Sept 3, 1927

When the war broke out, and for some time previous to this, I was overseer for Dr. Payne, a planter in Ponola, Mississippi. A company was formed here, and it was Dr. Payne's wish that I should enlist here, but as I wanted to see my people before starting, I returned to my home near Alexandria in June 1861. In September the company was formed at Miranda, Rowan County, with W. L. Hood, captain and W. L. Lowrance, 1st Lt. Some time was spent here drilling.
day before we left, Dr. Sam Carr, a wealthy bachelor living at what is now Mill Bridge, gave our company, which was called Co. A, a big dinner. The memory of that dinner was with us many times afterward during the war. Neighbors brought their wagons and took the members of our company to Salisbury. From there we went on the train to High Point and were assigned to the 34th Regiment (Oct. 26, 1861). We spent the winter there and at Raleigh drilling. We were then sent to Goldsboro and from there to Weldon waiting for marching orders. The spring of '62 found our company along with the regiment at Hamilton on the Ro-
And we river. While there I contracted typhoid fever. There was a great deal of sickness among the soldiers. The hospitals were crowded, and there were not enough nurses to look after the sick. After I had been in the hospital several days, the doctor came to me one morning and said that a lady out in town had offered to let me come to her house and stay if I would bring some milk to wait on me. A cousin of mine, James McReeley, was in my company, so he went along to nurse me. These people, whose names I have now forgotten, were very good and kind to me, and I had much better attention than I would have had otherwise.
Soon as I became able to travel I went to Goldsboro. I spent one night with the company. As I was unable for duty, I was granted leave of absence for thirty days and went home. At the expiration of this time, I went to Richmond and joined the 34th Reg. again, which in the meantime had left Goldsboro and gone to Fredericksburg, Va. where it was attached to Pender's Brigade. This Brigade which was composed of the 13th, 16th, 22nd, 34th and 35th, all N.C. Regiments was a part of P. H. Hill's "Light Division." On the 26th of June 1862 our company had its first real war experiences at Mechanicsville or rather Elly's Mill. It was the first time
we had met the enemy in battle. On the following day which was my birthday we were in a fight at Gain's Mill. On Monday, June 30th our regiment took part in the fight at Frazier's Farm and two men from our company - John P. Parks and P. S. Cowan - were killed while aiding in the capture of a battery. It was told that as Capt. Parks laid his hand on one of the captured guns and said, "This is my cannon," a bullet from the enemy killed him instantly. It was in this fight that I received a wound in my left arm. I was sent to the hospital in Richmond, and after being there a short time, was sent home for sixty days. On my return, I joined the regiment at
Bunker Hill in the valley of Virginia. We went into winter quarters in the vicinity of Frederickstown and guarded the south bank of the river for miles above and below town. It was during this winter there was so much suffering from the intense cold. Our clothes and shoes were worn out. Often there was only one blanket for two men. Sometimes we have waked in the morning to find ourselves covered over with snow. We were glad to see warm weather come though it brought us to battle again. Our company took part in the fights at Chancellorsville and at Gettysburg. At the latter place many from our regiment were killed. I was wounded.
ca the first day of the fight and
was sent to the rear. On our
return to Virginia several days
later, at Falling Waters, along
with several others, I was taken
prisoner. We had had little to
eat that day and were hungry.

The Federal officer who had us in
charge asked me of the prisoners
if he had any money. On his saying
no, the officer pulled out a twenty
dollar bill and gave him to
buy something for all of us. He
bought crackers and cheese and
handed the remainder of the money
back to the officer. When he offered
to repay him he said, "You don't
owe me anything. The only thing
I ask of you is to do the same for
me if I ever become your prisoner."
The following day we were taken to Washington and imprisoned in the old capital. After staying here a short time we were sent to a prison on Johnson's Island, Lake Erie. There were twenty-five hundred prisoners here, all of whom were officers. Every morning our rations for the day, consisting of bacon, coffee, and bread was given out to us. Just as soon as we got our allowance, we cooked and ate it. Sometimes when we had any money we bought vegetables and cooked them. At first, we had more bacon and bread than we could eat given to us, but, later on, the allowance grew smaller. Then we got only a quarter of a pound of bread daily. The winter we spent here was very
cold. The lake was frozen over with ice thick enough for wagons to be driven over it. I saw a good many people baptized in the lake when a hole had to be cut in the ice for them to go under the water. After the surrender we were paroled and started for home. We were given transportation on the train with one was a young man who was a candidate for the ministry. His home was in Salisbury and when we got there he invited me to breakfast at his brother's house and afterwards sent me home.
A Tale of the Civil War as told by
Written by Miss Mary McRady, his daughter.

From Battle of Bentonville Ch. W. 1900.
Tells by Capt. A. Lewis, History N. C. Div.

1903
North Carolina State Archives