical the whole way down it had something of this shape [drawing in the manuscript]. The Major says he conceived the idea that this recess was intended as an air chamber to lessen the force of the recoil when the gun was fired, but he said the General insisted that the cartridge bag should be made with a long tail to it to fit the smaller chamber also. Obedient to orders the Major did as he instructed and when the explosion came the breech of the gun was hopelessly cracked. "Now," he complained, "they lay it all to me and I can't ride in the streets of Charleston without having the boys stick out their tongues and yell after me "there goes O. B., 'Old Buster'." It was pretty hard on him, but I found it difficult to preserve a sympathetic face as the tale was told. A charming young fellow was Captain Mitchell, also of the 1st So Ca Artillery. He was the son of John Mitchell, the Irish patriot and a man of most winsome personality, his features classical in outline, his eyes brilliant and clear, a warm tone to his complexion, and a grace of manner that was irresistible. He had charge of a battery that was located at the nearest point to Morris Island, from which a constant fire was kept up against the enemy's lines. I sat with him one night upon the parapet there until long after midnight while he told me of his hopes and ambitions. He would be a soldier all his life and the reputation he hoped to gain in the war would give him high position in the Army of the Confederacy when our indepen-dence had been established. He specially desired to be put in com-mand of Fort Sumter (even then a glorious ruin) saying that there was fine opportunity for distinction there. Poor fellow! he did re-main a soldier for the rest of his days, but they were few. Command of Sumter was given him and he died there, stricken by a shell as he stood in the upper parapet. A very tragic event that took place while we were at Fort Johnson was the wreck of the "Sumter." This was a steamer engaged in bringing up troops that had been relieved from duty at Wagner. It was a service that had to be per-
formed at night to avoid the fire of the enemy, and a code of signals was established to pass between the steamer and the forts of the inner harbor, since no chances could be taken of having one of the Yankee vessels slipping in. The Sumter started from Cummings Point crowded with men all looking forward to the relief and rest that had been earned by arduous service at the outpost. As the boat drew in toward Fort Moultrie a gun was fired and a signal made from the Fort but the Captain seemed to have lost his head and made no response. Instantly, the fire of the Fort was opened upon him and shot and shell tore through the crowds of men on the steamer’s deck. The Captain changed her course and essayed to run in between Fort Sumter and James Island but the boat soon became a perfect wreck rolling and tumbling about in the waves. Some of the men were drowned, some were picked up by boats that put out to their relief; others stripped and swam to Fort Sumter and still others came ashore at Fort Johnson—the most utterly demoralized men it has ever been my fortune to meet. Among them was Captain Matthews, a brother of the Fraser Matthews of whom I have spoken. He, like his brother, was a man of conspicuous and cheerful gallantry, but as he landed on the beach the horror of what he had gone through unmanned him entirely; he trembled like a leaf and could scarcely speak when I addressed him. Daylight had dawned ere the close of this lamentable tragedy. Firing upon both sides stopped for a while as the work of rescue went on, but soon it opened again and life savers became life destroyers once more. Such is war, aptly described by General Sherman as “Hell.” That night as Uncle Mat and I were sleeping in a little picket tent that we enjoyed together I heard the sound of troops passing by and went out to find who they were. It proved to be a Regiment that had just been relieved from duty at Fort Sumter and was on the march for the interior of the Island. As the rear came there were the notes of a fiddle played by a soldier in gray, following whom was a singular procession of ghostly figures arrayed in white, dancing and frolicking like a lot of children. These were the men who swam to the fort from the wreck that morning; they had landed naked and had been clad in hospital night-shirts, the only available clothing. All day they had endured the terrific fire that was rained upon Fort Sumter, yet here they were as I saw them. Surely there was never better exemplification of the spirit that animated the Armies of the Confederacy. The little tent that Matthew and I occupied at night was very scant in its accommodations; its furniture consisted of one cot of narrow proportions and a small desk for official papers. By right of seniority I took possession of the cot so Mat slept on the ground.
alongside of me and because of the desk there was shelter for only the upper part of his body; his legs were out of doors. A sentinel was always kept on duty at headquarters to receive any communications that might come during the night and to awaken us up in case of emergenices. One night I heard someone at the door of the tent and called out "Who is there?" The reply came in strong Milesian accent "The Sintinel, Y'r 'onor," "What are you doing?" "Foldin' in the Adjutants legs out of the rain." Mat was a pretty sound sleeper in those days and I do not recall that the process of "foldin'" aroused him from his slumbers. A vivid memory comes to me of a night attack upon Sumter by the monitors. There was not a breath of air stirring and the water of the harbor was like a mill pond; an intense stillness was over everything—just one of the nights when sound travels indefinitely far. Suddenly the quiet was broken by the bellowing of the fifteen inch guns and the roar of bursting shell as one iron clad after another opened upon the Fort. It was very impressive to us at Fort Johnson as we stood by our guns not knowing how soon we ourselves might be engaged. The intense blackness of the night would be followed by flashes from the ships like lightning while the peculiar atmospheric conditions that prevailed made the roar of the explosions seem continuous. I never quite understood why this attack was made as nothing was accomplished by it; possibly it was intended to find out whether the defensive power of Sumter was good or not. The old Fort appeared a perfect ruin but the Yanks ascertained that considerable fighting ability was still there. The fleet retired just before dawn and in going sent a few shells in our direction, but that was our only share in the night's performance. The most formidable of the enemy's vessels was a huge iron clad known as the "New Ironsides." Those of us who were exposed to her fire at sundry times held her in great respect and were always glad to get under cover when she was around. At that time she was reported to be the most powerful vessel afloat and I have never seen the statement contradicted. Against this leviathan a torpedo attack was planned, its execution being committed to Lieut. Glassell of the Confederate Navy. The means at his disposal seemed woefully disproportionate to the work but in spite of that the attempt came very near being a great success. A little steam pleasure boat was fitted with a long spar at her bow to which was attached a percussion torpedo containing a heavy explosive charge. Glassell started down the harbor one dark night in his little craft which bore the very appropriate name of the "David." His crew, I believe, consisted of only two men, the engineer and one other, though I do not speak with certainty on this point. He drew quite near to the Ironsides before he was discovered
and hailed by a sentinel; his response was a quick order to go ahead at full speed straight for the big ship. Unfortunately there was a strong ebb tide flowing and it swept the bow of the little craft out of her direct course so the blow given was a glancing one; moreover it struck the Ironsides just at the point where one of her cross bulkheads happened to be located. But for these two happenings there is little doubt that the great war ship would have been sunk where she lay. As it was the shock given to her framework was tremendous—she began to leak badly and in point of fact it eliminated her from the fighting force of the enemy for a very long time. I do not know that she ever fired another gun in Charleston harbor, certainly she did not during our stay there. Meanwhile things were going badly on the "David;" the explosion of the torpedo sent a great wave over her that put out her fires and washed Lieut. Glassell overboard. He managed to reach the bow chains of one of the Federal fleet and was made a prisoner of war while the David floated helplessly away in the darkness. But the men on board of her were plucky and resourceful. Undismayed by the roar of the enemy's guns that blazed away at them from every quarter—they tore out the lining of the little boat for kindling wood, relighted the fires, succeeded in getting up steam once more and reached the wharf at Charleston in safety. Poor Glassell remained a prisoner I believe until the end of the war. There was much heated talk in the Northern papers of hanging him as a "pirate," but that was the nonsensical utterance of irresponsible parties—the authorities knew that his attempt was a perfectly legitimate one in warfare. I had been notified, as commander of Fort Johnson that his attack on the Ironsides was to be made in order that Glassell might receive our protection should circumstances have led him to run in under our guns. On the following morning therefore I was up by daylight, hoping to find the big ship gone; but to my great disappointment there she was still at her anchorage, though it was some satisfaction to note that she heeled over almost on her beam ends and streams of water were flowing from her scuppers—pretty good evidence this gave that she had been seriously injured and that it was necessary to keep her afloat by the pumps. As I have said there was a comfort in that much but it would have been so much better just to see the tops of her masts sticking out of the water.

Battery Wagner was finally evacuated by the Confederates but not until the trenches of the enemy had reached the very edge of the moat. The old sand fort had endured a pounding of fifty-one
days and its defence effectually blocked Gen Gilmore's hopes of getting possession of the City of Charleston, the one thing for which his campaign had been inaugurated. He gained the outpost of Morris Island but not one step beyond that; the City remained in the hands of the Confederacy until the last months of the war, when, as I have already noted, the advance of Gen. Sherman's army from Savannah northward necessarily led to its fall—the cause itself had failed by that time however. In the latter part of the autumn of 1863 we were ordered back to the lines about Savannah, and were encamped in what was then open ground, just back of the Massie School. The Regiment was very much broken up; four companies were with me, two other in the Batteries on the Savannah River, two at Caustons Bluff where very heavy works had been erected, and two at Fort McAllister on the Ogeechee River. I was very anxious to get the command together and made several applications, from time to time, asking that it might be done, but the exigencies of the service seemed to forbid, and I had to content myself with things as they were—a lesson that a soldier has to learn very soon in his career. The winter passed quietly with us. We were sent once to meet a force of the enemy that landed on Whitemarsh Island though they did not remain there long enough for us to get at them. Another expedition was out to Rose Dhu to assist in quelling a mutiny that had broken out in a part of Col Alfred Hartridges Command. I have forgotten what caused the trouble, which did not prove to be very serious; it was ended without the necessity of using force, very much to my satisfaction for I dreaded the possibility of having to fire upon our own men in gray. Two or three of the ring-leaders were court-martalled and punished and my connection with the Court as its President led to a rather funny incident. My orders from Gen Colston (under whose command we were brigaded) required me to report at the close of each day what the proceedings had developed. After a very busy session I had written out my dispatch to the General and given it to Col. Hartridge to have it sent in by his courier who was to start in for the City at daylight; then I threw myself on a sofa and went off into the soundest kind of a sleep. I had been up for the greater part of two nights and had been continuously busy for the whole of two days. It was the sleep of exhaustion from which Hartridge found it very hard to awaken me, as he did about midnight, to give information that made certain changes necessary in the report. I got up, opened the dispatch and sat down at the table to write. Meanwhile Hartridge began to talk to the courier giving the man instructions concerning private business that he wished attended to
in the City. He was to carry certain articles of clothing to Mrs Wayne on Liberty Street, to buy so many pounds of fresh beef from such and such a butcher, etc etc; and every word that he uttered I wrote down automatically in the dispatch without the slightest idea of what I was doing. Then in a minute I was fast asleep again. When morning came I awoke with a certain dim sense of what had happened yet unable to recall anything clearly. I hurried to Hartridge who said there was no doubt of my having added to the dispatch but what was added he did not know; the courier had been gone for some time but possibly might be overtaken by a fast rider. Accordingly I roused up Uncle Mat and got him to ride “in hot haste” to try to accomplish this. He was very good about it and was off in a few minutes but the man had too long a start and when Mat finally got to the General’s Headquarters he was received with roars of laughter by the staff; the dispatch had been delivered, was even then being pondered over and found incomprehensible. Henry Cunningham, one of the staff made the remark, “it is a good thing that Col. Olmstead has the reputation for sobriety that is his.” The incident mortified me no little at the time, yet I had to laugh over it too.

Early in the spring of 1864 I was again detached from regimental duty and sent over to Pocotaligo to take command of the 3rd Military District of South Carolina, relieving Gen Wm S Walker who had held that position for a long while and was ordered to Virginia. I went alone except for my orderly Linskey having been informed that Gen Walkers District Staff would serve as mine. I could not help feeling a little lonely in being cut off from the officers of the Regiment to whom I was bound by so many ties, but the gentlemen who met me were very courteous and cordial – none but pleasant memories of them remain in my mind. General Walker was a charming gentleman, a soldier every inch of him and a man of distinguished presence. He had one or two severe fights in the defence of the District – gaining a very notable victory over a largely superior force, under the live oaks of Pocotaligo. This gave him the sobriquet “Live Oak Walker” by which he is generally known and distinguished from the brilliant Georgian, Gen Wm H T Walker under whom I afterward served. He remained at the Headquarters only one day after my arrival and a very busy day it was for me, trying to get a grasp of the new conditions in which I was placed. The District was a very difficult one for a stranger to learn topographically; it
embraced the coast line from the Savannah River half way to Charleston. The railroad between the two cities ran through it and this had been the object of repeated attacks by the enemy who held Port Royal harbor in strong force. The Combahee and Ashepoo Rivers came down to the sea within the District and there were also several salt water inlets running far inland. These not only offered facilities for attack by an enterprising enemy at various points, but likewise increased the difficulty of defence since all the water ways had to be guarded and the Confederate force could only be concentrated at the last moment when the plan of the enemy had been developed. Gen. Walker who had been in command for two years or more had drawn up in writing the plans of battle that he had formulated in case the enemy landed at one point or another. These plans he very kindly turned over to me and they caused much burning of "the midnight oil" during my stay at Pocotaligo. They comprehended not only the General's idea as to the position of his forces in actual battle but likewise the method of concentrating the widely scattered troops under varying conditions. At that time every Regiment Battalion and Battery that could possibly be spared from coast defence was being hurried to Virginia to aid Lee in his death grapple with Grant, or to Johnston's army in North Georgia that was facing the advance of Sherman from Chattanooga. I found accordingly that the force in the 3rd Military District upon which Gen. Walkers plans were based, had been sadly depleted and that while what he had written gave me valuable ideas to study and keep in mind, I had, after all, only myself to depend upon. The first thing to do, the imperative thing, was to gain personal knowledge of the country to be defended and to that my every energy was devoted every day and all day. From what I have written of the lay of the land it will be seen that it consisted of a series of peninsulas separated by water courses so that it was not possible to ride directly from one end of the District to the other. I was in the saddle at early morning and would ride until night, taking the peninsulas one by one and trying to fix the general features of each of them in my mind as clearly as possible. I am obliged to say, however, that with increasing knowledge of the situation there came greater and constantly growing solicitude. The country was so open to attack—up any one of half a dozen avenues the enemy might be upon us in a night—our own forces were so isolated and scattered, that I could not comprehend why the important railroad had not long ago been seized and held; and Gen. Lees direct communication with the South thus severed. In spite of all this however I much enjoyed those long rides through the swamps and under
the oaks in the beauty of early spring. My headquarters were in the
residence of a Capt Gregory who was the Engineer Officer of the
District—a very pleasant gentleman who did all in his power to make
me feel at home in his house. The quartermaster was a Capt Screven
a relative of the Savannah Screvens. Then there were two or three
Charlestonians and a Capt Clark a Georgian whom I had known
before the war. Altogether we formed a pleasant circle and had
generally a merry time at the dinner hour when the labors of the day
were over. I have spoken above at my surprise that the Yankees
at Port Royal did not pick their opportunities but it probably was
the result of their over estimating our strength—a mistake that Gen-
erals are very apt to make. It was the special weakness of Gen Mc-
Clellan who might readily have captured Richmond in the campaign
of 1862 had he pushed boldly forward after the battle of Williams-
burg; but discretion was too deeply ingrained in his mental make up.
He imagined tremendous armies between himself and the coveted
city and they kept him from advancing—no less surely than armies
of flesh and blood would have done. In point of fact the Confederates
before him were much fewer than his own forces; it was not until
later that our authorities were able to concentrate for defence; Mc-
Clellan gave us the time to do it.

Fortunately I was not called upon to test my ability to defend
the District. After I had been there a few weeks orders came for
me to turn over the Command to Brig Gen Thomas Jordan, who was
sent to take it, and to return myself to the First Regiment which
was ordered to assemble at Savannah and proceed to join the army of
Gen Joseph E. Johnston who was then facing General Sherman in
North Georgia. I obeyed the command with alacrity on the day it
reached me. It was a great joy to have the ten companies together
for they made a noble Regiment that any man might have felt proud
to lead—two companies of the [Irish Jasper] Greens, one of the Ogle-
thorpe Light Infantry, the Tattnall Guards, German Volunteers, City
Light Guard, Coast Rifles, Emmett Rifles, Washington Volunteers
and Irish Volunteers. The Regiment joined the army of Gen Jos E
Johnston when it was in position to the North and West of Marietta,
the line stretching across the Western and Atlantic Railroad North
of Kenesaw Mountain on the right and covering Lost Mountain on
the left. We left the train at Marietta where orders were handed me
to march to the left and join Mercer’s Brigade of Walkers Division
and Hardee’s Corps. Genl Hugh Mercer was the father of Col George
A Mercer, whom you knew in his later life; he was a West Pointer
a man of cultivation and refinement as well as of undoubted courage,
a charming gentleman but, I think, rather too old for the vigorous requirement of duty in the field. At the beginning of the war he had been Colonel of the First Regiment when I was its Major, and when promoted to be a Brigadier General was for a long while in command of the Military District around Savannah and down the coast. He gladly welcomed the Regiment to his Brigade which then consisted of three other Georgia Regiments, the Fifty-fourth, Col C H Way, the Fifty-seventh, Col Barkuloo, and the Sixty-third, Col George Gordon, (an older brother of the late Genl W W Gordon). Our Division Commander Major Gen'l Wm. H. T. Walker, (father of Mrs C. C. Schley), was an officer of wide spread reputation for dash and courage who had served with great ability in the Mexican War where he had been desperately wounded. The Corps Commander Lieut Gen Wm J Hardee was also a Georgian whose name was well known both North and South. He was at one time Superintendent of the Military Academy at West Point and was the author of the book of Infantry Tactics used by both armies; like Genl Walker he had earned fame by brilliant service in Mexico. The story is told of him that on one occasion he met a straggling soldier on the road whom he reproached for straying from the ranks. "Who are you" said the soldier. "I am General Hardee" replied the Genl. "What! the man who wrote the Tactics." "The same." "Well Gen'l you told us a lot about 'Double Column at half distance' but you never said nothing about double distance on half rations." I don't know how the interview ended but the soldier's wit ought to have saved him from any severe punishment. Genl Hardee had been with the Western Army from the beginning of the war and I believe had taken prominent part in every one of its many battles. He too was related to someone you all knew, he was the uncle of an old friend Major Chas S Hardee.

We had, it will be seen, every reason to be satisfied with the leadership under which we had come and it was specially gratifying to be brigaded with Georgians whom we knew.

Genl Mercer's Staff consisted of his son, Capt George A Mercer, Asst Adjutant Genl, Major James Williams and Capt W W Gordon Inspectors, Major James Stewart, Quarter Master and Capt John I Stoddard Aide de Camp. In my service with the Brigade I was thrown much and intimately with these gentlemen and there is no memory of my association with them that is not pleasant to dwell upon. The Brigade was a fine one that we all felt proud to be part of; it did its whole duty to the end.

The 57th Regiment had done service in the Vicksburg Campaign with honor to itself. I never got to anything like intimacy with its
Colonel, but the Lieut Col, C. S. Guyton I like exceedingly. He was a man of middle size with a face of much refinement, gentle in speech yet possessing a resolution of character that never failed him in any emergency.

The service of the other Regiments up to that time had been confined to the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina. Walker's was a reserve Division which meant that as a rule it had no fixed place in the line of battle but was moved about from point to point as occasion might require to strengthen any weak places in the line when threatened by the enemy. These changes were generally made at night and they involved much loss of sleep marching and counter-marching while other commands were resting. The roads too were particularly bad, there had been a great deal of rain and the constant passage of artillery and transportation trains had cut them up most abominably. A small mud-hole in a soft spot would gradually widen and deepen through the combined action of falling rain and grinding wheels until the entire road bed would be a perfect quagmire in which the heavily laden baggage wagons or pieces of artillery would sink to the axles. Very often too these bogs extended into the adjoining fields as one vehicle after another would drive out in the side in the search for firmer ground. The memory of the night marches over these roads is like a night mare to me as I think of them; horses and men wearied and exhausted, stumbling along, through red clay mud and darkness—prolonged waitings every few hundred yards when somewhere in front a stalled wagon or broken down caisson would block the road and all this with little prospect of rest and refreshment in the mornings. Ordinarily on the march the men were lively and good natured, full of jest and badinage, often breaking into songs, but these night tramps were generally made in moody silence. I remember to have fallen asleep in the saddle often, waking with a start and wondering where I was when the order came to move on. This is a side of war that histories do not lay much stress upon but every old soldier bears it in mind.

Our Lieut Col. W. S. Rockwell was not much of a horseman, not liking much to exercise himself in that way even in bright sunny weather, so experience such as I have described was specially trying to him. On one miserably rainy disagreeable night we were routed out of bivouac and brought out into the road for a march between ten and eleven o'clock. Taking my place at the head of the column I found the old Colonel there on foot. I tried to remonstrate with him for not riding but he replied "No! I am not going to risk myself on a horse on a night like this." So, on he trudged through mud and mire.
though by no means adapted by nature for such a promenade. I felt very sorry for him, still the choice was his own and nothing could be done to help him. After a while we came to a place where the road ran along a steep slope and hearing a flop behind me in the black darkness I called out, "Colonel! is that you?" There was a brief moment of hesitation, then came a rather faint reply in a tone of simulated cheerfulness, "Yes, I slipped." Poor old chap, he ought to have been comfortably at home in bed that very minute. His zeal to serve was all right, but years and figure were too much for him. When morning dawned he was missing, to my great uneasiness, for I understood that the march had been in rather close proximity to the enemy and I thought it possible that he might have been picked up by them. Accordingly I sent his orderly, Johnnie Counts, on his horse to hunt for him on the road we had traveled. An hour or two later Counts reported that he had found the old gentleman at a farmer's house, seated before a blazing wood fire, bare-footed, one wet sock on each andiron, a shoe in each corner of the fireplace and the back of his coat stiff with red clay mud from collar to tail. But there was a frying pan on the floor before him, a rash of bacon in one hand, a knife in the other, and a bright twinkle in his eye as he thus sat giving orders to the household "as one born to command." Later in the day he joined us, none the worse for the nights adventure.

One of our marches carried us out to an advanced position on the Burnt Hickory road in front of Kenesaw Mountain where for about a week in company with a Brigade from another Division, we held a false line while the real line in our rear was being fortified. The orders were to be firm against all skirmishing attacks but to retire before a line of battle. We were upon a ridge and the ground in the immediate front sloped down into an enormous field of corn through which a pathway led from the North East corner to the South West corner. Beyond was a thick wood that was occupied by a line of Confederate Cavalry whose presence there saved us from the necessity of picket duty. On the first day we threw up a light breastwork and then, the front being guarded by the Cavalry, enjoyed several days of good rest after the long siege of marching. Bright and early one morning there was the sudden sound of active skirmishing in the wood beyond; it grew heavier and heavier with each passing moment. The two Brigades stood to their arms and soon the Cavalry came streaming out of the wood riding straight across the field and taking position behind us. The edge of the wood became blue with Yankees, a battery of their guns was rushed up and a heavy fire was opened both of infantry and artillery upon our lines. Just then a little inci-
dent happened that I have often laughed over and told about since. In the N E corner of the field a belated cavalry-man appeared mounted upon a mule—he came out just at the head of the pathway that I have described and endeavored to ride straight across to the Confederate position but her ladyship the mule saw the pathway leading diagonally between the contending forces and chose that for her line of retreat. She jogged steadily on while we could see the rider tugging at the rein and making vigorous effort to bring her head around to the way he wanted to go. It was useless however and now he was brought to the notice of the enemy who began firing upon him while shouts of laughter went up from their ranks at his unfortunate plight. I have often thought since that they did not really want to hit him for when, in manly defiance, he rose in his stirrups, faced them and waved an old sombrero over his head they gave him a cheer as the mule ambled along to a place of safety far to the left.

While this was going on I was watching the road with much intentness expecting every moment to see a charging column emerge therefrom. The men were all ready and strong up to the point where they would have made a noble fight, but it was not intended that we should. A voice called and I turned to meet Capt Gordon who brought an order for the Regiment to retire. Then I made a tactical mistake that I have always been thankful led to no unhappy consequences. Instead of retiring in line as we should have done, I gave the order “By the right of companies to the rear” thus thinning the Regiment into a formation of ten companies marching to the rear in so many columns, with intervals between them, something like this [drawing in the manuscript] My reason for doing this was the sudden thought that this formation would present a smaller mark for artillery fire, but we no sooner had made the move than it flashed upon me that if a shell struck a line it would only kill the two men who happened to be at that point, while if it struck the end of one of these columns the loss of life would be great indeed. Fortunately we escaped this danger as most of the shells went over our heads or between the intervals. I have gone into this to show how careful an officer should be who has the lives of men in his keeping. His mind should always be clear, his wits keen in every emergency. Had disaster followed upon my mistake it is probable that no one would ever have blamed me for it but I should never have forgiven myself. I remember the great admiration I felt for Lieut Col Dargan of the 21st So Carolina Regt who sprang from his sleep one night when a false alarm aroused the garrison of Fort Johnson on James Island, and without a seconds delay shouted the command that brought order and atten-
tion among his men. The afternoon of the day on which we retired from our advanced position on the Burnt Hickory road to the main lines was an eventful one for the Regiment. Several of its companies were sent out under Major Ford as a picket force some hundred yards and more to the front. They had scarcely gotten into position when they were vigorously attacked by the enemy and until night fall the fighting was severe, but their line was held. The loss in killed and wounded was heavy but less severe than it would have been but for the thick woods which gave more or less shelter to the men. Among the wounded was Sergt McGowan of Co A who for so many years after the war held the office of Receiver of Tax Returns for Chatham County. A ball shattered his arm and ended his days of soldiering. My boyhood friend Cyrus Carter (brother of Miss Eliza,) received his death wound. I went to the field hospital to see him and found that there was no possible hope of saving his life. He was perfectly calm and knew his condition, facing the truth like the Christian gentleman that he was. He spoke of his wife and child with infinite tenderness and said the thought of leaving them gave the only pang for him in dying. I knelt at his side and prayed with him; the roar of musketry in our ears continuously as the petition ascended. An attack in force upon our main line was anticipated to follow this hot picket fight, so I was compelled to hurry back to my post bidding adieu forever to the friend whom I had known from early childhood; he died that night in the hospital in Marietta to which he was removed. Carter was a man of deep piety, albeit a little narrow in his denominational views; his soul was pure, his heart brave, — a good and true man.

The fighting ended at nightfall, the attack we looked for was not made. For the two or three weeks that followed, the armies of Johnston and Sherman were in close contact—it was a continuous grapple; fierce fighting on the picket lines and steady artillery fire from early dawn far into the night. Every day added its quota to the dreadful list of killed and wounded, but on neither side was there any evidence of an abatement of the grim determination with which the campaign had been conducted from its beginning.

From Dalton down to Atlanta practically the same tactics were repeated over and over again. Johnston would select a line straddling the Western and Atlantic Railroad and fortify it with care. Then Sherman would deploy his army until he had covered his opponents entire front and, this being done, he would then send a corps Southward on one or both of the Confederate flanks. Superior numbers enabled him to do this at will and the result necessarily was Johnston's retreat to a new position. But these retreats were always made in the most masterly way—always with a firm front and without the slightest
loss of war material. Indeed it has been said that he did not abandon even so much as a single wheelbarrow. Sherman would vary the performance occasionally by savage assaults upon the Confederate lines, and in these he invariably met with bloody repulse—at Resaca, at New Hope Church, at Kenesaw Mountain, at Smyrna Church and in numerous minor engagements that have not been honored with a specific name, but in which as many men lost their lives as in the most Sanguinary battle of the Revolution.

On the night we fell back to the position about Kenesaw Mountain the 1st Regiment sustained a serious loss in the capture of its senior Captain, Yates Levy, (a brother of Mrs Octavus Cohen) and a number of the men of his company who formed the Regiments detail on the picket line that day some little distance out in front of the main line.

Major Allen of the 63rd was the officer in command of the picket and his orders were to remain in position for a certain time after the Brigade had retired and then to withdraw quietly and follow it without attracting the attention of the enemy. When Allen joined us about day break he brought in the details of the 54th, the 57th and the 63rd Regiments but not that of the 1st. On being asked about them he expressed great sorrow and chagrin and said that in some way he had lost touch with them in the black darkness of the night and had not been able to communicate the order for withdrawal. He also said that the orders given to him to preserve quiet, had prevented any loud calling to locate the detail and that failing to find Captain Levy he had to come in without him when the time was up. It was not a satisfactory explanation to me for I felt that the first duty of an officer commanding a picket line should be to acquaint himself with the location of every part of his force and to keep in touch with it by constant visitation, but there was nothing that could be done save to accept the fact as one of the unfortunate incidents of war. Captain Levy wrote to me some time afterward from the Federal prison on Johnsons Island, Lake Erie, to which he had been taken after his capture. He said that word had been brought to him by a Confederate officer who had recently been taken, that Major Allen had charged him and his men with being asleep at their post on the night of the capture, giving that as the reason why they could not be found. The Captain resented this imputation with considerable heat and requested me as his commanding officer to defend his reputation by bringing charges against Major Allen for neglect of duty. He also declared that he would demand personal satisfaction when he got out of prison. Allen told me when I spoke to him about this letter that he had never made the charge that reached Capt Levys ears;
and there the matter dropped for reflection convinced me that it was the easiest thing in the World for the original accident to have happened, taking into consideration the black darkness of the night & the dense wood in which the picket was placed. It was only just, likewise, to remember the anxiety of mind that would naturally oppress an officer in Major Allen’s position, the fear that undue delay in his movements might involve the loss of his entire force.

After a very exhausting night we reached the ground that our Division was assigned to, on the South West flank of Kenesaw Mountain, and as soon as a halt was sounded the men dropped to the ground for rest and sleep. But just then the Engineers wagons drove up with intrenching tools and orders were given to begin work at once throwing up works on our front. There was considerable dilitoriness in responding to this order; the men moved with great reluctance apparently overcome by fatigue; but suddenly there came the booming of Sherman’s artillery in the near distance and a “change came over the spirit of their dreams.” The quickening effect of the sound was ludicrous in the extreme. The sleepers sprang to their feet, the wagons were unloaded post haste and spades picks and axes began to fly with great alacrity. A remark of Lieut Everett’s, a fine young fellow in the 57th, amused me very much. “Boys,” he said, “I’m going to get a cannon on my plantation when the war ends, there’s nothing like it to make lazy people work.”

The building of field works became quite an art during the war in both Northern and Southern armies. It was really quite wonderful how rapidly it was accomplished and with what skill every device was used to hinder the onset of an enemy and give protection to the defending force. At every position where troops expected to be attacked these works were put up and would be ready for occupancy in a very few hours. A ditch about three feet deep and five or six feet in width was dug and the earth thrown out on the side toward the enemy to form a parapet leaving a little bench, (or “banquette” as it was called) for the men to kneel upon in delivering their fire. [Drawing in the manuscript]. Along the crest of the parapet logs were ranged upon blocks that lifted them up a few inches and through this opening the firing was done, the logs protecting the heads of the troops. It was a good protection, too, against the fire of musketry but an added danger if the log happened to be struck by a shell. In the front of the parapet an “abbattis” was laid consisting of young trees stripped of their leaves with the branches sharpened and turned outward. In some of the works around Atlanta “tanglements” of wire bound the “abbattis” together and increased its efficiency, but in the
ordinary field works this could not be done as wire formed no part of the field equipment. The ditches that were the genesis of these works were called “the trenches” and in them when the positions were exposed to fire the men lived and slept.

It will interest you to learn something of how we were fed in those days. The army regulations stipulate that rations are to be issued to the enlisted men but leave the officers to provide for themselves as best they may from their pay. This rule was observed at the beginning of the war but in active campaigning it was found to be impracticable, (among the Confederates at least,) for officers to look after their wants in this direction. In the first place there were no sources of supply to be depended upon and then the daily and hourly exigencies of service left an officer no time for his individual house keeping. This was certainly true in the long grapple between Johnston and Sherman in North Georgia, and none the less so in Gen Lee’s army. So the Confederate Congress passed a law that rations were to be issued to officers as well as to men, and we were “all on a footin’” as the old country woman remarked to your Aunt Sue. The ration as prescribed by regulations is varied and ample, but with us it consisted of corn bread, meat, (generally bacon and sometimes stringy beef) with a little salt; the coffee, sugar, molasses, beans, flour &c that are so alluring in the printed list of rations, were conspicuous by their absence.

From every Regiment men were detailed to form what was known as the “cooking brigade” who performed these ministrations in camp well to the rear. Corn bread was all they cooked, the meat being issued raw for each man in each mess to treat as taste and opportunity might permit. The bread was prepared in dutch ovens and each individual “pone” bore the sign manual of the cook who had pressed it into shape; the finger prints were plainly to be seen, with transverse ridges between, on every one of them. I reflected some times upon the degree of cleanliness of these fingers, but it was just as well not to let the mind dwell upon that theme too particularly. The rations were usually brought up in the Commissary wagons to the main line in the dusk of the evening, to avoid the fire of the enemy; then what the men did not eat at once was stored away for the next days consumption in the haversacks, or “war bags” to be brought forth, when needed, encrusted with the stale crumbs, fragments of tobacco and sand, always to be found in the bottom of these receptacles. “Pretty poor fare” you will say, and I am ready to agree with you, but in that campaign there was enough of it and the most of us attacked it with appetites and digestions that regarded quantity more than quality,
and knew nothing of what has been very wittily called "The remorse of guilty stomachs." The days in front of Kenesaw were the longest in the year, in the month of June; dawn came about four o'clock and the light lasted until nearly eight in the evening. The firing began as soon as there was light enough for the gunners to see and all day long our line was searched by shot and shell. It will be readily understood how wearing this was to nerves and what a relief the coming of darkness brought. There were many narrow escapes in every one's experience, so many indeed that they often passed with no more than a moments comment. I remember one occasion particularly when my dear friend John Hopkins and myself were very close to death without receiving any harm whatever. It was just at dusk after a hard day, we thought the firing was over and sat down together on a little slope a short distance back of the trenches, lighting a small fire to warm our evening repast of "Cush." The blaze attracted the attention of one of the enemies batteries and suddenly a rifle shell came hurtling through the air struck the slope not three feet from where we were sitting and buried itself in the ground. For an instant we breathlessly expected the explosion but the shell failed to burst, had it done so, doubtless we would both have been killed, or had the ground been level then there would have been the same result from the ricochet. It is needless to add that the fire was extinguished without delay.

General Sherman made desperate and repeated attempts to take the Kenesaw position by storm but on every occasion he was met with a resolution that defeated him. He suffered very heavy loss in attack upon Gen Cheatham's Division which formed the left of our corps; after he had been driven back then the woods through which his columns had charged caught fire and a number of the poor wounded Federals were burned to death—one of the unmitigated horrors of war. In our Brigade front one day all of our rifle pits, then held by the 63rd Georgia were taken by the rapid advance of a line of battle, many of the men being bayonetted in the pits but the lost ground was regained by a gallant counter attack led by our Inspector General, Major James Williams. Kenesaw Mountain was held by General French's Division and against this a most determined effort was made. There was heavy artillery fire, and sharp picket fighting along the entire line and we all stood to our arms not knowing where the assault would come: to the surprise of all on our side however it was against the mountain, decidedly the strongest point in the whole Confederate position. From base to summit the dual peaks of old Kenesaw were wreathed in smoke and flame from flashing guns, bursting shells and burning forest. As I watched it there came to me
a memory of having once before seen the mountain on fire in my student days—then simply an interesting spectacle, but now combined with the awful sublimity of battle. Failing at every point to break the integrity of General Johnston's line the enemy gave us a few days of comparative quiet, then General Sherman renewed his old tactics of pushing a force Southward, past the flanks of the Confederate army to threaten its line of communication. In this there was but one response we had to fall back. The order for this movement came to me about eleven o'clock at night when the whole command was in the profound slumber that blessed our eyes in these days. In a few minutes the Regiment was formed and we filed out onto the road to take our place in the Brigade column. The night was dark and the little country road narrow, so progress was exceedingly slow because of the thousand and one obstructions to a march of troops under such conditions. We would go on for a few hundred yards and then halt for what seemed an interminable time—then go on again to be halted again in a few minutes. I sat on my horse taking little "cat naps," indifferent to surroundings, when suddenly the sense of being in a familiar spot aroused me; we were marching up the rear of the hill on which the old Georgia Military Institute was located. It was the school in which I had been educated and in which I had spent four happy years. Many had been my dreams of the future while there but never had there been forecast of such an event as marching with an army corps at midnight through this beloved spot. Every inch of its soil every brick of its buildings was dear to me and it saddened my soul to believe that its destruction was near. It had furnished too many officers to the Confederate Army to be spared and Sherman ordered it to be burned on the following day. You may be sure that memory was busy and that my mind was full of the associations so strangely awakened. My dearest friend at the Institute had been John Patton of the Class of 1857, as noble a young fellow as ever lived, generous, high spirited, courageous and loving with an intellect that promised great things for his future. He had been the best man at my wedding, and I had looked forward to the enjoyment of his friendship while my life lasted. And now riding there in the dark there came, with a bitter pang, the thought that for nearly two years he had slept in a soldiers grave. He was killed in the Battle of South Mountain in Lees invasion of Maryland in 1862, being at that time a Captain in your Uncle Charles Williams's Regiment. There were recollections too of many others of the old Cadet Corps who had laid down their lives for the South, (in almost every battle of the War some of them had perished,) and their faces haunted me as I rode through the familiar grounds.
The retreat stopped at a strong position near Smyrna Church, which if I remember aright was a few miles North of the Chattahoochee River. Arriving there early in the morning I was instructed to turn the Regiment over to Major Ford and assume command of the Brigade because of the temporary illness of General Mercer, a duty that I assumed with considerable reluctance in my own heart, though there was no outward expression of it. The line that we occupied was a commanding one having a fine sweep of the country before it excepting for a hill that stood a short distance out in our immediate front.

During the day General Walker, the Division Commander rode up with the Inspector General of the Corps and ordered me to send a Regiment out to seize and hold the hill, saying that General Hardee feared the enemy would take it for an artillery position. Of course there was no such thing as demurring but I took the liberty of pointing out to General Walker that any troops sent out there would be isolated and, moreover that should the enemy put a battery upon the hill he could not use it since the summit was within range of the musketry fire of our main line. The General said he was aware of these facts but that the orders to him were imperative and must be obeyed. There is an unwritten law in most military organizations composed of several units that their units take turn and turn about in any extra services that the command may be called upon for outside of the regular routine and as the First Regiment was then at the head of the roster I had to order it out to take possession of the hill, though with full realization that the duty before it was perilous in the extreme and believing, in spite of Division and Corps Commanders that it was a needless risk. The Regiment had scarcely reached its post and begun to fortify when a heavy artillery fire was opened upon it and in a very few minutes a number of the men were killed and wounded. Then there was an abundance of the enemy’s skirmish lines upon either flank and to avoid being cut off and surrounded there was nothing for the Regiment to do save to retire to the main line. When this was done the enemy rushed a battery to the top of the hill as had been anticipated, but we opened upon the gunners at once with rifle fire and drove them rapidly away. They left the guns standing without a man near them and there they remained harmless and silent all the rest of the day and were removed under cover of the night. My judgment in the premises had been justified but that did not bring back the lives that were lost nor heal the grievous wounds that had been inflicted. How many instances of this kind there must have been during these long four years of war; how many
lives recklessly squandered through insufficient consideration before
the giving of orders! Among the wounded that day was Bobby Lewis
who was struck by a fragment of shell in the chest. Capt Lachlison
told me that Bobby thought he was going to die at once and that he
called in your Uncle Mat Hopkins to pray for him. The request
embarrassed Mat very much for at that time he was not much given
to prayer; looking around however he saw his brother John and called
to him "Oh! John, come here" Which John did and kneeling by the
wounded man in the midst of shot and shell, prayed earnestly for him.
That was the kind of a man John Hopkins was; a self controlled, big
hearted, pure-minded Christian gentleman. One of the great bless-
ings of my life has been the love of these two brothers for me and
my love for them. I can not remember when it began but I do know
that the tie which binds our hearts together is one over which time
and death have no power. It belongs to that part of our natures that
is immortal.

Shortly after the lamentable affair at Smyrna Church the retreat
of the Confederate army continued. A little North of the Chatt-a-
hoochee River we passed through fortifications of great strength
that had been prepared for us to defend and I remember my deep
regret that they should have been abandoned without a struggle;
yet it was unavoidable because of the preponderance of the Federal
forces. Sherman while engaging Johnston's entire front had pushed
forward a corps beyond each flank of the Confederate position,
thus directly threatening our communications with Atlanta. There
was nothing left for us to do save to get back, and that we did.
We crossed the River on a pontoon bridge and as we halted for a
while on the Southern bank I observed Capt Wallace Howard of
the 63rd Ga. watching the crossing of the troops and gazing with
melancholy earnestness upon the hills on the opposite side. I made
some remark to him about our nearing the point, Atlanta, where
the great battle must be fought. "I don't know" he replied "I don't
like giving up so much territory, it looks to me like the beginning
of the end and as though we were going right straight down to the
Gulf of Mexico." Captain Howard was the father of Jet Howard
who was a Lieutenant of the police in Savannah after the war. Mrs
Henry Bryan was also a daughter of his. He was a man of culture,
refinement and ability well known in literary circles as the author
of "The Young Marooners."18 Hearing his pessimistic talk gave me
the first real doubts that had ever entered my mind as to the ultimate

18 Col. Olmstead is mistaken here; The Young Marooners was written by
Francis R. Goulding whose wife was Mary W. Howard.
success of the Southern Cause. I reflected however that his home
was in the country occupied by the enemy—a fact that would natu-
urally explain his low spirits, and the thought cheered me, but he was
not very far from the truth. The two armies lined the banks of the
Chattahoochee for several days and by unspoken consent of each
side there was a general suspension of the heavy picket firing that
had marked the operations all summer long. The men called out jokes
to each other across the stream and frequently “Johnny Reb” and
“Yank” would swim out to meet each other in the middle of the river
to swap tobacco for sugar or some other delicacy that might be lack-
ing in the Confederate commissariat. It appeared a harmless inter-
change of courtesies to me but rigorous orders were issued to have
it stopped lest it should lead to the discovery by the enemy of certain
fords across the river by which an advance might be made.

On one occasion while we were at this position I was detailed as
division officer of the day with instructions to see to the maintenance
of this order. The duty involved a constant oversight of a long section
of the river bank; a miserable, cold Northeast rain storm set in during
the night and the early mornings found me soaking wet, chilled to
the bone and fagged out from want of sleep, just the conditions to
make a man willing to give his head for a cup of coffee, (a stimulant
that we knew nothing of in our Army.)

Looking across the river I saw two Yankee soldiers walking along
with a pole, stretching from the shoulders of one to those of the
other, from which was suspended a smoking caldron of hot coffee.
They were on their way to give a little mornings refreshment to their
line of pickets. I could almost smell the delightful aroma, and a green
eyed envy took possession of my soul. As all firing had stopped the
coffee bearers proceeded safely in the performance of their task in
plain, open sight of less happy mortals on our side of the river, a
tantalizing illustration of the old song “Thou art so near and yet so
far.” It would have been a great relief to put a bullet through that
caldron, though I have often thought how mean it was to harbor
such a feeling. None of us know however how mean we can be until
an occasion arises for the development of the “Old Adam” in us.

But now we were approaching the objective point of the Cam-
paign—the City of Atlanta—and it became apparent to every man, from
Major General down to the “high private in the rear rank” that de-
cisive battles were very near. From the Chattahoochee we fell back
to positions around the devoted city and awaited events with the
absolute certainty that they could not be delayed for many days. In
spite of the long retreat the Army was in splendid condition, full
of confidence in itself and its great leader, Joseph E Johnston, and believing that the hour had arrived when his Fabian policy was to find ample justification in final victory. And then there came a blow to our cause from which it never fully rallied. Our General was removed from command and the Army given to General Hood.

The removal of Genl Johnston at the crisis of the Campaign was one of the most lamentable events of the entire war. Its effect upon the morale of the Army was immediately disastrous; it took the heart out of the men for he was their idol and they believed in him in spite of the long retreat from Dalton to Atlanta. They knew that Sherman’s Army was much larger than our own and that the falling back had been unavoidable because of the conditions which I have already explained. But they had seen every assault of Sherman’s repulsed with bloody loss and realized that every mile of advance brought him that much farther from his base and would add to his discomfiture in the event of defeat. They believed that the Generals skill as a strategist would find opportunity to deal a fatal blow to his antagonist and that the ground was reached where it would be struck. They were prepared to follow him to the death and I believe to this day that but for his removal Atlanta would not have fallen.

The causes, or rather, the cause that led to this most unhappy action was a difference between President Davis and General Johnston that might almost be considered a personal enmity; the two men were both high spirited, quick tempered and stubborn in holding to their own views, while neither understood the other nor gave him credit for the virtues and high qualities that he really possessed. Gen Johnston had a grievance from the beginning of the war in relation to his rank in the Confederate Army, he claimed that by right he should have outranked Genl Lee and Genl Samuel Cooper, the Adjutant General, because of his relatively higher position in the old United States Army. The fact that this claim was not admitted he attributed, (it was generally believed), to President Davis and it so embittered him as entirely to prevent his giving to Mr Davis the frank confidence that always existed between the latter and Genl Lee. There was probably fault on both sides and it is difficult now to say who was most to blame though it is quite sure that had friendly good will been present between them, no distrust and suspicion in one, nor haughty reserve in the other, the battles around Atlanta would not have been fought under the leadership of General Hood. Of General Johnstons abilities as a military man there was but one opinion in the Confederacy, and
time has not altered the judgement of his contemporaries. In every thing save courage, where they stood as equals, he was head and shoulders above Genl Hood upon whom his mantle was about to fall.

Hood was a man of the utmost gallantry who had fought nobly for the Confederacy on many fields and had been desperately wounded more than once—a fine soldier for a subordinate command but lacking in the mental power and firm grasp of strategic detail that conspicuously marked his predecessor. In Virginia he had led a Division with great honor and ability but there are many who think that in that his limit was reached; it was probably his reputation as a desperate fighter that brought about his appointment as Commander of the Army of Tennessee. He was a tall, handsome man with long yellow hair and beard, he wore an artificial leg but, notwithstanding that disadvantage, sat a horse magnificently and made a noble appearance. Still, whether because the men resented his appointment or because he was without personal magnetism, the fact remains that he never excited enthusiasm in them. Wherever he rode he was received in silence—while the sight of “Old Joe” invariably provoked a storm of cheers.

Gen Johnston in his book says that it had been his intention to attack Sherman’s left wing which had crossed the Chattahoochee and was separated from the rest of the Federal Army by that river and Peach Tree Creek. I believe the order for this attack was formulated but the receipt of the President’s telegram stopped its issuance. It is quite probable that Genl Hood was made acquainted with this intention for he attempted to carry out Gen Johnston’s plan, but it took time for him to promulgate the order assuming command and to get hold of the Army. At least two precious days were lost in which the Federal position had become decidedly stronger by the crossing of a large body of troops and the chances for our success in the movement had diminished in direct proportion. On the afternoon of the 20th of July the battle of Peach Tree Creek was fought resulting in failure for the Confederates as might have been expected under the circumstances. A man of only moderate intellectual power, suddenly called to execute the plans of a military genius, with an army of disappointed discontented men without confidence in their leader, under changed conditions from those upon which those plans were based, was not the one to command success.

I do not take it upon myself to pass judgment upon the tactics of the battle, my field of observation was too limited to warrant my doing that, but all the criticisms I have read concerning them indicate the attack was delivered in a half-hearted, hap-hazard dis-
jointed way. It lacked resolution and likewise proper dispositions for the mutual support of the Divisions and Brigades engaged. Our own Division advanced over very difficult ground, first through a thick wood, then across a boggy valley through which a small water course meandered tortuously. It turned and twisted so much that we had to wade it two or three times in pressing forward. Indeed we never got fairly into action as the attack had failed in other parts of the field and the Division was withdrawn before it reached a point of close touch with the enemy.

Shortly after dark a line of battle was formed again in the dense woods and it was generally understood amongst us that it was for the purpose of a night attack upon the positions we had failed to take in the afternoon. We laid down on the ground there in a state of expectancy for some hours, but finally received an order to retire to bivouac. I must confess to having felt a great sense of relief when the order came for the plan seemed to me to promise nothing but grave disaster.

The next day, July 21st, was one of excessive heat and I was so overcome by it that I had to report on the sick list. That night Hardees Corps made a wide detour, marching through Atlanta and out toward Decatur with a view to striking Sherman's left flank that was located there. I was unable to sit my horse but rode in the ambulance immediately in rear of the Brigade. In the early morning of the 22nd I rejoined the Regiment as the Corps was being lined up for battle. Old Gen Mercer made a neat little address telling what he expected of us, then the skirmishes were sent to the front and we started forward—moving very slowly because of the thick woods. It was intended I believe that our line should strike the enemy's flank somewhat after this fashion [drawing in the manuscript] to envelope it both front and rear, but after marching a while there was a sudden halt with a great galloping to and fro of staff officers and an entire change of direction to the right. I did not understand it at the time but was told afterward that because of the density of the woods there had been a miscalculation of distance and that instead of bearing down on Sherman's exposed flank we were really marching along his front and exposing our own flank thus [drawing in the manuscript]. I do not know how true this may have been though it is very certain that the direction of the march was changed at right angles and that the change necessitated so much delay that instead of attacking in the early morning as was intended it was late in the day before we finally moved forward. We emerged from the woods passed over an open space and had begun the ascent of a little slope when the enemy
opened fire upon us. I was giving orders for the adjustment of the regimental line which had been more or less lost in going through the wood when a shell exploded in the air above me, a fragment struck me in the head and then I knew nothing more until coming to consciousness in the field hospital at some indefinite time later. That morning I had exchanged the light kepi that I had been accustomed to wear for a stout felt hat with a broad brim (one of a lot that Governor Brown had sent up to the Regiment,) and this hat was literally torn to pieces but it probably saved me from a much more serious injury. The Division suffered very severely that day. Gen Walker, its Commander, was killed and the loss in officers generally was particularly heavy. In the First Regiment we lost, among others, Capt Screven Turner, a brother-in-law of the two Hopkins boys—poor Capt Umback, too, received a wound that disfigured his handsome face and made him an invalid for life—the whole roof of his mouth was shot away. Of our color guard two were killed while bearing the colors and two others wounded. One of the killed was Joe Singer, a Bethesda boy whose gallantry at Fort Pulaski had been conspicuous. A pathetic incident was the death of the sons of Mr Wm Neyle Habersham—Joe Clay, the elder was shot down by the same volley that killed General Walker, on whose staff he had been for some time. Willie, the younger, a private in the 54th Georgia, exposed himself recklessly after learning of his brothers death, and met the same fate. You have doubtless seen the stone in Laurel Grove Cemetery that marks their resting place. The Confederate attack was made with great vigor and was successful in the first part of the battle, had it been upon the flank, instead of frontal and delivered at an early hour it might have proved a great success. But the fates were against us; the delay had given time for the bringing up of strong reinforcements for the enemy and at nightfall the Southern troops were withdrawn. On July 28th Genl Hood attacked again on another part of the Federal line and once more met with failure. Thus in eight days he had made three ill managed assaults and had nothing to show for them but a dreadful list of killed and wounded not to speak of loss of confidence in the Army. General Johnston had retreated from Dalton to Atlanta yet had he managed so that Sherman should always assault his strong positions and always disastrously to himself. Hood had demonstrated his claim to be "a fighter" but, alas! he had also shown himself lacking in other qualities equally necessary in the make-up of an Army Commander. The Army never fully trusted him and many a criticism was passed upon him by the camp fires that would have made his ears tingle. Of course many of these were unjust but
the change of commanders had surely been a fatal one for us. I have very little memory of the two or three weeks that followed the battle of the 22nd July. There must have been some concussion of the brain for I find it difficult to recall a single thing except a dreamy recollection of having shared a tent with Dr. Elliott. In course of time I came to myself and had some thought of applying for a short furlough, which would undoubtedly have been granted, but the Brigade was so short of officers that I concluded not to do so. It has always been a regret to me that this opportunity to go home was not seized for your little brother Charlie had been born in Milledgeville and in deciding not to go I lost the only chance of ever seeing him on earth. I often think of the dear little face wondering if there will be recognition in the heavenly home of the features that I never saw here—yet we may be assured that love will find its own there.

After General Walkers fall his Division was broken up and its Brigades assigned to other Divisions. We were honored by being placed under General Pat Cleburne who commanded the fighting Division, "par excellence," of the Army of Tennessee. He had seen the Brigade going into action on the 22nd and had made special request that it might be given to him. Gen Mercer was returned to his old position on the Georgia coast, and Genl Argyle Smith was assigned to the command of the Brigade. He was about on furlough recovering from wounds so when I returned to duty I, as Senior Colonel, took his place. General Cleburne was a distinguished soldier, one of the finest that the war produced upon our side and I have always felt that it was a privilege to serve under him. He was an Irishman by birth, a man of humble beginnings, having in youth been a private in the British Army. When the war began he was a practicing lawyer somewhere in Arkansas. Entering the Confederate Army he rose rapidly from one rank to another filling each place with honor and rising by sheer force of merit. As a Division Commander he had no superior; whether he would have been equal to higher command can not be said, though none that knew him doubted it. What specially struck me about him was his perfect grasp of every detail of his Division. When on the march we would go into bivouac at night he would sit on his horse until the last Regiment filed off the road—that he might know personally the location of every unit of the command. In establishing a picket line he always went himself with the engineer officer and saw that the rifle pits were well constructed and mutually supporting. If there was a halt of some days in any one place he invariably utilized the occasion to inspect every musket with his own hands and eyes. As a consequence of this constant and careful
supervision Cleburnes Division was always in a state of high efficiency ready for any duty to which it might be called. The Brigadiers under him were men of ability and experience, Lowry of Mississippi, Govan of Arkansas, Granberry of Texas, and our own Argyle Smith who had the reputation of getting wounded in every fight that he ever went into. Altogether it was a Division that one might well be proud of belonging to. During the month of August little was done by either Army; there was always hot firing on the picket lines, but the main bodies were resting and recuperating after the sanguinary engagements of the previous month. We were on the left of the Army guarding the railroad between Atlanta and Macon which was now the road over which our supplies came. The enemy were constantly in evidence in our front, but one morning (I think it was on August 30th) we woke up to find that they had disappeared entirely. Some of us went out to visit the camps they had occupied and we were much interested to note the ingenuity that had been exercised there to make the men comfortable. On one of the little huts was a placard bearing the words "Good bye Johnny Reb, we'll see you later"—a fact of which none of us had any doubt.

That night Hood held Atlanta with one of his three Corps and sent the other two, Hardee's and Lee's down to Jonesboro, 20 miles South on the railroad, to which point Sherman was pushing his right wing. That was the explanation of its having left our front.

We marched all night long and in the dim grey light of the morning reached the little town and at once went into position to the West of the railroad. It was a misty morning, the air was heavy with moisture, and it muffled the sound of the skirmishing that was already going on so that it seemed as though an army of wood choppers was at work in the distance. As soon as we were in line your Uncle Charlie, whose Regiment, the 54th, was next to mine, got his servant "Bunkum" to start a fire with the view to getting a little warm breakfast. The blaze felt good too to men who had been marching all night, so it was quite provoking when in adjusting the line of battle we were compelled to move two or three hundred paces to the left and leave our cheerful fire to others. However, another was soon started and Bunkum in a great state of nervousness had begun making "flip-flops" (the name is given to a sort of batter cake that he used to fashion for us,)—when suddenly a shell from a Yankee battery fell and exploded in the center of the group gathered around the fire we had just left. I don't know how many men were killed but I could see several of them writhing and struggling and then settling down into the quiet of death. It was a pitiful sight that moved us all greatly—
to poor Bunkum it was a revelation of the horrors of war he had never dreamed of; he turned ash-colored, gathered into his arms all of the cooking outfit he could reach and ran to the rear as fast as his legs could take him, dropping canteens, pans, haversacks etc at every step. We did not see him again for several days. All that morning we waited, most of the time in line of battle, doing nothing save the shifting of position sometimes a little to the right, and then to the left, while every now and then a man would fall under the fire of the enemy's sharp-shooters. It was very trying, much more so than positive action would have been, even though it brought us into greater danger. At last the order to advance was given and on we went; the pace gradually quickening almost to a run. The ground before us was a gentle slope down to where the Flint River wound its way through the lowlands, — then upward to the works of the enemy.

As the men went forward cheering, a battery of light artillery commanded by Captain Beauregard, (a son of the General's,) followed, the guns leaping and bounding over the uneven surface of the ground, drivers whipping and spurring, horses wild with excitement, cannoneers clinging for dear life to their seats on the caissons and ammunition boxes—as fine an exhibition of warlike power as could be imagined. Again and again at the order "Action Front," the teams were brought around in sweeping curves in the full run, the men leaped to their places, the guns were unlimbered and bang! bang!! bang!!! went the shells hurtling over our heads. It fascinated me to watch them. Nearing the river I happened to strike a boggy place in which my mare sank to the saddle flaps and every struggle seemed to sink her deeper. Meanwhile the line was advancing leaving me, the Brigade Commander stuck in the mud. It was an unendurable plight in which to remain for a minute under the circumstances, so I climbed over the mare's head and pushed forward on foot, hoping that Linsky, my orderly, would find Lady Gray and rescue her, which very fortunately he did. The Flint was a shallow stream through which the Division dashed without trouble, then up to the works from which the enemy retreated as we approached. But the fight had gone against us in other parts of the field and we were ordered back to the original position. Returning over the field through which we had charged I noticed where an entire team of the battery horses had been killed by a shell; the four of them lay in pairs with the harness upon them just as they had been hitched up.

I spoke of the passage of the Flint as having been made without difficulty and so it was for all excepting for Captain Charlie Russell
of the 54th. As the Regiment got to the bank and looked at the yellow water of unknown depth the men hesitated a little before entering the stream—noticing this, Russell, who was always inclined to be melodramatic, waved his sword and shouted "Dont be afraid of a little water, men; its only knee deep. Follow me!" Then he stepped in up to his neck, having unfortunately found a place where the current had washed a hole under the bank. Of course there was a great shout of laughter as the men went by on either side of him through the shallow water. Gen Henry R. Jackson's Brigade had attacked immediately on our right. On his staff—his adjutant general I think—was Joe Holcombe, the son of Mr Thomas Holcombe of Savannah—and one of my old school mates at Marietta. Poor fellow, he was desperately wounded. I saw him as he was being brought from the field and it grieved me beyond measure to be told that his wound was mortal. He died a few hours after. That night Lee's Corps was hurriedly ordered back to Atlanta and Hardee's Corps was left alone to face the largely augmented forces of the enemy at Jonesboro. Cleburne's Division was withdrawn from its position on the extreme left of the army and ordered to the extreme right to fill the gap left by Lee, (a Division to take the place of a Corps). Just before day break we filed into the slight works that Lee had hastily constructed the day before and woefully spread out. We were in them—the men in single line and about a yard apart. As we left the road to go into this position, the field officers all dismounted, giving their horses to the various orderlies who were there to receive them. These were all in a group together, among them the man "Bonny" of whom you have heard your Uncle speak so often. He was mounted on a miserable old nag that he had picked up somewhere, and was leading a string-halted charger that belonged to our Brigadier, the bridles of the two horses being hitched together by a rein. The movement of the troops made a certain amount of noise, though it was done as quietly as possible; it attracted the attention of a Yankee battery located some 700 or 800 yards down the road and they opened upon us with schrapnel. Fortunately it was too dark for them to see us and they aimed too high, but the whistling of the shells overhead frightened both orderlies and horses, all of whom made a dash for the rear, without standing on ceremony. Bonny was in specially hard luck, with his double team, when we last saw him; the string-halted horse had gone on one side of a tree, while the other one that he rode took the other and the most frantic efforts did not get him on an inch. I don't know how he finally got out of the predicament. Bonny was as arrant a coward as ever lived though very valiant, whenever
he managed to get a little whisky. On one such occasion he was heard expressing himself to this effect: "It's a good thing as I ain't in command of this 'ere army:— I'm one of the charging kind."

The Division was formed in the trenches in the following order by Brigades: Granberry on the right, then Govan, Lowry and Smith. The enemy were so close that we could not send out a picket line, in fact an attempt to do so resulted in the capture of a number of the men. Everything was quiet for a few hours after we got into position; then began a steady firing of both musketry and artillery that lasted throughout the day without serious loss to either side.

In front of Govan's Brigade the ground sloped gradually for about fifty yards and then dipped suddenly into a valley which could not be seen from our works. In this depression a heavy storming column of the Yankees was assembled in perfect safety to themselves and unknown to us. About the middle of the afternoon there was rapid increase of the firing and the Division stood in expectancy of the assault that this presaged. It came in an instant upon Govan; the attacking column rising suddenly from the valley, rank after rank, had but a short rush to make and literally ran over his slender line capturing him and most of his Brigade. Thus the Division was pierced and had supporting troops promptly poured through the gap so made, irretrievable disaster must have befallen Hardee's Corps. But the commands on either side were under brave and experienced leaders whose valor had been tested in numberless fields. Men ready in resource and not easily flurried by untoward events. Granberry promptly swung back his left wing and Lowry his right, so that any force attempting to advance through the gap in our line would have had a deadly fire from those two splendid Brigades on both flanks. The attempt was not made and night came on without change in the situation. In looking back upon those four years of war certain episodes stand out in special clearness in my mind; one of them occurred on that fateful afternoon. Captain Beauregard's battery occupied a place in our Brigade front and when the disaster happened to Govan he was hurriedly summoned to assist in repelling the anticipated advance through the break in the line. The officer who brought the order was Major Bob Martin of South Carolina, General Hardee's Chief of Artillery. I was standing immediately back of the battery and hearing a voice behind me, turned and saw Martin on the crest of a ridge that ran in rear of the works and parallel to them. He was an unusually handsome man, dressed in a splendid new uniform and mounted on a superb blood-bay horse that was rearing and plunging with excitement, its nostrils dilated and breast covered with foam,
while the riders face was aflame with the light of battle. With the roar of the combat in my ears and the hiss of bullets above and around in every direction, I saw this group in silhouette against the sky—it seemed as though I were looking at the God of War himself, and the picture has remained with me ever since.

Hardee's Corps was surely most critically placed when night came upon us after two days of unsuccessful fighting. Twenty miles away from the main body of the army and almost surrounded by a largely superior force, the enemy so close we could hear them talking. It was vitally necessary for us to get away from so compromising a position yet every road was closed to us except the one that leads Southward from Jonesboro to Macon. I have read in some accounts of the battle that Howard's Corps had been ordered to throw itself across the road so as to cut off our retreat absolutely but that it missed its way in the darkness of the night in marching through the thickly wooded country. However that may be, the road was open and we availed ourselves of it. The order to march came about 10 o'clock and the men moved out as silently as possible. A certain amount of noise could not be avoided, and that was accounted for to the enemy by sundry calls to the various Regiments to come and draw their rations.

We got away from the trenches without molestation and marching all night reached Lovejoy's Station on the Macon and Western Railroad about daylight. The memory of that night's march is like a horrible dream. I was so tired physically as scarcely to be able to sit on my horse, and the mental depression, deep enough because of our own failure, was the more profound as the red glare in the Northern sky and the sullen rumble of distant explosions told that Hood was burning his stores and abandoning Atlanta to Sherman. The long campaign had ended in defeat and disaster.

We remained at Lovejoys for several days fortifying the position as strongly as the lay of the land would admit, anticipating the Federal army would follow us up. But there was no serious attempt against us, a little skirmishing in the picket line and some feeling of our lines with schrapnel shells was about the sum total of the fighting there. A bullet from one of these shells struck Capt Gordon on the wrist one day as we stood talking together. It was a painful wound though by no means a dangerous one; not bad enough for an operation and just good enough for a furlough which he was glad to get after the arduous work we had all been through.

I cannot remember exactly when the army got together again, or how. My impression is that Cheatham's and Lee's Corps which were with Hood at Atlanta had retreated Eastward along the line of the
Georgia Railroad when the city was abandoned and subsequently marched across the angle that the two Railroads made to unite with Hardee at Lovejoys. [Drawing in the manuscript.] Finding after a while that the Yankees had retired from Jonesboro we advanced and took possession of the town again. Sherman was then planning the destruction of Atlanta, and his march to the sea. His first step was to order the people to leave their homes and go into the Confederate lines. The dreadful cruelty of this was that it affected, almost entirely, old men, women and children, for the men of fighting age were all in the army. We did not dream until then of his intention to burn the city. It did not seem possible that such a crime could be committed in the Nineteenth Century, and nothing that has since been written either by Sherman himself or any of his admirers concerning that act of vandalism, furnishes any excuse for it. Under the established laws of warfare he had a perfect right to destroy factories, arsenals, etc that supplied munitions to Confederate armies in the field but it would puzzle any right-minded man to explain the military necessity for burning the roofs that sheltered innocent non-combatants.

The truth is that Sherman, in spite of his genius as a soldier, was a vindictive, malignant man to all who called themselves Confederates whatever their age or sex. No other proof of this is needed than the burning of Atlanta and Columbia and the broad track of desolated homes that marked his progress through Georgia. He gave utterance to the expression "War is Hell" and every energy of his being was put forth to make it such to women and little babies as well as to men with arms in their hands.

The whole trend of modern civilization is to minimize the horrors of war, especially for non-combatants, but this man seemed to delight in bringing upon a section of the country that had once been his home the most cruel penalties without reference to the need of them for military purposes. Sherman and Stanton are the two men for whom I find it most difficult to exercise the grace of charity, but I am thankful that even for them the bitterness that was once in my heart, has passed away.

A truce of several days was arranged between the two armies while the poor people of Atlanta were being driven from their homes and received by the Confederates. It was pitiful to see them coming in all sorts of vehicles piled up with such household belongings as the owners could find transportation for; many, too, tramping along on foot. Yet for the most part they seemed to be facing the situation with bravery if not with cheerfulness. The various Quarter Masters of the army were all busy aiding this exodus and passing the refugees on to the rear
where, I doubt not, they found unlimited sympathy and such help as it was possible to give them at that time.

One great pleasure the truce brought to me was a visit from your dear Mother. A number of ladies seized the opportunity given by the temporary cessation of hostilities to come up to Jonesboro to see husbands, brothers and sons. Your Mother and Aunt Fan were in the party and you may be sure that they received the heartiest of welcomes. Unfortunately they did not arrive until the very day before the end of the truce so Uncle Charlie and I had but one happy day with them. Even in that one we found difficulty in getting away from the camp as the orders were out for the march at an early hour the next morning, and Gen Cleburne thought his officers ought to be occupied in getting their commands ready. It looked blue enough for us until your Aunt Fan and Mother went to put the matter before Gen Hardee, (whom they both knew,) carrying with them, for purposes of bribery, some of the good things they had brought up with them to reinforce our commissariat. The General was complaisant enough but said, "Ladies, this matter rests with Gen’l Cleburne who is here now; let me introduce him." The introduction was made and then Gen Cleburne, who was a shy man, found himself in a tight place. He started to explain how essential it was to have all officers with the Division on that day, but every word of explanation and argument was met by gifts of peaches, apples, cakes and other appetising things that were piled up in his arms while Gen Hardee stood by roaring with laughter. Of course, there was only one ending to the situation, the General surrendered at discretion for the first time in his life. On the following day the Army started on its march but with what object in view none of us smaller men could divine though of course there were any number of conjectures. The first stopping place was near a little town called Palmetto somewhere to the Westward of Atlanta. There, the knowing ones said, we were to take a stand and by being a constant menace upon Sherman’s flank prevent his further progress into Georgia. For a while it seemed as though they might be right, the men were put to throwing up field works, drills and inspections were of daily occurrence and every effort was made to put the troops in first rate condition. At this point our new Brigadier joined us and I returned to command of the Regiment. President Davis visited the Army while we were at Palmetto: I caught sight of him as he galloped along our Brigade front, — a white faced haggard looking man, burdened down—I imagined at the time—by the cares and responsibilities that were upon him. He swept by us surrounded by a crowd of Generals and staff officers and I never saw him again until his visit

158
to Savannah in 1886, a few months before his death. He made a speech while with the Army declaring that it would soon strike a great blow for the Southern Cause, but I did not hear him.

To the best of my recollection we were at Palmetto for eight or ten days then orders for the march came and we were off again, this time with faces turned Northward. We halted when some twenty miles West of Marietta; then everybody said it was preparatory to throwing ourselves directly across Sherman's line of communications and so forcing him to turn back. I have always wished since that such a course had been adopted—success might have attended it, and had failure instead it could scarcely have proved more disastrous than the Mad Tennessee Campaign upon which we were about to enter. Here I was put "out of commission" for a while by an attack of fever. Dr Thompson the Brigade surgeon said he thought there were symptoms of typhoid, and he insisted upon putting me in a house. So he found a place nearby with a farmer who had kindly consented to take me in, dosed me up with medicines and left me for the night. Early the next morning he came in to say that the Brigade was moving a little to the left though it was not going far and that I must try to make myself as comfortable as possible. He told me afterwards that he knew better but did not think me in any condition to be moved even though my remaining involved almost the certainty of capture and imprisonment. All through that day I was in a dreamy, semi-unconscious state of which I have little recollection, but at about two o'clock or thereabout the sound of skirmishing not far off brought me suddenly to perfect clearness of mind. I called to the farmer vigorously and he came running into the room. "What is that firing?" I asked. "The Yankees fighting with the Cavalry rear guard"—"Where are the infantry?" "Oh—they left early this morning." "Where are the Cavalry?" "They passed by an hour ago." "By what road?" He pointed it out to me from the window. I crawled out of bed, put on my clothes, threw my saddle bags over my shoulder and left the house. My feet were like lead, my head ached so that I could scarcely see the road, but the mind was clear and in my heart was the distinct purpose to die on the way rather than be captured. I have always felt that Divine Goodness alone brought me safely through that cruel strait. I said, like David, "I will lift mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help" and the help came in a way that I shall ever remember with a sense of gratitude to the Giver of all good. Strength was given me with every step and a resolution of purpose that kept me up surprisingly. Toward the middle of the afternoon two straggling soldiers overtook me and relieved me of the burden of the saddle bags. They were lead-
ing a young unbroken colt that was as wild as a buck rabbit and they
offered to put me on him but it would have been worse than walking
to have attempted to ride such a horse in my weak condition. Just
about dark we came in sight of the cavalry camp by the bank of a bold
creek. My two companions evidently did not care to be questioned
as to how they got possession of the colt for they slipped off into the
woods at once leaving me to go on alone. An outlying sentinel chal-
lenged me and then the Corporal of the guard escorted me to the
headquarters of the General in command who proved to be Genl
Jackson of Augusta. He received me very kindly and seemed quite
sorry to see me in the plight I was in, for I was as dirty as a rag man
from the red clay dust of the ten miles of road I had tramped over,
and so exhausted that my limbs would scarcely support me. He called
for a horse, made a couple of men lift me into the saddle, and then
directed his orderly to ford the creek with me and escort me up to
a log cabin that was on the opposite bank. The men left me at the
gate of the little fence that surrounded the house, then I went up to
the door and knocked. In a few minutes a girl responded to the knock,
a tall, gaunt woman plainly dressed but rather a pleasant face. She
looked at me doubtfully as I preferred my request for shelter for the
night. "I'll ax Dad," she said. "I'm very sick" was my reply "and
if you don't take me in I'll die." In an instant she seemed to realize that
this was a case for prompt action: the door was thrown wide open,
"Come in," she said, and then with a jump, she was at my side and was
fairly lifting me up the two or three little front steps. Another moment
and I was seated in a big chair, she had taken off my coat and was
kneeling at my feet to unlace my shoes. Then there was a call to a
sister from the back part of the premises and the two of them picked
me up bodily and deposited me in the only bed there was in the room.
I sank in among the feathers with a sense of relief and comfort that
can come to a man only after some such experience as had been mine
that day. I fell at once into a deep sleep but was awakened to drink a
great cup of herb tea, boiling hot, that those good Samaritans had pre-
pared for me. During the night I awoke again, dripping with perspira-
tion but with every particle of fever gone. There was a flickering
light from the fireplace and by it, on the floor, in their day dresses,
those blessed girls were lying side by side fast asleep At a very early
hour in the morning my special friend aroused me saying she thought
I had better get up for she was "afeared" there was going to be a
fight "right thar." She brought me food, another cup of that efficacious
tea, filled my haversack with provisions for the day and started me on
my journey with the words "Now honey you had better be a goin'"
Surely no one ever found a better friend in need. I am ashamed to say that her name has gone from my memory entirely. I put it down in a note book that I used to carry about me but the book itself was lost later on. I trust that her life was a happy one and that God blessed her in it as she deserved; there was the spirit of the Master in her ministration to me. As I left the house the cavalry who had crossed the creek were forming line of battle in front of it while on the other side there was the sound of skirmishing in the distance. Inquiring on what road the infantry had gone I started off with a very weak pair of legs to hold me up but weakness was the only trouble and strength began to return as I walked. That day twenty five miles were covered and at nightfall my anxieties were ended. I reached a place where a part of the army wagon train had gone into camp. The Quarter Master in charge of it was very kind,—he made me a cup of coffee (quite a rarity it was in those days) fixed up a bed for me in one of the wagons and invited me to ride there on the next day. We started at daylight, were on the road all day, and about ten o'clock found the bivouac fires of the troops just ahead of us in Cedar Valley. It took me some time to find my own Regiment, but it was found at last and at midnight I crawled under a tent fly where Mat Hopkins and Fred Hull were sleeping. You may be sure that they did not object to being waked up and that there was great rejoicing over me. Everybody in the Brigade had settled down to the assurance of my capture as it was known that the enemy were approaching the farm house in which Dr Thompson had put me. And captured I undoubtedly would have been had I remained there another half hour. It remains only to add that from that time until the end of the war my health was absolutely perfect, not an ache or pain excepting such as cold weather brought to the whole army.

The Northward March was continued as far as Dalton, where a Federal garrison of something over 400 men was captured. Forlorn looking fellows they looked and I felt sorry for them remembering my own feelings as a prisoner of war. At this point we turned squarely to the West and made for the Alabama line, a proceeding that mystified not a little the wiseacres of the ranks who always know everything.

At a little town called Alpine, just on the border, the First Regiment was detached from the Brigade to convoy a wagon train going down to Gadsden Ala. for supplies. It was an uneventful service, discharged without seeing or even hearing of an enemy. At Gadsden I had great pleasure in meeting General Beauregard to whom I had been intro-
duced when he was in command of the Georgia and Carolina coasts. He was a very distinguished looking man, decidedly French in type, (as he had good right to be,) with florid complexion and iron-gray hair—a soldier every inch of him and with marked courtesy of speech and manner. Without asking any questions, which would have [been] manifestly improper, I tried indirectly to get from [him] an inkling of the army’s destination but he was too wary to walk into any trap that could be set for him by a small person like myself.

The wagon train being loaded the Regiment started Northward with it again directly up the slopes of Sand Mountain, a ridge that traverses North Eastern Alabama terminating in Lookout Mountain near Chattanooga. The ascent was very steep and it was all that the teams could do to drag the heavy wagons up. I saw one magnificent mule fall dead in the effort. The men of the Regiment were posted all along in the specially stiff places to lend a hand in pushing and tugging at the wheels—very hard and fatiguing work it was.

You see from this that soldiers have much to do besides drilling and fighting. Reaching the summit we turned Westward again marching for two or three days along the ridge, then we descended on the North side and soon thereafter rejoined the army which by this time was well on its way across the State. Our first stopping place was at Tuscumbia, a little town on the Tennessee River of which I remember very little excepting a great springs of water that gushes from beneath a huge rock in the heart of the town. We were here several days and learned definitely that the campaign was to be in the State of Tennessee. The weather had become quite cold and the bleakness of our bivouac on a bare hill side gave promise of what was before us. From Tuscumbia the army moved up the river a few miles until opposite Florence on the North bank. The whole army was massed at this point in large open fields, preparatory to crossing the river on a pontoon bridge that had been laid there. The various Brigades and Divisions were all in column of fours side by side with only a few paces separating the columns—they made a very impressive sight for it is not often that one sees an entire army in such close masses. It was a bright autumnal Sunday morning, the church bells were ringing in the little town and as the commands moved down in succession to the bridge, with colors fluttering in the sun light there was a sense of exhilaration in being a part of the brilliant spectacle. The pontoons were deep in the water as we crossed and the current of the mighty river chafed and fretted against them, but all held safely to their mooring and there were no mishaps that came to my knowledge. The first man I met on the Northern bank was Raleigh Camp an old Marietta comrade whom I had not seen since his graduation the year
before me. He was Lieut Col of a Texas Regiment that had crossed just ahead of us and had waited to see me. It was pleasant to meet him and have a short talk of old times and old friends but we could not be very long together. We parted and I never learned whether he survived the campaign or not. At Florence we remained a week or more awaiting for supply trains and Gen Cleburne availed himself of the opportunity to order a Division Court Martial for the trial of sundry offenders against military law.

There were thirteen members of this courtmartial and I was its President—Lieut Col Guyton of the 57th was the only other officer from our Brigade. My reason for mentioning this otherwise uninteresting incident will appear later on.

While waiting at Florence your Uncle Charlie was taken quite ill with what threatened to be pneumonia. His surgeon, Dr Godfrey, succeeded in getting him into the house of a private family where he received every care and attention, but he was sick a long while, indeed his active service ended then. I did not see him again until the campaign was over and we were passing through Georgia to join Gen Johnston in North Carolina. The orders finally came for the army to go forward into Tennessee but to our great disappointment Smiths Brigade did not march with it. We were detached and sent to a place called Cheathams Ferry some twelve miles or so from Florence to aid in getting a supply train across the River. I learned that we were chosen for this service because being men from the coast we were supposed to have some knowledge of the management of boats. We waited for two days at the Ferry before the train arrived on the other side of the river and then getting the wagons over gave pretty strenuous work for four or five days more, (though there was no let up at night)—for the river was a mile broad, the current was strong, and two or three old flat boats were the only means of transportation. At last the job was completed and we were on the march once more, but a full week behind the rest of the army. That week was the salvation of very many of us for as we advanced news came to us of a great battle that had been fought at Franklin with terrible loss of life. Cleburnes Division was reported as "cut to pieces." There were anxious hearts in our bosoms and anxiety became deep and unavailing sorrow when we arrived at Franklin and learned all of the sad particulars. Hood had brought Gen Schofield to bay at that town and had then made a frontal attack along the entire line—over four or five hundred yards of level ground, every inch of which was swept by artillery and rifle fire. Obstacles on the right and left made our men crowd toward the centre where the lines overlapped and were six or eight ranks deep in places, a formation that led to
most dreadful slaughter. A turnpike road led to the centre of the enemys position and where it entered the works three batteries of artillery were located that poured an unceasing fire of grape and cannister upon the advancing Confederates. Along this road our Division had charged and just to the left of it Cleburne fell. He was leading the Division on foot, (I believe his horse had been killed,) and coming to an abbatis of Osage orange immediately in front of the works, called out "Come on men! don't let this little brush stop you." Then the fatal ball struck him and he fell. Not far from him Genl Granberry of the Texas Brigade went down—he was found dead upon his knees with his face in his hands. Every field officer in the Division was either killed or wounded while the loss of the rank and file was awful. The Confederates reached the works but could not surmount them; for hours, far into the night, the opposing forces lay firing at each other across the narrow parapet neither side being able to advance. Toward midnight Genl Schofield withdrew, leaving the field to Hood but the victory was practically with the Northern Army.

We arrived at Franklin on the third day after the battle and I had opportunity to examine the ground a little. I saw several of the enemys dead still lying in the field and all along the front of the works there were little pools of congealed blood in the frozen earth where our poor Southern boys had died. In one place the horse of a Confederate General lay astride of the parapet where he and his rider had been killed. I learned that this was General Adams the commander of a Mississippi Brigade. Inquiry developed the fact that every one of the eleven officers who had sat in the court martial with Guyton and myself at Florence, was either dead or desperately wounded.

It was impossible to avoid the thought that but for the detail that sent us to Cheathams Ferry we too would in all probability have shared the same fate. One of these officers I had liked exceedingly, Lieut Col Young of the Fifth Texas. We had agreed to know more of each other if we both lived through the war. He was a Georgian by birth, brother of Gen P M B Young an old school mate of mine at Marietta. He fell near General Granberry and his poor body was almost torn to pieces by bullets. A pathetic story was told me of a young Lieutenant in a Tennessee Regiment who had been overjoyed at the advance into the State because his "home," which was on the outskirts of Franklin, "would be redeemed." He was killed immediately in front of his father's door.

We did not remain long in these depressing surroundings but pushed on until the army was rejoined in front of Nashville. The Division was entrenched on a ridge from which we had a good view of the
city and so near to batteries of the enemy that camp fires were forbidden on our lines lest they should attract artillery fire. As the weather was bitterly cold, the thermometer, far below the freezing point, this was a decided hardship but it had to be borne. The death of Genl Cleburne brought General Smith to the command of the Division, he being the senior Brigadier, and this put me in command of the Brigade again a position that I kept until the reorganization of the army in North Carolina in April 1865, the last month of the War.

We had scarcely settled down in our places in the lines around Nashville when orders came for Smiths Brigade to proceed to the vicinity of Murfreesboro, some twenty five miles or so to the South-east, and report to General N. B. Forrest who was operating against the garrison in that town. We started out on the march at sun-rise one morning and just at dusk were met by a staff officer, when within two or three miles of our destination. He directed me to put the men into bivouac in a thick cedar thicket at that point where there was perfect shelter from the icy wind, good water, and unlimited supply of cord wood that had been cut and piled for the Railroad near by. It was an ideal place for camping, highly appreciated by all of us for the day had been a bitterly cold one with snow fall toward the end of it. At one time during the day we had to cross a stream of water some three or four feet deep. It would have been cruel, in that weather, to make the men wade it so they went over on a Railroad tressle bridge that was without flooring or hand-rail, "cooning" it, (as the saying is,) on their hands and knees over the ice coated cross-ties. Some of the leading files started in the upright position, but did not keep it up more than a few steps. It was rather a funny sight and there was much laughing and joking over it.

On the following morning, according to orders that had been given me, I left the Brigade in its comfortable camp and went to find Genl Forrest to report to him in person. A sleet storm had sprung up during the night, driven by a fierce gale and I rode right in the teeth of it, unable to see more than a few yards ahead. Poor Lady Gray's mane and tail were frozen stiff and my own hair and beard and every fold of my clothing were encrusted with ice. When the General's Head Quarters were finally reached I had to be helped from the saddle, but a blazing fire of great logs, by which the General was standing, quickly restored circulation, which was assisted also by a "nip" from his flask which he considerately handed me. I had felt great curiosity to meet this distinguished man, of whose warlike feats many stories had been told by every camp fire in the Confederacy from the very beginning of the War. But I had never dreamed of
ever being under his command—it is always the unexpected that happens. The first look at him as he stood there, fully satisfied my preconceptions of the man; he appeared the born soldier that he was, Six feet and over in height, straight as an arrow, black hair, and piercing black eyes, a ruddy complexion and an indefinable something in his bearing that stamped him as a leader of men. That he had had no education to speak of was currently reported and a little order, written by himself, that I received from him later on, gave demonstration of the truth of this; there was scarcely a word of it that was up to the dictionary standard. But what a man he was in all that makes manhood. It was said of him that on every battle field he instinctively saw at a glance the weak point of his enemy and then hurled upon it all the force at his command, giving blow after blow with a fierceness that first confounded, then demoralized, and routed his opponents. Such was his fight at Tishamingo in northern Mississippi when with cavalry alone he utterly defeated and drove back to Memphis a force considerably larger than his own, consisting of infantry, artillery and cavalry. In North Alabama and Georgia he followed a federal raiding expedition with grim determination, giving it no rest day or night, and finally received its surrender, thus capturing many more men than he commanded. At Johnsons Landing on the Tennessee he charged down upon a flotilla of steam transports that were lying at the wharf there. His men leaped their horses onto the decks of the steamers and took possession of them in that way. I know of but one other instance in history of vessels being captured by cavalry; in the early wars of the French Republic some ships that happened to be frozen in the ice in the Zuyder Zee were picked up by an officer whose name has escaped me. All during the war Forrest had been a thorn in the flesh to every Yankee General operating in middle and West Tennessee and the northern parts of Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia. Absolutely fearless, untiring, sleeplessly vigilant, and possessed of native military genius of very high order, he seemed to know by intuition the plans of the enemy and the best way to thwart them. Whenever in independent command, success attended his operations and his name was a tower of strength throughout that whole region of country. I doubt if he had ever read a book on military strategy or the conduct of war but he gave an excellent epitome of the art in his answer to a gentleman who asked him the reason for his being always so successful. “I always try to get there first with the most men!” Whether with “most men” or not, however, he never failed to “get there first”. Such was the man to whom I was now reporting and it will readily be understood that I felt honored in having him for a commander. The first question he asked me was “Who is your
commissary and does he do his duty?” I replied that we had an excellent commissary in Capt. Ned Drummond who gave us what there was to be had. “Well,” he said, “there is plenty to eat in this country and the men must be well fed; they can’t fight on empty bellies.” For three days the sleet and snow storm continued and all military operations were at a stand. I believe we did a little work in the way of tearing up the Railroad between Nashville and Murfreesboro, but the weather was so bitter and so many of our men were barefooted that not very much of that was demanded of them. During the interval I had opportunity to become acquainted with the officers of a Tennessee Brigade that was also serving with General Forrest. Its commander was a Col. Quarles, a very delightful gentleman whom it was a great pleasure to meet. He had lost an arm in one of the earlier battles of the war but that had not kept him from continuing in the service. He was a man of fine culture, too, well educated and well read, with Shakespeare at his fingers ends. Finding him and talking with him by the blazing fires of cedar logs made me forget for a time the hardships and difficulties of our surroundings. Col. Quarles was quite prominent in Tennessee politics after the war. I have seen his name very honorably mentioned many times and I believe he served his State in Congress, but whether in the Senate or House I do not remember.

When the great storm was over we began to move toward Murfreesboro but were fated to do nothing toward the capture of that town. We had just forded a stream that ran between us and the city when a tremendous cannonading in the distance was heard. It was in the direction of Nashville and there could be no doubt that the great battle expected there had begun.

I thought that we would immediately set out to join the main army as a reinforcement even though we could not have reached it until far into the night, but no such move was made. I did not understand the reason for this at the time though reflection has convinced me that Gen. Forrest kept his force where it was to neutralize the Federal garrison in Murfreesboro that might otherwise have advanced to the assistance of Gen. Thomas, the Northern commander at Nashville. Doubtless, too, Forrest was acting under direct orders for couriers came to him with dispatches repeatedly during the day.

It was an anxious time for us all, this listening to the ceaseless roar of the guns and giving full play to the imagination as to what might be happening to our comrades twenty odd miles away.

About noon on the second day an ominous change in the direction from which the sound of firing came, seemed to indicate that matters were going badly for the Confederates. It appeared to be more from
the South and West and the only possible explanation was that Hood had been driven back, as indeed he had been and most disastrously defeated.

Early in the afternoon a courier came riding up at top speed; his dispatch was delivered and five minutes thereafter we were on the retreat.

Then began a march that had few parallels in the war for downright hardship and suffering—every circumstance conspired to make it such. The country was covered with sleet and snow, the weather was bitter. Many of the men of the brigade were absolutely bare-footed, while all of them were clad in worn clothing that was three fourths cotton; not one in a hundred had an overcoat and added to all this was a knowledge of disaster and of the fact that the Federal army was between us and Hood. Everything combined to weigh down heart and soul with a deep sense of depression. I can not remember how late we marched that night but by crack of dawn on the following morning we were on the road again. And what a day that was! I saw with my own eyes, again and again, the print of bloody feet in the snow and men fell out of the column from whom we never heard again. Under any other man than N. B. Forrest there would have been no salvation for us for, to all appearances, were were hopelessly cut off from our own army; not only did he know every inch of the country, every cross road and bridle path in it, but he was likewise possessed of an indomitable spirit whose highest powers were always put forth when obstacles seemed insuperable. He, with the officers of his staff, dismounted from their horses and gave them to sick and disabled men while they trudged along themselves on foot through the snow, at the head of the column. Cavalry were sent back over the route by which we had come to pick up the barefooted and to cheer the weary. No word fell from our leader that did not help to put heart and courage in a man. I had always felt admiration for him as a bold and skilful soldier, but this day gave me a revelation of the man that is very pleasant to remember.

Between one and two o'clock that day a courier brought to me the note from the General to which reference has been made. In it he enjoined upon me to keep my command well closed up and further said that we were near a ford over a certain river at a place called "Ellicotts Mills," (if my memory is correct,) and that once over, a very few miles would put us in touch with the army that was waiting for us at Columbia. This was good news and it was quickly spread among the men, cheering them up greatly. We soon reached the river to find it in flood—the ford fully ten feet under water, and no possible chance of getting across. Failure here meant a wide detour that added

168
eighteen miles to our route. There was no alternative however, and we had to make the best of the situation, but it was disheartening in the extreme for we were almost at the end of strength.

It was close on to midnight when the head of the column reached Columbia but wearyled stragglers were coming up all through the rest of the night. I do not remember ever to have been more fatigued so as soon as possible I sought my bed which was the soft side of a plank on the piazza of a house by the roadside. Billy Elliott shared it with me and we slept soundly in spite of adverse conditions.

Early in the morning the command was formed preparatory to crossing Duck River to join the Division once more. And here occurred the incident that you have often heard me speak of but which must go on this record also for it was one of the most beautifully unselfish acts I have ever witnessed. The First Reg't was on the right and in its leading file was Allie Shellman, standing on the frozen turnpike without shoes, his feet tied up in a lot of old rags. The column filled the road and while we were waiting for the order to march a cavalry man rode by through the bushes at the side of the road. Passing, he happened to notice Shellmans condition and in an instant had one foot after another up at the saddle bow, took off his shoes and threw them at Allies feet with the remark, "Friend you need them more than I do," then galloped away without waiting to be thanked. One such incident as this goes a long way toward giving a firm faith in the good that is in human nature.

A day or two after our little force had rejoined General Hood, the Army continued its retreat toward the Tennessee River leaving behind at Columbia a rear-guard composed of five skeleton Brigades of infantry and Forrests Cavalry. These were called Brigades but no one of them equalled a regiment in strength after the sick and barefooted men had been weeded out. General Forrest was given command of the whole, the infantry being under General Walthall of Mississippi a soldier of reputation and experience, and a very charming gentleman as well. Our Brigade was honored by being chosen for this service, a fact that I have always looked back upon with pride for it was most arduous service calling for all the manhood there was in one—and the record is there to show that the call was not made in vain. [William] Swinton, the Northern historian, in writing of this campaign says in effect that Hood owed his salvation to the constancy of his rear-guard. All of the baggage was sent to the rear and through the stupidity of my orderly, Linsky, my two blankets went with the rest; so I was left with no other protection in the bitter nights that followed, than a worn overcoat that was almost threadbare. During the whole of the march to the Tennessee River I slept on the snow
without any covering whatever—if a series of cat naps through the night could be called sleep—I would get my back as close to the fire as possible and lose myself for a few minutes until the cold from the ground would strike into my bones, then the only thing to do was to get up and lie down again on the other side, but always with the back to the fire. It was by no means ideal comfort yet the naps were probably longer than they seemed.

We remained at Columbia for three days after the Army had marched, guarding the South bank of Duck River and in that time Uncle Mat and I were fortunate enough to secure quarters in the house of a Mrs Voght. We had a warm room with comfortable beds, a very decided contrast to what we had just been through and to what was still ahead of us. I can remember feeling as if I snuggled down in the blankets on the first night and listened to the fierce winter wind howling outside, that I would be quite willing to have the war come to an end right then and there.

There were two young ladies in the house, Miss Sallie Voght and her cousin, whose name I am not sure of, though I think it was Phillips. They were nice, simple girls, full of sympathy for the Southern cause and ready to express it by kindness to Mat and me. We had two delightful days with them that are pleasant to remember. They played and sang for us though the songs were mostly of the lugubrious character brought forth by the stress of the time "The Vacant Chair," "We shall meet but we shall miss him" &c &c. In telling this experience once to the Rev Mr Dunlap at Beaulieu, he remarked that he knew those two girls very well as they belonged to a church that he had charge of at Columbia some time after the war.

On the third morning news came that Genl Wilson had crossed the River both above and below us with a force estimated at 10,000 men. This necessitated an immediate falling back on our part, so we bade goodbye to our kind friends, receiving from them in our haversacks sundry very welcome additions to the Confederate bill of fare, and soon were again on the tramp. The province of a rear guard is to keep the enemy from harassing the retreat of the main army and certainly no army ever needed to be so guarded more than Hoods for it had been most terribly demoralized at Nashville. We marched very slowly and whenever the enemy came too near would form line of battle faced to the rear. This would oblige him also to deploy from column into line and feel his way by throwing out skirmishers, all of which took time and caused delay, the thing we aimed at. Things went on thus for several days until Christmas Eve (1864) when we were put into bivouac an hour or so before sunset, in a cedar thicket that reminded me much of the one near Murfreesboro. There was the greatest
abundance of wood and huge fires were lighted that promised a night of a comparative comfort. But at about 10 o’clock a staff officer brought the order to move and we left the sheltered thicket for the icy turnpike road. I can not recall ever to have been colder, there was a strong wind blowing, the temperature was far below freezing and no man in the command had any too much clothing on him. We marched until midnight and then camped on the summit of a high hill just North of the little town of Pulaski. The position had at one time been occupied by Federal troops and they had left a number of burrows in the ground roofed by a net work of boughs and thatched with broom grass. These furnished good protection from the wind and into one of them Mat and I crept and managed to sleep a little. At early dawn on Christmas morning we were aroused by what seemed to be firing in the town behind us but as we marched through the explosions were explained. Pulaski had been one of Hood’s points of supply and now all of the stores were being fed to a huge bonfire in the public square—bacon, clothing, boxes of ammunition, &c, all went into the blaze. I noticed women and children in their night dresses at the windows of some of the houses—many of the former sadly weeping and wringing their hands. So the day of “Peace on earth and good will to man” was ushered in for us; God grant that none whom I love may ever see another like it. We crossed the little river that runs by the town, the Elk, I think, and after marching for six or seven miles reached a place called Anthonys Hill. Here General Forrest had determined to make a stand and his dispositions were made accordingly. One half of the rear guard continued the retreat with the wagon train while the other half (including Smiths Brigade) was formed just beyond the crest of an amphitheatre of hills up to the centre of which the road ascended. The General notified his various commanders in person as to his plans. We were to keep perfectly quiet without any demonstration whatever as the enemy came up the slope—then as he was nearly up, at a given signal, (two shots in rapid succession from a section of artillery that we had with us,) we were to charge down upon him “with a yell,” from one end of our line to the other. Everything was carried out exactly as planned. Our rapid advance and exultant yells following as they did a dead silence, took the enemy completely by surprise and they fled down the slope in dire confusion leaving in our possession a number of prisoners, the horses and a fine 12 Pdr Napoleon gun with six coal black horses attached. of a Regiment of Cavalry that had dismounted to join in the attack, As I came up to this last the color bearer of the 1st Regiment was sitting astride of it waving the colors like a madman. It was no part of our policy to pursue, so after burying the few men who
lost their lives in this engagement, Gen Forrest continued the retreat. That afternoon a thaw commenced and a cold rain set in; the roads were rivers of slush as the snow melted, but on we went in the black darkness, stumbling along, cold, weary to exhaustion, dead for sleep, but the march kept up until midnight when we came up with the other half of the rear guard where they had gone into bivouac. Our men filed off into the fields to the right and left of the road but there was sorry comfort for them—it was cultivated land and the furrows were filled with water—they slept as they could on the ridges between. So ended our Christmas.

After the men were placed, Matthew and I looked around forlornly for some more attractive bed than a corn hill in which to sleep. Cruising around in the dark we discovered an ambulance standing on the side of the road which no one seemed to have claimed. Into this we crept, glad to get a shelter from the steady down pour of rain. The vehicle was loaded with sacks of some hard substance—we could not tell what—but we curled up on them and tried to sleep. Doubtless there was some sleep but it seemed to me that I did nothing but shiver the whole night through and long for the morning; there never was a colder bed. When day light came we found that we had been sleeping on sacks of salt. That day those who had been engaged the day before went on with the wagon train while the other half of the rear guard remained to face the enemy. They too had a sharp fight with them and drove them back; after that we were not molested again. Our last bivouac we understood to be very near the Tennessee River and we were all glad to realize that the arduous service was drawing to a close. A pontoon bridge had been stretched across the river at Mussel Shoals and in the night, while it was yet black dark, a staff officer came to guide the column to it. He led us off the main road by a path-way between two unusually steep hills whose bases met like a letter V, a path so narrow that we could only go along in single file. At one point we were halted for some reason or other and for quite a while those at the head of the column sat there nodding on their horses. Suddenly I was aroused by a shout of Whoa! Whoa!! and dimly I saw a white object apparently going straight up in the air. It was the little pony on which Matthew was riding; for some unexplained reason he had started with a jump right up one of those hills and nothing could stop him. Then we heard a dumping fall and pretty soon Matthew came disconsolately down with his saddle on his arm. The girths had broken and he had slipped off to the ground while master pony vanished in the darkness. It was pretty hard luck for my old friend—he had lost a good horse, killed at the battle of Jonesboro, and now another had run away from him. But when we got to the
bridge shortly after daylight, there was the gray pony waiting for us—he had been stopped in his wild career by the guard stationed at that point.

Smiths Brigade was next to the last command to cross the river and in a very few minutes after we were over the great cable was loosed from the Northern bank and the ponderous bridge was swung by the current over to the Southern side. Hood's disastrous Tennessee campaign was at an end. The river had been over the South bank and we found it an expanse of the stickiest and deepest mud in which countless horses and mules had bogged down and died. Poor things the hardships of the service had completely broken them down and they had no strength to resist this new complication. The sight made me anxious for Lady Gray for she was pretty well used up herself. She made one or two steps in the mud and gave a groan that went to my heart. I promptly dismounted and led her by the bridle through to higher ground and safety. From Mussel Shoals we turned Westward and made for Corinth in North Mississippi. Marching was difficult for there were many small streams across our path all full to over flowing, but we reached our destination in a few days and then the army rested. I had not realized how great the fatigue had been all through the retreat but in the three days we were at Corinth I did nothing but sleep and rest by big fires from morning until morning again—happy too in being united to my precious blankets again.

Once more on the march we turned Southward down the line of the Mobile & Ohio R R and as the country was too flooded for men on foot to make their way, and we were not in proximity to the enemy, the troops marched on the railroad track while mounted officers took the dirt roads. This separated the higher officers from the men during most of the march but there was no help for it and no untoward results followed. I recall one evening shortly before dark when we found ourselves on the edge of a huge swamp which was a vast expanse of water in which we soon lost the road and were very dubious as to how we should get through. A guide was found in a countryman who lived in a log cabin at the edge of the swamp; he mounted a mule and bade us follow him in single file without straying to the right or left. There were some twenty or thirty mounted officers in the group and a strange looking procession we made riding silently through the dark recesses of the swamp. It was by no means a pleasure ride for night was fast approaching, the water on the path was up to the horses' bellies while no one knew what untold depths might be on either hand, and the whole surface was covered with a thin film of ice. About half way we came to a deep creek that ran through the swamp though under existing circumstances there was no way to
distinguish its course from the surrounding expanse of water. Without the guide we would certainly have ridden into this but he led us to a bridge on which we crossed in safety though the water was well over the flooring. We traveled in this manner for between two and three miles but finally reached dry land, for which one of the party, at least, felt profoundly grateful.

A halt was made at Iuka Mississippi for purposes of rest, reorganizing, bringing up stragglers, and the issuance of stores of various kinds to supply the need resulting from the wastage of the severe campaign the men had been through. I can not remember exactly how long we were there but I do recall that it seemed very pleasant to be free for a time from the everlasting marching, and to rest both night and day without any popping of musketry from the picket lines. At Iuka orders came for the transfer of the entire army of Tennessee to Smithfield North Carolina where we were to be once more under our old leader General Joseph E Johnston. A look at the map will show that this involved a pretty mighty problem for the Quarter Master department—there are many hundreds of miles of distance between the two points and at that time the whole railroad system was in a most deplorable condition, everything was on its last legs.

I suppose nothing but dire necessity would have permitted the use of railroads at all, for engines were nearly worn out, cars and road bed—ditto.

Every train was run under extremely hazardous conditions the only favorable circumstance, so far as safety was concerned, being the slow rate of speed at which it crept along. Our Brigade was sent by a tortuous route by way of Mobile and Montgomery to Columbus Georgia.

In walking around the streets of Mobile during the few hours we were there I met a Lieut Brown an officer of a North Carolina battery who had been in prison with me on Governors Island and at Sandusky in 1862. He was glad to see me and profuse in his offers of service. “Let me do something for you,” he said; and then my personal appearance probably caused him to add “Can’t I have your washing done”? It was kindly meant but I could only reply by telling him the story of the Irishman to whom some one wanted to sell a trunk—“What will I do with it said Pat?” “Why put your clothes in it to be sure.” “And me go naked!” was the answer. Perhaps I was not quite so badly off as that, for there was a change of underclothing in my saddle bags, but I was perilously near to it—much nearer than I should care to be again.

At Columbus we waited two or three days for transportation the railroads of Georgia being in a worse condition than those of Alabama
& Mississippi because of Sherman's march through the State. This delay enabled me to spend a very pleasant time with your Aunt Mary Ann who lived there. Your Uncle Charlie Way was at her house also, in very delicate health, not having fully recovered from the attack that compelled him to leave the army at Florence. He told me that your mother whom I supposed still to be in Milledgeville at the old home, had gone down to Savannah to get out of Gen Sherman's way. The news upset me considerably for I had counted on seeing her and the two children as we passed through the State. It distressed me also to know that now she was shut up in a city held by the enemy and that there was no way of communicating with her. But there were a great many unpleasant happenings in those days that had simply to be borne; there was nothing to be gained by fretting over them; to perform the duty of the hour was the only course left to any of us and that was so exacting that it helped to dispel harrassing thought.

It was not to me alone that the news received at Columbus was distressing; most of the men of the Brigade had their homes in the line of Shermans "March to the Sea" and they heard of the ruthless burning of private houses and the robbery of food from helpless women and children which characterized that much lauded "March". Hundreds of the Brigade slipped away from the ranks as we passed through Georgia to look after their families, and who can blame them for so doing? When we finally reached Augusta on the Eastern border it was a sadly depleted Brigade. But more of that later on.

In going eastward from Columbus we took train as far as Midway which place was reached between 11 and 12 o'clock at night. You will remember that it is only some two or three miles from Milledgeville, so as soon as the men were detainted and in bivouac I set out for your grandmother's house. A man in a cart who was driving that way gave me a lift and in due time the familiar corner was reached. Everything looked sombre enough, there was not a ray of light from that house or any other and not a sound broke the stillness of the night—a forlorn sort of homecoming it seemed. I felt some anxiety in going up the front steps lest "Boss" the old mastiff that guarded the premises might mistake me for a marauder: he was a dog to be afraid of but on this occasion made no sign. I knocked several times on the front door without getting any response but finally heard some one moving about in the hall and then a trembling note in Betsey's voice as she demanded "Who's that—" She was glad enough to admit me and I went at once to your grandmothers room. The dear old lady was sitting up in bed with a big shawl around her, and as I came up to her she threw her arms about my neck and wept over me. I sat by the bed side a long while talking of your dear mother and
the children, (Sallie and little Charlie), how she had fled with them from Milledgeville as the Federal army drew near, hoping to find in Savannah a safe place of refuge. And now she was there within the enemy's lines with no possible chance of communication either way.

It made my heart very heavy for the clouds seemed dark above me: I could see no prospect of being with my dear ones at any time in the near future and it was impossible to avoid the reflection that there was little hope for the Confederate cause and that I was about to enter another campaign from which there might be no return.

One thing I was more than glad to find at the old home—a trunk full of clothing that your mother had sent out from Savannah as soon as she arrived there, while communications were still open. There was in it a good uniform suit comparatively new and never was a suit more needed. My old one had become disreputable to the last degree; it was threadbare throughout and there was a broad band of scorched cloth from the back of the collar to the tail of the coat, and down each leg of the trousers to the heels, the result of my snuggling up to the fires during the hard nights of the retreat from Tennessee. I have always thought that it was the sight of that suit that started the flow of tears from your grandmothers eyes when she first saw me. Yet, as with many other women in those sad times, the fount of tears was full and it required but little to cause it to overflow. She was alone, with only servants about her, in that great house that I had always associated with bright, happy gatherings of a large and loving family. Three of her sons had died since the beginning of the war, two from the hardships incidental to army life in Virginia and a third from exposure in Railroad service, while yet a fourth had been desperately wounded at Malvern Hill and was even then, (more than two years after,) in a precarious state of health. Of her three daughters only one, your Aunt Sue, lived within reach, the other two were in the enemy's lines. But she was a brave woman and not again did she yield to feeling during the one day that I was privileged to spend with her. My memories of her are all of the tenderest; she gave me an affection like that of my own mother and in return my heart went out to her with a love that still remains.

At Milledgeville Railroad connections stopped so the commands marched across to Camack, a station on the Georgia R R where they took train for Augusta.

In passing through Sparta among the people standing on the sidewalks to watch the troops, I noticed Mr Soullard and his two daughters (now Mrs Harry Stoddard and Mrs John West). I halted a little while to chat with them for it did my heart good to see Savannah people again. From Augusta Northward we were done with Railroads
and took to marching once more. It distressed me to see how many of our men had slipped away from the ranks during the passage through Georgia, though I quite well understood and sympathized with them for going. When we were nearly up to the North Carolina line, Gen Cheatham, who then commanded the corps, sent for me to ask an explanation of this falling off in the Brigade numbers. I told him that the men had no intention of deserting the colors, but that as husbands and fathers they had felt obliged to go to look after their families most of whom had lived on the line of Sherman's March and were now homeless and destitute. I further said that if he would send me back to Georgia I felt confident of being able to return to the army with most of the missing ones. The proposition met with his approval and he at once instructed his Adjutant General to prepare an order detailing me for this service. The paper was handed me and I started off the same day. This was the first time I had ever been brought in contact with Genl Cheatham and it can not be said that he made a very favorable impression upon me. He was known as a man of great personal bravery, an indomitable fighter and with a fine record upon many bloody fields. But he was also reputed to be a hard drinker and, upon one occasion at least, in the Tennessee Campaign, to have missed a golden opportunity to strike a decisive blow, because of this failing. I have no personal knowledge of the truth of this charge but it is certainly true that during my interview with him there was decided evidence of his being under the influence of liquor. As he handed me the order he said with a gravity that was ludicrous, "Colonel you go and bring those men back and if you want anybody shot just wink your eye"

I will not enter into all the details of my trip to Georgia suffice it to say that I advertised in Augusta, Macon and Columbus papers that on certain days I would be in those cities to meet the men and lead them back to the colors—and that in a little over two weeks I started from Augusta again with five hundred of them behind me. We joined the army at a little place called Smithfield in North Carolina and were once more under command of our old hero Genl Joseph E Johnston. So many of the Regiments Brigades and Divisions had been depleted by the exigencies of service that a thorough reorganization took place here and in this what remained of the 57th and 63rd Georgia Regiments were consolidated with the 1st and under its Regimental name. I was retained as Colonel, Guyton of the 57th was made Lieutenant Colonel and Allen of the 63rd, Major. There were something over 800 of the rank and file, men who had borne the heat and burden of the day, tough, wiry, and hardened by service and experienced. They made a Regiment that any man might be proud
of and I was proud, but it never fired another shot, for the war was practically at its end.

We did a lot of marching about after that though exactly to what purpose I never knew. Probably our movements had relation to those of the enemy, but the armies were not in very close contact.

When in the vicinity of Greensboro news came of the capture of Richmond and the surrender of General Lee, then we felt, of course, that our Cause was hopeless. About the same time we heard of the assassination of President Lincoln and I desire to put upon record here that no other utterance concerning that crime came to my ears than one of horror and reprobation. There was a very general feeling in the army that the South had lost in Mr Lincoln a friend who would have guarded our section from the malignity of such men as Thad Stevens, Edwin M Staunton and Benjn F Butler which afterwards found expression in the awful reconstruction period.

Then came a weeks truce between Generals Johnston and Sherman for the purpose of arranging terms for the surrender of our Army. I remember that week as one of perfect rest and enjoyment. "Grim visaged War" had at last "smoothed his wrinkled front" and we lay down at night in security and peace. Dr Elliott and I had a tent fly together; we spent our time in reading a volume of Shakespeare that he carried in his saddle bags, and in drinking sassafras tea.

For the first time during my connection with that army a ration of sugar had been issued—sassafras bushes were growing all around and it was only natural that the two things should have been brought together. We were paid off too, in genuine "coin of the realm"—two silver dollars to each officer and man from Confederate Treasury money that had been hurried out of Richmond when the fall of that city seemed inevitable. It was the only pay I received for nearly the whole of my last year of service and I have often wished that these two coins had been kept as mementos. Many did so keep theirs, but my needs prevented me from so doing. Genl Sherman had offered quite liberal terms to Gen'l Johnston but the authorities at Washington thought that in them he had exceeded his powers as a military officer, attempting to settle the political status of the seceding States. Accordingly the truce was declared at an end and the two armies were once more in hostile relations. It was very disappointing for every one felt that should there be more fighting precious lives would be needlessly thrown away. But new terms were offered and accepted and finally at Greensboro on the 26th of April 1865 the formal surrender took place. The troops were marched to a certain point and there laid down their arms. Officers however kept their swords and each Regiment retained its colors. You will readily understand the
mingled emotions that were in my heart. I was weary of war and of
the long separation from my wife and children; my eyes yearned for
a sight of the dear little boy who had been born in my absence and
the thought of returning home to face no more the perils and hard-
ships of a soldier's calling filled my soul with gratitude to the Giver
of all good. I was thankful too that life had been spared and that
a new career could be begun, while I was yet young, and blessed
with a vigorous and unmarinated body. Yet, nevertheless, it was im-
possible to avoid a deep feeling of depression as memory brought
back the high hope and courage with which we had entered the war
and contrasted also the brilliant successes that had marked the earlier
stages of the conflict, with the ruin and desolation that had finally
come upon the South. The faces of many dear friends who had laid
down their lives for the Cause, were present with me too. I can not
think of some of them even now without a pang of sorrowful emotion.
The Regiment marched back to Georgia with its colors flying, and
disbanded at Augusta. I brought the flags home with me and returned
to the Regiment some years afterward when it had been re-
organized. Every step of the homeward march I made on foot, (poor
old Lady Gray having given out entirely.) Twenty five to thirty
miles a day we did day after day without anyone feeling the worse
for it and I think that shows pretty well the fine physical condition
we were all in, for it is a good long walk across two States. At
Augusta I was for a day the guest of the Osborne family and from
Mrs O I learned with deep grief of the banishment of officers families
from Savannah and of the death of your little brother. It was a
bitter blow. I felt glad however to know that your mother had gone
back to your grandmothers house at Milledgeville, and thither I
followed on the next day going by way of Atlanta and Macon. It was
a tedious journey, one that tired me far more than the marching
had done. We rode in ramshackle old cattle cars seated on boards
that were stuck through from side to side, and the dust and heat
were dreadful. But Milledgeville was reached at last and I held
my beloved wife and blessed little "Daughter" in my arms. God had
been good to me and I acknowledged it from the depth of my soul.

Here my dear children these rambling reminiscences are brought to
an end: I am glad to have written them for your sakes, for the writing
has awakened many happy recollections as well as those of more
sombre hue. I find though that time has softened all pain and made
brighter the pleasant things of life. I have lived long enough since
those four years of strife to learn to believe that the failure of the South to establish a separate independence was not an evil. As a section we had to pass through deep waters after open warfare ended but those unhappy days likewise have passed away, and now we are an integral part of a great nation honored and respected around the whole world.

CHAS. H. OLMSTEAD.
CIRCUSES, 8, 16-18
CITY Exchange, clock mentioned, 11
CITY Light Guard, in 1st Ga. Regt., 133
CIVIL War, political situation leading to, 25-78
CLAGHORN, John, Capt. Chatham Artillery, 79
CLARK, Capt., in 3d Military Dist., S. C., 135
CLAY, Henry, candidate for presidency, 20, 21; visit to Savannah, 22-23
CLEBURNE, Gen. Patrick Roiayne, career, 131-32; movements of his Division, 151-64; incident concerning, 155; Division cut to pieces, 165-66; orders Court Martial, 163; at Nashville, 164; killed, 164; mentioned, 165
COAST Rifles, in 1st Ga. Regt., 133
COCKSPUR Island, mentioned, 80
COHEN, Mrs. Octavius, mentioned, 139
COLORADO, mentioned, 22
COLSTON, Gen. Raleigh Edward, mentioned, 130
COLUMBIA, S. C., destruction mentioned, 132
COLUMBIA, Tenn., Army of Tennessee, 169-69; rear guard at, 169, 170
COLUMBUS, Ga., Smith's brigade at, 174-75; mentioned, 177
COQUITT, Gen. Alfred Holt, mentioned, 74
COMBAHEE River, mentioned, 132
CONEY Island, primitive place, 63
CONFEDERATE States of America, formed, 77
CONFEDERATE States Army, soldiers' relation with federal troops, 146
CONNELL, Dr., at G. M. L., 52-53
CONTRERAS, Battle of, 24
COOMBS family, mentioned, 49
COON hunt, description, 37
COOPER, Gen. Samuel, mentioned, 147
CORINTH, Miss., Army of Tennessee, present at, 173
COUNTS, Johnnie, orderly to Col. Rockwell, 136
CRANE, Horace, description, 71-72
CRANE, Julia (Mrs. Thomas J. Charlton), description, 72
CRANE, Willie, killed at Manassas, 72
CREAMER family, mentioned, 39
CUMMINGS Point, mentioned, 120, 127
CUNNINGHAM, Henry, on staff of Gen. Colston, 131
CUSH, army fare, 142
CUSHMAN, Charlotte, performed in Savannah, 11; mentioned, 70
CUSTER, Gen. George Armstrong, mentioned, 100
DALLAS, George M., candidate for vice president, U. S., 20
DALTON, Ga., mentioned, 138, 150; retreat from, 147; federal garrison captured at, 161
DARGAN, Lt. Col. Alonzo T., incident concerning, 157-158
DAUGHTER of the Regiment, The (opera), mentioned, 71
DAVID (torpedo boat), attack on New Ironclads, 123-129
DAVIES' Descriptive Geometry, mentioned, 112
DAVIS, Charles, mentioned, 8
DAVIS, President Jefferson, elected President CSA, 77; mentioned, 103; removes Johnston from command of Army of Tennessee, 147; visits troops at Palmetto, 158-9; in Savannah, 159
DEMARY, Helen, mentioned, 67
DEMARY, Jane, mentioned, 62, 63; home described, 67
DEMOCRATIC Party, mentioned, 26; discussed, 76
DE SOTO Hotel, mentioned, 10, 116
DETHRIT, Mch., overlooks visit, 67
DEWEY, Admiral George, mentioned, 46
DIXIE Discourser, newspaper at Governors Island, 138
DRAENON, Commander Percival, mentioned, 88n
DRAFTER, Gen. Thomas F., mentioned, 88n
DRUMMOND, Capt. Edward W. (Ned), commissary clerk at Fort Pulaski, 90; commissary of 1st Regiment, 116; brigade commissary, 167
DYSDALE, Alec, playmate, career, 11
DU BIGNON family, mentioned, 73
DUCK RIVER, Tenn., mentioned, 169
DUNLAP, Rev. Mr., mentioned, 170
EASTMAN, Mr. and Mrs. mentioned, 3
18TH BATTALION, Savannah Volunteer Guards, at Isle of Hope, 118; at Battery Wagner, 120-121
8TH GEORGIA Regiment, at Manassas, 10
ELECTRICITY, usefulness of, 32
ELK River, Tenn., mentioned, 171
ELLIOTT, Mrs. Mills, mentioned, 108
ELLIOTT, Carrie, mentioned, 57
ELLIOTT, Emma, singing career, 71
ELLIOTT, George, mentioned, 57
ELLIOTT, John Mackay, mentioned, 57
ELLIOTT, Lella (Mrs. Fred Habersham), attended Montpeller School, 34; mentioned, 57
ELLIOTT, Margaret Mackay (Mrs. Ralph E.), mentioned, 56-57
ELLIOTT, Mary, mentioned, 57
ELLIOTT, Percy, mentioned, 57
ELLIOTT, Rafa, mentioned, 57
ELLIOTT, Bishop Stephen, description and character, 33-34
ELLIOTT, Brig. Gen. Stephen, mentioned, 125
ELLIOTT, Dr. William H., mentioned, 9, 56, 66, 151, 139, 178; at Harvard, Surgeon 1st Regt., 116
EMERNS, Elizabeth, mentioned, 3
EMMETT Rifles, in 1st Ga. Regt., 133
ERIE Railroad, mentioned, 106
ERWIN, Capt. Robert, Quartermaster at Fort Pulaski, 90; imprisoned at Governors Island, 102

183
ETOWAH Cliffs, vacation at, 57-59
EVADNE, or the: Hall of Statues
(plays), mentioned, 71
EVERETT, Lt. James A., remarks, 140
EXCHANGE, See City Exchange

FALSTAFF, Sir John, mentioned, 14
FEDERALIST Party, discussed, 75-76
FERRILL, John, mentioned, 37
5TH GEORGIA Calvary, mentioned, 29

54TH REGIMENT Georgia Volunteers, Infantry, at Manigault's Point, 125; in Mercer's Brigade, 134; mentioned, 139, 150; movements, 152ff.

57TH REGIMENT Georgia Volunteers, Infantry, in Mercer's Brigade, 144; at Vicksburg, 154; mentioned, 139, 145; consolidated with 1st Regt., 177

1ST REGIMENT Georgia Regulars, organized, 52; at Tybee, then Virginia, 84

1ST REGIMENT of Georgia Volunteers, in Mexican War, 24-25

1ST VOLUNTEER Regiment of Georgia, composition, 78; goes into Confederate service, 78-79; at Fort Pulaski and around Savannah, 82ff.; reorganized, officers, 116; scattered, 117; four companies at Isle of Hope, 118; at Battery Wagner, 120 ff.; location of companies, 130; reorganized, 133; in Army of Tennessee, 133-79; mentioned, 134, 160; out of communication, 139-40; ordered to hopeless position, 144; Maj. Ford assumes command, 144; heavy losses, 150; with Cleburne's Division, 151-2; movements, 152 ff.; detached for special duty, 161-2; at Anthony's Hill, 171; reorganized. Olmstead Colonel, 173 marches back to Georgia, 179; disbanded, 179; flags kept by Olmstead until reorganization, 179

1ST SOUTH Carolina Regiment, at Battery Wagner, 122; at Fort Johnson, 125-6

FLETCHER, Mr. and Mrs. Dix, mentioned, 49

FLETCHER, Georgia, mentioned, 49

FLINT River, crossed by Confederate troops, 133-4

FLORENCE, Ala., army at, 162-3; mentioned, 175

FLYNN, Rev. William; performs Olmstead's wedding ceremony, 74

FOLEY, Maj. John, second in command at Fort Pulaski, 90; resigned from 1st Regt., 116

FOLLY Inlet, mentioned, 119

FORBES, Mr., manager of Savannah Theatre, 14

FORD, Maj. Martin J., of 1st Regt., 116; commands picket, 138; assumes command of 1st Ga. Regt., 144

FOREMAN, Col. Tom, supports Secession, 81

FORREST, Edwin, performed in Savannah, 14

FORREST, Gen. Nathan B., mentioned, 110; Smith's Brigade joins, 165-9; description, career, 165-7; retreat, 168-9; hardships, 168; commands rear guard, 169-73; at Pulaski, stand at Anthony's Hill, 171; continues retreat, 172; crosses Tennessee River, 172-3

FORSYTH Park, scene of childhood games, 10-11

FORT, Kate, bridesmaid in Olmstead wedding, 74

FORT Bartow, location, 117

FORT Columbus, on Governors Island, 101

FORT family, mentioned, 73

FORT Fisher, mentioned, 100

FORT George Island, vacation on, 40-44; severe gale, 42; Spanish ruin on, 42-43

FORT Jackson, troops at, 82; location, 117

FORT Johnson, defenses strengthened, 123-4; Olmstead in command, activities, 124-30; mentioned, 119, 137

FORT McAllister, attacked, 117; batteries, 130

FORT Moultrie, mentioned, 119, 127

FORT Pulaski, difficulty of provisioning, 28; mentioned, 35, 53, 54, 121, 150; orders for seizure of, 79; troops leave Savannah for, 80; armament, 81; garrison life, 81-96; Olmstead takes command, 87; officers, 89-90; inspected by Gen. Lee, his prediction, 90-91; Increased measures for defense, 91-92, isolated, 94; surrender demanded, 96; siege of, 96-99; severe damage, 96-98; surrender, 99; surrender terms violated, 99; surrender scene, 100

FORT Sumter, fired on, 77-78; mentioned, 119, 125; fired on, 127, 128

FORT Warren, mentioned, 102

4TH INFANTRY, USA, mentioned, 52

FORTUIN, Tenn., battle of, losses, 163-64

FRASER family, mentioned, 49

FREEMAN, George, mentioned, 96

FREEMAN, Lt. Henry, company fires first shot at enemy from Fort Pulaski, 96

FRELINGHUYSEN, Theodore, candidate for vice president of U.S., 20

FREMONT, John Charles; Republican candidate for president, 76

FRENCH'S Division, USA, holds Kennesaw Mountain, 142

GADSDEN, Ala., mentioned, 161

GALLAUCET, James, residence mentioned, 10

GALLIE, Maj. John B., killed, 117

GAMES, 11, 15, 17, 29-30

GEOGRAPHY text book, 7

GEORGIA Episcopal Institute and Christ College, See Montpelier

GEORGIA Historical Society, mentioned, 1, 2; Bishop Elliott's address, 34

GEORGIA Hussars, mentioned, 30, 78
GEORGIA Military Institute, mentioned, 27; description, 46-60; mentioned, 156; burned by Sherman’s orders, 114
GEORGIA Railroad, mentioned, 157, 176
GEORGIA regiments, two organized, 83
GERMAN Volunteers, mentioned, 103; in 1st Ga. Regt., 133
GIBBS, Mr. and Mrs. Kingsley, visit with, 40-41
GILLMORE, Gen. Quinsey A., receives surrender of Fort Pulaski, 99; later incident mentioned, 99; mentioned, 124; fails to take Charleston, gains Morris Island, 130
GLADDING, Hattie, mentioned, 15
GLADDING, Sue, mentioned, 19
GLASSELL, Lt. William T., commands torpedo attack on New Ironsides, 129-29; captured, 129
GOODREY, Dr., mentioned, 163
GOLDING, Charlie, mentioned, 57
GOODRICH, Samuel, books mentioned, 66
GOODRICH family, mentioned, 64
GOODWIN, Annie, mentioned, 118
GOODWIN, Mr. and Mrs., mentioned, 118
GORDON, Col. George, commands 63d Ga. Regt., 134
GORDON, Capt. William W., Inspector on Mercer's staff, 134; brings order to retire, 137; wounded, 156
GORDON, Mrs. William W., mentioned, 100
GORDON, Ga., mentioned, 27
Goulding, Francis R., mentioned, 145n
GOVAN, Gen. Daniel C., with Cleburne's Division, 152; at Jonesboro, 153
GOVERNORS Island, New York, account of imprisonment, 101-106; mentioned, 117, 174
GRAHAM, Col. R. F., commands Battery Wagner, 120
GRANBERRY, Gen. Hiram B., with Cleburne's Division, 152; at Jonesboro, 155; killed, 164
GRANT, Gen. U.S., struggle with Lee, 132
GRAYHILL, Harry, mentioned, 71
GRAYBILL, J. H., mentioned, 71
GRAYBILL, Mary, mentioned, 71
GREEN, T. Britain, mentioned, 75
GREEN, Charles, teaches in Sunday School, 12; mentioned, 30
GREEN Island, military post on, 82; mentioned, 90
GREENE, Harriet, mentioned, 3, 4, 24
GREENE, Herman D., mentioned, 3
GREENE, Jennie, mentioned, 3
GREENE, Maggie, mentioned, 3
GREENE, Susie, mentioned, 3
GREENE Monument, Savannah, Daniel Webster speaks at, 23
GREENSBORO, N. C., Johnston surrenders at, 178
GREGORY, Capt., engineer officer, 3d military district of S. C., 133
GRIFFIN family, mentioned, 73
GUILMARTIN, Capt. Lawrence J., at Fort Pulaski, 90; mentioned, 95, 98, 104; at Governors Island, 102
GUY Mannering (play), mentioned, 14
GUYTON, Lt. Col. C. S., in 57th Ga. Regt., 138; officer at court martial, 163; Lt. Col. of 1st Regt., 177
HABERSHAM, Mrs. Fred, see Elliott, Lelita
HABERSHAM, Joseph Clay, killed, 150
HABERSHAM, Mrs. Joseph Clay, see Stiles, Mary Anna
HABERSHAM, William, killed, 150
HABERSHAM, William Neye, sons killed, 150
HABERSHAM family, mentioned, 30
HACKETT, James Henry, performed in Savannah, 14
HALL, Hattie, bridesmaid in Olmstead wedding, 74
HALL, Wilburn, description, career, 27-28
HALLOCK, Mrs. Eliza, Olmstead visits, 62-63, 68; mentioned, 67
HALLOCK, Emily, mentioned, 62
HALLOCK, Marvin, mentioned, 62
HALLOCK, Dr. Robert T., mentioned, 62
HALLOCK, Waverly, mentioned, 62
HAMILTON, Alexander, leader of Federalists, 75
HAMILTON, Prioleau, mentioned, 79
HAND, Mr., school mentioned, 30
HANSELL family, mentioned, 49
HARDEE, Maj. Charles S. H., mentioned, 100
HARDEE, Elizabeth (Eliza), attended Montpelier school, 34; mentioned, 60, 116
HARDEE, Hattie, mentioned, 50
HARDEE, Pleas, mentioned, 50
HARDEE, Lt. Gen. William J., Corps commander, career, 134; story about his Tactics, 134; mentioned, 144; incident concerning, 158
HARDEE'S Corps, mentioned, 133; moves through Atlanta, 149; at Jonesboro, 152, 154, 155; critical situation, 156; rejoined by other Corps, 156-57
HARRISON, William Henry, campaign in Savannah, elected President, 20
HARTrIDGE, Col. Alfred L., mutiny in his command suppressed, 130; mentioned, 131
HARTrIDGE family, mentioned, 28
HAWLEY, Joseph, Lt. Col. 7th Conn. Regt., 99; later career, 100
HEIDIJ, Rev. Emanuel, mentioned, 103
HENRY Chouteau (steamboat), carries Johnson Island prisoners for exchange, 111-14
HEWSON, Joe, fiddler for G.M.I. commencement ball, 55
HILTON Head Island, S. C., in hands of enemy, 87; Pulaski prisoners taken to, 100
HODGSON, and Durand Opera Troupe, perform in Savannah, 71
HOLCOMBE, Joe, killed, 154
HOLCOMBE, Thomas, mentioned, 154
HOLMES, Oliver Wendell, poem mentioned, 12
HONEYMOON, The (play), mentioned, 71
HOOD, Gen. John Bell, given command of Army of Tennessee, career, 147-48; unsuccessful attacks around Atlanta, 149-50; criticism, 150-51; holds Atlanta, 152; abandons Atlanta, 156; at battle of Franklin, 163-64; defeated at Nashville, 167-68; rejoined by Olmstead, 169; Tennessee campaign ends, 173

HOOKER, Norton, mentioned, 8

HOPKINS, Edward, Quartermaster Clerk at Fort Pulaski, 90; at Governor's Island, 102; Quartermaster of 1st Regt., death, 116

HOPKINS, Matthew H., mentioned, 9, 15, 72, 111, 150, 161, 170, 171; Adjutant of 1st Regt. Ga. Vols., character of, 89-90; with Olmstead inspects damage to Fort Pulaski, 97; wounded, 98; at Governor's Island, 102, 103; Adjutant of 1st Regt., 116; at Fort Johnson, 124, 127-28; carries dispatches, 131; incident concerning, 145, 172-73

HOUSTOUN, Patrick, description, 38-39

HOWARD, Jett, Lieutenant of Savannah Police, 145

HOWARD, Johnnie, at Fort Johnson, 121

HOWARD, Mary W., mentioned, 145n

HOWARD, Capt. Wallace, incident concerning, 145-46

HOWARD'S Corps, falls to cut Hardee's retreat, 136

HULL, Fred M., groomsmen in Olmstead wedding, 74; Quartermaster 1st Regt., 116; mentioned, 161

HUNGARIAN revolution, mentioned, 56

HUNTER, Gen. David, receives Pulaski prisoners at Hilton Head, 100; mentioned, 107

HYATT, John, mentioned, 63, 65

HYATT, Mary, mentioned, 63

HYATT, Philip, mentioned, 63

IDA (steamboat), carries troops to Fort Pulaski, 89; fired on as approaches Pulaski, escape, 92-95

INDEPENDENT Presbyterian Church, mentioned, 30

INGRAHAM, Lizzie, bridesmaid in Olmstead wedding, 74

IRISH Jasper Greens, chosen for Mexican War, 24; two companies in 1st Ga. Regt., 135

IRISH Volunteers, partially destroy Tybee lighthouse, 88; in 1st Ga. Regt., 135

IRONSIDES, see New Ironsides

ISLE of Hope, under Olmstead's command, 117-19

INVENTIONS, changes brought by, 32

IUKA, Miss., Army of Tennessee rests at, 171

“JACKASS Artillery,” on Tybee Island, 86

JACKSON, Gen. Henry Rootes, commands C. Georgia Regt. in Mexican War, 24-25; character, career, 24-26; supports secession, 81; Brigade attacks, 154

JACKSON, Gen. John K., kindness to Olmstead, 160

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., visit to, 43-44

JAMES Island, mentioned, 119, 122, 137; activities on, 121-30

JARRETT family, mentioned, 73

JEFFERSON, Thomas, leader of Republican, 75

JOHNSON'S Island, Lake Erie, account of imprisonment at, 106-11; Confederate prisoner shot, 109-10; prisoners exchanged, 111

JOHNSON'S Landing, Tenn., vessels captured by Forrest, 166

JOHNSTON, Capt. George R., prisoner at Governor's Island, description, 165-06

JOHNSTON, Mrs. George R., mentioned, 106

JOHNSTON, Gen. Joseph E., troops sent to aid of, 132; faces Sherman in north Georgia, 133-57; army in continuous flight, tactics, 138-39; strategic retreat, 143, 145, 159; removed from command; Olmstead's comments, 147-48; mentioned, 163; resumes command of army of Tennessee, 174; army reorganized, 177; surrender, 178

JONES, John Paul, mentioned, 100

JONESBORO, Ga., Corps sent to, 152; movements around, 152-54; mentioned, 156, 172; retaken, 157; troops remain at, 158

JORDAN, Brig. Gen. Thomas, command 3d military district of S. C., 153

KEELE family, mentioned, 64

KEIFFER family, mentioned, 31

KELL, Mrs. John M., see Monroe, Bonnie

KELLY, Brigham, Olmstead joins firm, 69

KENAN family, mentioned, 73

KENNARD, Capt. Joel S., career in C.S.N., 28; brings supplies to Fort Pulaski, 94

KENNESAW Mountain, mentioned, 45, 133, 136; battle of, 139; Walker's Division reaches, field work built, 140; fighting around, 142-43; successfully defended by French's Division, 142; retreat from, 143

KING'S Point, Lazaretto Creek, house mentioned, 88; mentioned, 85

KNOX, Billy, account of travel with, 68-69

KOLLOCK, Rev. Henry, mentioned, 30

LADY Gray (horse), mentioned, 119, 145, 153, 165, 173, 179

LAKE Erie, military prison on Johnson's Island, 106

LANGREN, Dr., at Governor's Island, 106

LANIER, Sidney, description, 74

LARDNER, Dr. Dionysius, performance in Savannah, 31-33; prophecy about steam navigation, 33

LAUREL Grove Cemetery, mentioned, 90, 150

LAW, Charles, heroic action, 85-86

LAW, Dr. John S., married Elizabeth Burroughs, 30
LAW, Judge William, speech supporting secession, 81-82
LAWTON, Gen. Alexander R., commander of 1st Vol. Regt. of Ga., 78; orders occupation of Fort Pulaski, 79; mentioned, 80, 89, 92; promoted to Brig. Gen., 82
LAZARETTI Creek, "Ida" escapes through, 92
LEAH (servant), mentioned, 40
LECOSTE, Henri, teacher, 8
LEE, Gen. Robert Edward, mentioned, 33, 57, 141, 147; inspects Fort Pulaski, description, 90; instructions for defense, predicts fort cannot be taken, 90-91; encounter with Capt. Circopeley, 93-94; troops sent to aid of, 132
LEE'S Corps, sent to Jonesboro, 152; ordered to Atlanta, 154; retreats, rejoins Hardee's Corps, 156-57
LEVY, Capt. Yates, captured, charged against mentioned, 139-40
LEWIS, Bobby, wounded, 145
LEWIS, John N., residence mentioned, 10
LINCOLN, Abraham, candidate for President, 76; mentioned, 103; assassination deplored, 178
LINSKY, (—) (Ordery), mentioned, 131, 153, 169
"LIVE Oak Walker", see Walker, Gen. William S.
LOGAN, Eliza, performance in Savannah, description, 70-71
LOOKOUT Mountain, Tenn., mentioned, 102
LOOMIS, Col., commandant of Governors Island, 101
LOUISIANA Purchase, mentioned, 76
LOST Mountain, mentioned, 48, 133
LOVEJOY'S Station, Hardee's Corps reached, 136; Corps reunited at, 157
LOW, Andrew, prisoner at Fort Warren, exchanged for aid to Olmstead, 102
LOWREY, Gen. Mark P., with Cleburne's Division, 152; at Jonesboro, 155
LUCRETIA Borgia (play), mentioned, 71
LYCEUM Hall, mentioned, 26
LYMANS, Lt. John, at Governors Island, 103
McCARTEN, Francis, letter regarding raising U. S. flag on Tybee Island, 58-59p
McCLELLAN, Gen. George B., defeat at Richmond mentioned, 108; weakness of, 133
McFARLAND, Theodore, attends G.-M.I. surgeon at Fort Pulaski, 90
McGOWAN, Capt. James J., wounded, later career, 138
MEINTOSH, Spalding, killed at Drakesburg, 10
MACKAY, John, career, 57
MACKAY, Kate, mentioned, 57
MACKAY, Sarah, mentioned, 57
MACKAY family, mentioned, 90
McLAWS, Gen. Lafayette, mentioned, 10
McMAHON, John, 1st Lt. Irish Jasper Greens, 24; at Fort Pulaski, 90, 94; remarks at surrender of fort, 100
McMULLEN, Capt. M. J., at Fort Pulaski, 90
MCNISH, Herman, greeting to Daniel Webster, 23; life, 23-24
MCNISH, Tom, mentioned, 23, 24
MACON, Ga., Olmstead visits, 27; railroad terminal, 32; Olmstead arrives at, 116; railroad to Atlanta mentioned, 152; mentioned, 156, 177
MACON and Western Railroad, mentioned, 156
McCONNELL, Capt. Thomas R., commandant of G.M.I., 52-53; service in Mexico, 53
MACREADY, William Charles performed in Savannah, 14
MALVERN Hill, mentioned, 176
MANIGAULT'S Point, 54th Ga. Regt. at, 125
MANILA Bay, mentioned, 46
MARIETTA, Ga., G.M.I. at, 46-60; mentioned, 133, 138, 162; Confederate troops at, 159
MARINE Corps, Mac, mentioned, 27
MARINE and Fire Insurance Bank, Savannah, mentioned, 12
MARRYAT, Frederick, book mentioned, 96
MARTELLO Tower, Tybee, mentioned, 87
MARTIN, Maj. Bob, description, 155-156
MASONIC Hall, Savannah, scene of secession convention, 81-82
MASSIE School, Savannah, encampment near, 130
MATTHEWS, Capt., survives wreck of steamer Sumter, 127
MATTHEWS, Charles, performed in Savannah, 14
MATTHEWS, Fraser, bravery, death, 124; mentioned, 127
MACKEY (Maxey), Mr. and Mrs. Tom, house burned, 43
MAYPOINT Mills, sawmill on, 41-42; mentioned, 43
MEMPHIS, Tenn., reception of Johnson Island prisoners at, 113-14; mentioned, 116
MERCER, Col. George A., mentioned, 133; assistant Adj. Gen. on General Mercer's staff, 134
MERCER, Gen. Hugh, Col. 1st Vol. Regt. Ga., 82; in command of Fort Pulaski, 83; appointed Brig. Gen., 87, 88; commands military district of Ga., 116; career, 133-34; ill, 144; address to troops, 149; returned to Georgia coast, 151
MERCER'S Brigade, joined by 1st Ga. Regt., 133; other regiments in, staff officers, 134; Olmstead temporary commander, 144; commanded by Gen. Smith, short of officers, 151
MESMERISM, 18-20
METAMORA (play), at Savannah Theatre, 14
MEXICAN War, 22, 24-25, 53, 76, 90, 125, 134
MIDWAY, Ga., mentioned, 175
MILER, Hamilton, mentioned, 63
MILER, James, mentioned, 63
MILER, Jennie, mentioned, 63, 69
NEW Ironsides (U. S. Ironclad), at Charleston Harbor, 124; torpedo attack on, 128-29; damaged, 129
NEW Mexico, mentioned, 22
NEW River, gun boats in, 94
NEW Year's Day, social customs in Savannah, 72
NEW York, Olmstead visits, 61-63; 67-68, 73; commercial relations with Savannah, 102
NEWELL, Tom, mentioned, 74
NEWELL family, mentioned, 73
NIAGARA, N. Y., Olmstead visits, 67, 68, 75
NIBLO'S Garden, N. Y., mentioned, 63
NORTON, Lydia, teacher, 8

OGEECHEE River, mentioned, 130
OLD Mary's Cave, Ridgefield, Conn., story of, 66
OLD Meko, see Meko
OGLETHORPE Barracks, Savannah, mentioned, 116
OGLETHORPE Hall, Savannah, mentioned, 71
OGLETHORPE Light Infantry, mentioned, 72; ordered to Fort Pulaski, 79; Co. B fires first shot at enemy from Pulaski, 96; one company in 1st Regt. Ga., 133
OGLETHORPE University, mentioned, 74
OLMSTEAD, Charles Hart, birth, 2; writings, 1a; boyhood, 2-31; early schools, 5-10; at Burroughs' School, 30-40; vacation on Fort George Island, 40-44; at G.M.I., 46-60; at Eto- wah Cliffs, 57-59; visits New York, 61-63; visits Ridgefield, 63-66; visits Niagara, Detroit, 67; visits Chicago, 68; return to Savannah, 68-69; joins Brigham Kelly firm, 69; sweetheart rejects, 69-70; business career, 69-70; marriage, 74; revisits relatives in North, 75; home in Savannah, 74-75; Adjutant 1st Vol. Regt. Ga., 75; Major, 82; second in command Fort Pulaski, 83; almost killed by light- ning, 84; in command Tybee Island, 86-87; commands Fort Pulaski, 87, 88; breveted, 88; commissions, 89; letter relative to raising U. S. flag on Tybee, 89n; visits Savannah, 92; inspects damage at Pulaski, 97; surrenders Fort Pulaski, 99; sword returned, 100; imprisonment at Gover- nors Island, 100-60; at Johnsons Island, 106-11; sword taken, 107; ex- change, 111-15; arrives at Macon, 116; at Milledgeville, 116; resumes command 1st Regt., 116; return to Savannah, 116; injured, 119; ordered to Charleston, 119; at Battery Wagner, 119-30; commands Fort John- son, 124-30; ordered to Savannah, activities, 130-31; command of 3d military district of S. C.; activities, 131-33; again commands 1st Regt., 133; with Army of Tennessee, 133-178; temporary command of Mercer's Brigade, 144; Gen. Walker's order, 144; doubts of Southern victo- ry, 145-46; Ill, 149, 150-61; hat shot up, 150; senior Col. with Cleburne's
Division, 151; resumes command of regiment, 158; rejoins regiment, 161; president of court martial, 163; again commands brigade, 165; rejoins Hood in rear guard, 165-73; visits relatives at Columbus, 174; at Milledgeville, 175-76; rounds up brigade, rejoins army, 177; again Colonel 1st Regt., 177; reflections on outcome of war, 176-80; rejoins family, 179.

OLMSTEAD, Mrs. Charles Hart, illness, 94; mentioned, 115, 116, 118; visit to Jonesboro, 158; in Savannah with children, 115-16; at Milledgeville, 179

OLMSTEAD, Charles, Jr., mentioned, 4; birth and death, 151; mentioned, 176, 179

OLMSTEAD, Eliza Hart, mother of Charles H., 5-9; at Marietta, 60; illness, 60; mentioned, 69; at Macon, 116

OLMSTEAD, Florence, 1-1a, 117, 118

OLMSTEAD, Florence Neely, mentioned, 102

OLMSTEAD, Harriet Eliza, birth and death, 4

OLMSTEAD, Jonathan, 3; bank cashier, amateur botanist, 12; death, 59

OLMSTEAD, Rev. Miles, mentioned, 64; visit to Governors Island, 102

OLMSTEAD, Mrs. Nancy, mentioned, 63

OLMSTEAD, Neely, see Olmstead, Florence Neely
described, 64

OLMSTEAD, Sarah (Sallie) (Mrs. A. Pratt Adams), 1; birth, 75, 92; mentioned, 116, 117, 176

OLMSTEAD, Sarah Morris, description, 4-5; education, 8; at Montpelier school, 33-34; goes to finishing school, 46; illness and death, 38; mentioned, 66

OLMSTEAD Seth, description, 63; mentioned, 102

OLMSTEAD, Susan, mentioned, 1, 54, 118

OLMSTEAD family, home life, 3-5; 11-12, 19-20, 29-30; new home, 45-48

ON Linden (poem), incident concerning, 9

ORANGE Bluff, Fla., school mentioned, 30

ORIENTAL (steamer), takes Pulaski prisoners to Governors Island, 100-101

ORME family, mentioned, 73

ORPHAN Boy (song), mentioned, 12

OSBORNE family, Olmstead visits, 179

PALMER, Miss, school of, 8

PALMETTO, Ga., Confederate troops at, 158-59

PALMETTO Regiment, mentioned, 125

PARK, Annie, marriage to J. W. Robertson, 8-19

PARK family, mentioned, 49

PARKER Emily, description, 63; mentioned, 65

PARKER, Mrs. Laura, mentioned, 62, 95

PARROTT, E. G., in command of USS Augusta, 88n

“PARSONAGE,” house in Cass county mentioned, 57

PATIENCE (servant), mesmerized, 19

PATTISON, Capt., John G., killed at South Mountain, 10, 61, 143; at G.M.I., 60; groomsmen at Olmstead wedding, 74; Captain 1st Ga. Regulars, killed, 84

PEACH Tree Creek, battle of, 148-49

PECK, Harriet, mentioned, 46, 66

PEGGY (servant), mentioned, 3, 4, 15, 29

PEQUOD Indians, mentioned, 5, 6

PETER Parley, see Goodrich, Samuel

PHILBRICK, Eliza, mentioned, 8

PHILBRICK, Samuel, mentioned, 8

PHILLIPS, Miss, Incident concerning, 170

PHOENIX Riflemen, stationed at Tybee, 84-85

PICKETT, Clara, mentioned, 65, 66

PICKETT, Eddie, mentioned, 65; killed at Gettysburg, 66

PICKETT, Rufus, mentioned, 65

PICKETT family, mentioned, 64

PIERSON, Col., commandant at Johnsons Island, 106-07

PINAFORE (opera), mentioned, 118

PIZARRO (play), at Savannah Theatre, 14, 15

PLANT, Increase Cotton, description, 27-28; aids with Olmstead’s education, 59

PLANT, Mrs. Increase Cotton, mentioned, 27

PLATT, Mrs. Susan, boarding house, 3, 18, 19; mentioned, 49

POCOTALIGO, S. C., mentioned, 131, 132

POLITICS, 26

POLK, James K., candidate for Presidency, 20, 21, 22

PONCE de Leon, mentioned, 43

PORT Royal, S. C., captured, 57; harbor mentioned, 132; mentioned, 133

PORTER, Admiral David D., bombardment of Vicksburg mentioned, 111, 115

PORTER, Capt. Horace, presided at Pulaski surrender, later career, 100

PRENTICE, James M., mentioned, 3

Preston, Henry Kollock, teacher, 8, 9

PRESTON, James, teacher, 8

PRESTON, Rev. Willard, mentioned, 8

PRINCETON University, mentioned, 30

PULASKI, Tenn., Forrest at, bonfire of Hood’s stores, 171

PULASKI House, Savannah, mentioned, 23

QUARLES, Col. William A., at Johnsons Island, 110; commands a Tennessee brigade under Forrest, career, 167

RAILROADS, largest in U. S. in South Carolina and Georgia, 32; condition of in Alabama, 174; in Georgia, 174-75
SEGUN, John, opera troop, 15-16

TTH CONNECTICUT Regiment, first U. S. troops in Fort Pulaski, 99

ATTACK ON BATTERY WAGNER, 123

SEYMOUR, Mrs. Blah, incident concerning, 64-65

SEYMOUR, Delia, incident concerning, 64-65

SHAW, wounded, 97

SHEFTALL, Shetfall, description, 12-13; death, 13

SHELLMAN, Allie, incident concerning, 169

SHERMAN, Gen. William T., mentioned, 127, 158, 159; advances, 130, 132; in north Georgia, 133-57; unsuccessful attempts to take Kenne- saw Mountain, 142; pushes forward, 145; takes Atlanta, 156; destruction of Atlanta, 157; character of, 157; destractive march to sea, 175; Johnston surrenders to, 178

SHILOH, Tenn., captured officers imprisoned on Johnsons Island, 107

SHIPTON, Mother, mentioned, 32

SIMS, Captain Frederick W., at Fort Pulaski, 90; mentioned, 95, 96, 104; edits newspaper at Governors Island, 103

SINGER, Joe, killed, 150

63D GEORGIA Regiment, in Mercer's Brigade, 134; mentioned, 139; rifle pits captured, 142; consolidated with 1st Regt., 177

SKIDWAY Island, troop servants desert to, 118-19

SLAUGHTER, Dr., at G.M.I., 52

SLAVERY, discussed, 76-77

SMITH, Gen. Argyle, assumes command of Mercer's Brigade, 151-52; position at Jonesboro, 155; succeeds to Division command, 165

SMITHFIELD, N. C., Johnston at, 174, 177

SMITH'S Brigade, sent to Tennessee, 163; detached for special duty, 163-164; under command of Olmstead, 165; with Forrest, 165-69; in engagement at Anthony's Hill, 171-72; crosses Tennessee River, 171-72; at Mobile, 174; at Columbus, 174-75; men desert to look after families, 175, 177; at Augusta, 176; marches to North Carolina, 176-77; Olmstead finds many of missing men, rejoins army, 177

SMYRNA Church, battle of, 139, 144-145; defeat at, 145

SOLOMONS, Joe, mentioned, 86

SOSNOWSKI, Callie, attended Mont- pelier school, 54

SOURLAND, Mr., mentioned, 176

SOUTH Mountain, battle of mentioned, 61

SOUTHERN states, feeling in, 76-78

SOUTHWESTERN Railroad, L. O. Rondols, president, 60

SPARTA, Ga., mentioned, 176

SPARTACUS, the Gladiator (play), at Savannah Theatre, 14

STAGG, Mrs. Catherine, mentioned, 62

STAGG, Helen, mentioned, 63

STAGG, Mary, mentioned, 63

STAGG, Tom, mentioned, 63
STANTON, Edwin M., appealed to re
Pulaski prisoners, 99; re prisoners
at Johnsons Island, 110; mentioned,
157; vindictiveness of, 178
STEVEN, Capt. J. H., at Port Pulaski,
90; at Governors Island, 103
STEPHENS, Alexander Hamilton,
elected vice-president of Con-
federacy, 77
STEVENS, Thaddeus, vindictiveness of,
175
STEWARD, Maj. James, Quartermas-
ter on Mercer's staff, 134
STEWARDSON, Thomas (Mr. James F.
Cann), mentioned, 8, 9; attended
Montpelier school, 34
STUART, Gen. J. E.B., mentioned, 10
SULLIVAN'S Island, mentioned, 119
SUMTER (C.S.S.), tragic wreck of,
120-27
SWINTON, William, comment on
rear-guard action of Army of Ten-
sessee, 169
SYMONDS family, mentioned, 67
TALJAIFERO, Gen. William B., men-
tioned, 121
TATTNALL, Commodore Josiah, men-
tioned, 28; engages enemy battery,
94
TATTNALL Guards, in 1st Regt. Ga.,
133
TATUM, Capt. "Pos"., at Battery
Wagner, 122; killed, 123
TELEGRAPH, invention of, 32, 33
TELEGRAPH, invention of, 32, 33
TELEGRAPH, invention of, 32, 33
TELEGRAPH, invention of, 32, 33
TENNESSEE campaign, 150-73
TERRY, Col. Alfred H., in command
7th Conn. Regt., 90; later career, 106
TEXAS, admitted as state, 21-22
TEXAS Brigade, at Franklin, 164
THEUS' Jewelry store, mentioned, 26
3D MILITARY District of S. C., Oml-
stead in command, 131-33; Jordan in
command, 133
38TH NORTH Carolina Regiment,
mentioned, 105
THOMAS, Gen. George H., victory at
Nashville, 167-68
THOMPSON, Col., hotel in Atlanta,
46-47
THOMPSON, Dr., mentioned, 159, 161
THOMSON, Harvey, at G.M.I., 47
THOUSANDISLANDS, description, 75
THUNDERBOLT, Ga., military post
at, 82
TISHAMINGO, Miss., Forrest's vic-
tory at, 103
TRANS-Mississippi Dept., mentioned,
114
TRENHOLM family, mentioned, 49
TRIPPE, Julie, mentioned, 117
TROY, N. Y., Omland Heights, 66
TUPPER, Fred, wounded, 121
TURNER, Anna (Mrs. James F.
Cann), mentioned, 8, 9; attended
Montpelier school, 34
TURNER, George, mentioned, 8; killed,
9; playmate, 11, 15; at G.M.I.,
46; groomsmen in Omland wedding,
74
TURNER, Joe, killed, 10
TURNER, Capt. Screven, killed, 150
TUSCUMBIA, Ala., 1st Rgt., at, 162
TUZO, Captain; commands steamer
"Oriental," description, 100-101
12TH GEORGIA Battalion, at Isle of
Hope, 118; at Battery Wagner, 120
21ST SOUTH Carolina Regiment, at
Battery Wagner, 120; mentioned, 137
TWIGGS, Duncan, at G.M.I., 33
TYBEE Island, military post on, 82;
garrisons on, 84-85; command chang-
ed, 84-85; Omland in command, 86-
87; evacuated, 87; enemy fortifies,
88; lighthouse, partially destroyed,
88; U. S. flag raised on, 88-89; en-
emy activities on, 91-92, 96; enemy
batteries on, 96
TYLER, John, elected vice-president
U. S., 20
UMBACH, Capt. Charles, at Pulaski,
94; wounded, 150
UNDERGROUND railroad, 76
UNITED STATES politics discussed, 75-
78; army relations with Confederate
troops, 146; adoption of Constitu-
tion, 75-77; right of states to secede,
77; fleet in Charleston harbor, 119;
Military Academy mentioned, 28, 47,
134; Naval Academy mentioned, 28,
47; navy mentioned, 28
UNIVERSITY of North Carolina,
mentioned, 105
UTAH, mentioned, 22
VAN-AMBERG'S Menagerie, perform-
ance in Savannah, 17
VAUCLUSE plantation, mentioned, 36,
42
VEADER, Mr. and Mrs. David, men-
tioned, 3, 45
VENUS Point, battery engaged, 94
VERNON River, description, 30
VICKSBURG, Miss., Johnson Island
prisoners exchanged at, 114-15; news
of fall, 119; campaign mentioned, 134
VIENNA, W. H. Stiles charge d'affai-
res at, 56
VINCENT'S Creek, mentioned, 120,
121
VIRGINIA, troops sent to, 132; Hood
in, 148
VOGHT, Mrs., quarters Olmstead, 170
VOGHT, Sallie, incident concerning, 170

WADE, Maggie, mentioned, 69, 72
WADELEY, William M., at Vicksburg, 115
WALKER, Capt. Robert D., commis-
sary at Pulaski, 90; prisoner at Gov-
nors Island, 103
WALKER, Gen. William H. T., men-
tioned, 131; commands Division, ca-
reer, 131; orders to Olmstead, 144; killed, 150
WALKER, Gen. William S., ordered
to Virgina, description, 131; plans
defense of 3d Mil. Dist. S. C., 132
WALKER'S Division, mentioned, 133;
reserve division, service, 135-36;
brigades reassigned, 131; reaches
Kennesaw Mountain, 140; in battle
of Atlanta, heavy losses, 149-50
WALLACE, John, private in Guilmur-
cut company, 95
WALTHALL, Gen. Edward C., com-
mands infantry in rear-guard, 169
WALTHOUR girls, mentioned, 72
WARD, Emma, mentioned, 67
WARD, Jane, mentioned, 67
WARD, Kitty, mentioned, 67
WARNER'S stables, mentioned, 8
WARSAW Sound, mentioned, 118
WASHINGTON Hall, Macon, men-
tioned, 27
WASHINGTON Volunteers, in 1st Ga.
Regrt., 133
WAY, Col. Charlton H. (Charlie),
mentioned, 56, 72, 74, 152; secretary
of secession convention, 82; at Tybee
86, 87; commands 54th Ga., at Man-
gault's Point, 125; with Mercer's
Brigade, 131; at Jonesboro, 158; Ill,
163; at Columbus, 175
WAY, Mrs. Charlton H. (Fannie
Williams), 56, 72, 73, 74, 158
WAY, Corinne, mentioned, 72
WAY, Eva, mentioned, 72
WAYNE, Mrs. Robert, mentioned, 81
WAYNE, Mrs. Thomas S., mentioned,
131
WEBSTER, Daniel, visit to Savannah,
23
WEBSTER'S Spelling Book, mentioned,
7
WEED, Joe, mentioned, 37
WERNER, Capt. C., at Battery Wag-
nier, 120; killed, 121
WEST, Charles, mentioned, 62; visits
Fort Johnson, 125
WEST, Mrs. Esther Olmstead, men-
tioned, 62, 63, 64, 65
WEST, John, mentioned, 62
WEST, Mrs. John, mentioned, 170
WEST, Lou, mentioned, 62
WEST Point, N. Y., Olmstead visits,
60
WESTERN & Atlantic Railroad, men-
tioned, 133, 138
WETTER, Mr. and Mrs. Augustus
Peter, mentioned, 117

WHEELER, Gen. Joseph, mentioned,
29
WELAN, Father Peter, incident at
Governors Island, 104-05
WHIG Party, mentioned, 26; discuss-
ed, 76
WHITE Bluff, 'school at, 33-45; Pres-
byterian Church mentioned, 30, 31
WHITEMARSH Island, enemy lands-
on, 117; enemy sortie. 130
WILDMAN, Dr., mentioned, 58
WILLIAMS, Anello, mentioned, 39
WILLIAMS, Charles J., regiment
mentioned, 10, 61, 143; Major in
Mexican War, 24; Col. 1st Ga. Regu-
ulars, 82, 84; death, 94, 118
WILLIAMS, Mrs. Charles J. (Mary
Ann Howard), at Columbus, 175
WILLIAMS, Eben, mentioned, 39, 40
WILLIAMS, Mrs. Eben (Margaret
Adams), description, 39
WILLIAMS, Edgar, mentioned, 39
WILLIAMS, Fannie, see Way, Mrs.
Charlton H.
WILLIAMS, Florence, mentioned, 56;
description, 72-73; marriage to Olm-
stead, 74; see also Olmstead, Mrs.
C. H.
WILLIAMS, Frank, mentioned, 39
WILLIAMS, Gus, death mentioned, 116
WILLIAMS, Henry, mentioned, 39
WILLIAMS, Maj. James, inspector on
Mercer's staff, 134; successful attack
on Kennesaw, 142
WILLIAMS, Margaret, see Williams,
Mrs. Eben
WILLIAMS, Peter, death mentioned,
116
WILLIAMS, Peter J., mentioned, 27
WILLIAMS, Mrs. Peter J. (Lucinda
Parke), description, 73-74; Olmstead
visits, 116; lost three sons in war,
116, 175-76
WILLIAMS, Richard, mentioned, 35
WILLIAMS, Sue, mentioned, 176
WILLIAMS, Thomas, mentioned, 35
WILLIAMS, Willie, wounded, 116
WILLIAMSBURG, Va., battle of men-
tioned, 133
WILLIE, Capt., description, 44
WILSON, Gen. James H., crosses Ten-
nessee River, 170
WISE Guards, at Pulaski, 90
WOODBRIDGE, Mrs. Wylly, see
Stiles, Florence V.
WRIGHT, Aleck, mentioned, 37
WYOMING, mentioned, 22

YATES, Lt. Col. Joseph A., men-
tioned, 125
YELLOW Fever, Savannah epidemic,
56
YONGE, Phil, groomsman in Olmstead
wedding, 74
YOUNG, Lt. Col., killed, 164
YOUNG, Gen. Pierce, M. B., men-
tioned, 164
"YOUNG Marooners, The," men-
tioned, 145
ZUYDER Zee, mentioned, 166