History and Reminiscences
of the Second Wisconsin
Cavalry Regiment

BY
EMMET C. WEST
HISTORY AND REMINISCENCES

OF THE

Second Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment

BY EMMET C. WEST
O. M. SERGT. CO. E

PORTAGE, WIS.
STATE REGISTER PRINT
MCMIV
Early in the fall of 1861, C. C. Washburn received authority from the government to organize the Second Regiment of Cavalry. He at once proceeded to have twelve companies recruited in different parts of the state and was commissioned Colonel by Governor Randall, Oct. 12. The following were the principal regimental officers during the service of the regiment:


Majors, 1st Battalion—W. H. Miller, M. W. Wood.


Majors, 3d Battalion—E. D. Luxton, G. N. Richmond, N. DeForest.

Surgeons—C. G. Pease, M. P. Hanson, Alex. McBean, A. H. Gurnsey, J. S. Kelso.

Chaplains—W. H. Brisbane, B. L. Brisbane.

Adjutants—W. H. Morgan, J. P. Scott, J. R. Wolfenden.

Quartermasters—George C. Russell, H. P. George, Geo. S. Race.

Commissaries—J. B. Bradford, P. L. Knappan.

I would like to give the names of all who served in the regiment but as it would take so much space will only give those of company E, with highest office held:

Captains—G. N. Richmond, Portage; C. W. Beach, Marcellon; Stephen Ward, Scott.

First Lieuts.—Wallace Smith, Portage; Austin Cannon, Springvale; Zadoc Merrill, Marcellon.

Second Lieuts.—J. T. Dean, Merrimac; J. H. Waggoner, Richland Center; James Price, Lowville.

Quartermaster Sergeants—Boyd McEckron, E. C. West.


The company was recruited in Portage by G. N. Richmond who had his office in Miles' drug store, a wooden building on the corner where Graham's store now is. I enlisted in the company Nov. 9, 1861 and was one of the few who remained of the original company of 97 men mustered out with the regiment at Madison in December 1865. There were but 17 as follows: Stephen Woodard, Geo. S. Race, James Price, W. C. Albee, M. G. Ellison, Albert Steadman, Thos. J. Fletcher, E. A. Pierce, G. W. Ames, Wm. Clark, Martin Olson, Henry Clithero, Moses Goodwin, James Gamble, Alex. Gamble, Thomas Haveroft, E. C. West.

Total number of men enlisted in the company, 164.

Of these 97 were of the original company and 67 were recruits who enlisted during the years of 1862-3-4-5. Number killed, died of disease and in prison, 25. Discharged for disability, 28. Deserted, 3. Dishonorably discharged, 1. Taken prisoners, 28. Many that had been in the service long enough; two years, re enlisted, January, 1864. Those that did not re-enlist were discharged when their three years term expired. But let us return to Portage and follow the company and regiment through the war. We spent the time there drilling and boarding at a hotel until the 27th of November, when we went to Milwaukee and went into barracks at "Camp Washburn," later the old state fair grounds. Some companies for the regiment had preceded us, others soon followed.

On the 23d day of December, 1861, we were mustered into the United States service. We remained at Camp Washburn during that winter doing routine camp duty and drilling while waiting for orders to go into active service. We were furnished army rations and did our own cooking. Occasionally we could get passes to go into the city and furloughs to go home.

On invitation the regiment marched into the city one day and formed in double ranks in front of the old Newhall House and were served to sandwiches and coffee.

Those were pleasant days and little did
we realize what we were to endure before the close of the war.

Colonel Washburn and the whole regiment were anxious to get into active service before the war ended. The Colonel received a telegram from Gen. Grant dated the 15th of February, 1862, the day before Fort Donelson surrendered, offering him a position on his staff.

He at once went to St. Louis and obtained an order for the regiment to go there, then visited Gen. Grant but did not accept of his offer. In a few days he returned to the regiment and on Monday morning the 24th of March we formed on the dress-parade ground for the last time and marched out of camp. As we passed through the gates we gave three cheers for the old camp ground. We marched to the depot and took cars for Chicago. There we changed cars and arrived at St. Louis on the 25th and went into camp at Benton Barracks. Soon after leaving Chicago one man fell between cars and was killed. The First Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment was at St. Louis but soon left after we arrived there. In Company A was a cousin whom I had not seen for years. The following fall we again met at Helena, Ark. At St. Louis we were mounted and armed with the old muzzle loading muskets. Company E drew black horses, L cream, H gray, etc. As the years went by all companies had horses of all colors and the old muskets were exchanged for carbines. First Sharps, then Burnside, and last and best, the Spencer. Later on we were also armed with sabres and Colt's navy revolvers. On the 17th of May we went aboard the steamer Isabelle and arrived at Jefferson City on the 18th. The 26th day of May we left Jefferson City and started on our long wearisome march through the states of Missouri and Arkansas. Each battalion took different routes to Springfield. The 1st composed of companies A, D, G, and K, commanded by Major Miller, escorted Gen. Brown by the western route. The 2d, companies B, E, H and L commanded by Col. Stephens marched by way of Castle Rock, Little Piney, Lebanon, Vienna, Rolla and Waynesville arriving at Springfield on the 10th of June. The 3d, companies C, F, I, and M under Major Sterling marched by the central route. At Springfield the regiment was divided, the 1st battalion doing service in Missouri and Arkansas, until September 1864, when they rejoined the other two battalions at Vicksburg.

On the 13th of June, Washburn, who had been made a Brigadier General—later was made a Major General—left Springfield with the 2d and 3d battalions and a battalion of the 10th Illinois Cavalry, as escort for a large provision train for Gen. Curtis’ army in Arkansas. We crossed the Ozark mountains to Ozark where we remained a couple of days. While there a company of rebels commanded by Major Clifford made their appearance and Capt. Sherman of company L with 60 men pursued them about 25 miles, killed 5 or 6 and took several prisoners.

June 27th we crossed the state line and went into camp at Salem, in Arkansas, where we remained two or three days and received pay. Lieut. Ring of company I while reconnoitering was fired upon by rebels and wounded. Several horses were also wounded. Resumed our march, passed through Jacksonport and arrived at Augusta on the 5th of July where we found Gen. Curtis and his army, who were glad to see us and gave us cheers as they were nearly destitute of provisions. We had marched about 440 miles and taken about 150 prisoners and sustained no loss. July 7th the whole army, Gen. Curtis in command left Augusta, the Second Cavalry in advance. When near the town of Cottonplant that day we encountered the enemy 4,500 strong, commanded by Gen. Price. The 11th Wisconsin Infantry
and the 33d Illinois came to assistance and the rebels retreated leaving 150 killed and wounded on the field. Our loss was 13 killed and 25 wounded. Fred Langdon of the 11th Wisconsin, from near Cambria, was among the killed. It was reported that the rebels captured a sergeant and corporal, tied them to a tree and shot them. Twenty rebels came in under a flag of truce to bury their dead but it was too late, they had all been buried. Left Cottonplant—sometimes called Bayou Cache—the evening of July 9th and arrived at Clarendon on White river the next morning having marched 25 miles. It was expected that transports would be there with supplies, but they had been there and left two days before.

Gen. Curtis had intended to cross the river, march to and capture Little Rock, the capitol of the state, but the failure to procure supplies at Clarendon compelled him to change his plans and he decided to march his army of about 25,000 men and a large train, to Helena, on the Mississippi river about 65 miles distant. He ordered Gen. Washburn to take 2,500 cavalry and by a forced march reach Helena and order supplies to that place from Memphis, 90 miles above. They left Clarendon on the 11th and reached Helena the next morning. I was among those left with the main army and train and we did not reach Helena until the morning of July 14th. It had been more than six weeks since we left Jefferson City and we had marched 565 miles on the main line besides many miles of extra scouting. Plenty of provisions had arrived at Helena and there were 400 letters for the Second Cavalry. Gen. Washburn was placed in command of the troops left at Helena, among them the Second Cavalry and he had his headquarters at the house of the rebel Gen. Hindman, who, years before had been a member of Congress with Washburn.

The next summer, while the Second Cavalry was at Haynes Bluff, near Vicksburg, Gen. Prentice was in command at Helena, and on the 4th of July, 1863, the day Vicksburg surrendered, Gen. Price and Gen. Marmaduke with a large force attacked the town but were defeated with a loss of 173 killed, 687 wounded and 776 missing. The Union loss was 57 killed, 117 wounded and 32 missing. Helena was a very unhealthy place and after our long and wearisome march from Jefferson City, the warm weather and poisonous spring water we first used there, caused a great deal of sickness. In fact there was scarcely a man in the whole force that summer but was sick. Some were discharged for disability; some were sent home on sick furloughs and never came back; some recovered sufficiently to remain in the service, but many died and most of them were buried there on the hill side with military honors. We finally drew Mississippi river water in barrels, which, warm and muddy as it was, was much better than the spring water. About six months and a half the regiment remained at Helena doing picket and scouting duty. Many were the foraging expeditions and raids, of from five to ten days made over that part of Arkansas as far as Devalls Bluff on White river, and over into Mississippi as far as Oakland. On some of the raids in engagements with the enemy we lost some men killed and taken prisoners, and killed and captured many rebels.

On the 22d of October nearly one hundred men and horses and thirty wagons with mules were surprised and captured while picking corn out about 12 miles. On the 16th of July two battalions of the First Cavalry regiment which left us at St. Louis came into our camp. The rebels attacked the regiment as it was getting daylight at their camp on the Augville river 35 miles northwest of Helena. Twelve men, including the
chaplain, were killed and many more wounded. Several were taken prisoners and many horses and mules captured. Fifteen wagons were burned. There were about 500 rebels and took away two wagon loads of their dead. A force from Helena including a part of the Second Cavalry pursued the rebels but they had too much the start and escaped. Nov. 4, 1862, was election day and arrangements were made so that all those of the regiment who were in camp and wished, could vote. There were 27 votes cast in Company E, 12 Republicans and 15 Democrats. I cannot give the result in the regiment.

Mrs. Governor Harvey visited the regiment on Dec. 9. The head-quarters of the regiment remained at Helena until Jan. 31, 1863 when we were ordered to Memphis, Tenn., some 90 miles above Helena. We went aboard the steamer Florence and arrived at Memphis, February 3d and went into camp two miles southeast of the city. It snowed twenty-four hours steady commencing on the 4th, but on the 8th it was all gone. Company E went out 15 miles on a scout that day and captured a rebel Lieutenant and 5 or 6 men.

It was healthier at Memphis than at Helena but we lost several men through sickness during the four months and a few days we were there at that time. Our duties there were about the same as at Helena. Many were the raids made by the regiment in southern Tennessee and northern Mississippi and across the river into Arkansas destroying railroads, burning cars, depots, bridges, etc. and sometimes we would have a lively fight with the enemy. They were in the habit of firing upon steamers passing up and down the river and they burned the Hercules. To retaliate and put a stop to it the town of Hopefield nearly opposite the city was burned on the 19th by orders from head-quarters. Gen. Washburn arrived from Helena about the 1st of March and took command of the cavalry troops by order of Gen. Grant.

Col. Stephens was an Englishman and had been a member of Queen Victoria's guards and he was an excellent swordsman. When not on duty he drilled the regiment a great deal with the sabre. "Brick" Pomeroy, of La Crosse, was with us a few days but the Colonel finally ordered him to leave camp, which he did. Gov. Salomon visited us on the 9th of June and made an address.

Gov. Harvey, it will be remembered, was drowned in the Ohio river while on a tour of visiting Wisconsin regiments in April, 1862. Gen. Washburn left Memphis on the 4th of June, 1863, to take command of the cavalry forces at Haynes Bluff on the Yazoo river near Vicksburg. The regiment was ordered to follow as soon as transportation could be furnished. On the 10th we went aboard the steamers Ohio Belle and Sultanna and arrived at Haynes Bluff on the 13th. We were then a part of Gen. Sherman's army, whose duty was to prevent Gen. Joe Johnston from attacking Gen. Grant in the rear during the siege of Vicksburg.

From that time until the 4th of July, when Vicksburg surrendered the regiment was continually doing picket and scouting duty between the two armies. We captured many prisoners, horses and mules. Our headquarters were about twelve miles northwest of Vicksburg, and day and night we could hear the firing and the boom of cannon and mortars over the doomed city. Some of our men got passes and visited their friends in the trenches. Co. E was on picket July 3d, and the morning of the 4th, when we went into camp, we learned that Vicksburg had surrendered and that the regiment had orders to break camp and march to Bear Creek near the Big Black river, twenty miles away toward Jackson. Those days, the 3d
and 4th of July, 1863, were momentous, for they were the turning point of the war in favor of the Union—the battle of Gettysburg being won on the 3d and Vicksburg surrendering on the 4th. The regiment reached Bear Creek the night of the 4th and remained there until the 7th waiting for the infantry, artillery and train to come up. On that day, Gen. Sherman with three army corps, the 15th commanded by himself, the 13th commanded by Gen. Ord and the 9th commanded by Gen. Parke, arrived and crossed Black river, the cavalry under Gen. Bussey in advance. Then commenced the pursuit of Gen. Johnston and his army to Bolton, Clinton, Canton and Jackson with fighting day and night all the way. Arrived in sight of Jackson on the 10th, and as Gen. Johnston made a stand inside the fortifications, the siege commenced, lasting until the night of the 17th when Johnston evacuated the city and escaped with his army across Pearl river. Our troops marched into the city the next morning and for the second time had possession of the capital of Mississippi. The Second Cavalry marched through the city on the 20th and watered horses in Pearl river.

The day after we reached Jackson our regiment, the 3d and 4th Iowa and the 5th Illinois, all cavalry, under Col. Bussey drew three days' rations and at 4 p. m. started on the road to Canton and marched all night. The next day we tore up and burned the rails, ties and bridges of the Jackson and Memphis railroad. Also burned a depot and train of cars and captured a rebel picket post within two miles of Canton. Col. Bussey learned that there was a large rebel force at that place and decided to return to Jackson. July 15, being reinforced by a brigade of infantry and a battery of four guns and a train of one hundred wagons with provisions and ammunition marched again for Canton. When with-
SECOND WISCONSIN CAVALRY REGIMENT

for nearly a year and a half and it would take a great deal of time to write, and a large volume to contain the details of the doings of the regiment during that time.

The 21st of August a division of infantry and artillery and details of Co's. E, F, H and C, of the Second cavalry and four companies of the Fourth Illinois under Gen. Stephenson left Vicksburg for a raid over in Louisiana. Had several fights with the rebels and quite a number were killed and wounded on both sides. Returned to Vicksburg Sept. 2d and found the regiment encamped three miles south of the city and about one mile from the fortifications. It was an unhealthy place and many of the men were taken sick and quite a number died. I was sick with fever and on the 7th was sent to the hospital where I remained until the 22d when I was given a furlough and reached home on the 5th of October. The 29th I started to return and arrived at Vicksburg on the 6th of November and found that the regiment had moved camp back to Redbone. Nov. 3d was election day but as I was not there, have no record of how the regiment voted. Redbone was simply the name of a church and cemetery in a farming community and many of the farmers requested that "house guards" be furnished them which was granted, and of course they had plenty of good things to eat, beds to sleep in and nothing to do but have a good time generally. My bunk mate, W. C. Albee, was one of the lucky ones. He was guard at Mr. Savoy's about two miles from camp. There were two young ladies there, who were good at entertaining the Union soldiers with rebel songs. Occasionally some of us would ride out for a visit and to be entertained with music and a good square meal. Our duties were the same old story, a continual round of camp, picket and scouting, and occasionally went out on a long expedition with a large force from Vicksburg. We went to Warrenton and other places and got old brick and boards and nails and built chimneys in our tents, etc., and prepared for the winter the best we could.

It was cold enough there in Mississippi that cold New Year's day, Jan. 1st, 1864, to keep fire in our tents all day.

About Jan. 1st, 1864, opportunity was given to all who had been in the service long enough—to re-enlist. About 385 of the regiment re-enlisted and were then entitled to a furlough home.

Farmers were plowing at Redbone on February 4th. February 5th orders were received for the regiment to move camp to Vicksburg, inside the fortifications on the Warrenton road. On the 14th we moved back to our old camp at Redbone. February 23d Capt. Sherman with a detail from all the companies; went out 10 or 12 miles to a Dr. Jones' where there were 70 bales of cotton and got all that could be loaded into the wagons. On the 25th the balance was got and the next day a lot was got at another place. In fact all the cotton that could be found, was confiscated. Eight men were taken prisoners March 8, while getting cotton for Mrs. Pettit across the Big Black river near Hall's Ferry. A large number of recruits for the regiment arrived March 22d. There were 26 for Co. E, among them William Payne and five others who were captured when he was killed. The day after they arrived the re-enlisted veterans under Major Richmond started home on 30 days' furlough. We left Vicksburg on the steamer Superior, whose captain was a rebel, and he did not intend to allow us in the cabin, but the Major insisted and of course we went in. While acting as Corporal of the guard one night I found hid away 21 cans of peach and blackberry preserves which I confiscated for
the benefit of the Union and Company E.

We arrived at Madison, April 1st, and were furnished a free breakfast. Major Richmond introduced Governor Lewis who, in a brief address welcomed us back to the state. The Major replied and three cheers were given for the Governor and the Second Cavalry. The next day all left Madison for their homes and enjoyed themselves immensely until the first days of May when all gathered at old Camp Washburn in Milwaukee and on the 5th left the state again, for the south by way of Chicago and St. Louis. Went aboard the steamer Continental and reached Memphis on the 9th and laid over a few hours. Our old Colonel, Gen. Washburn, came aboard and made a brief address. Arrived at Vicksburg on the 11th, being six days on the way from Milwaukee.

Coming home we were eight days reaching Madison, but the time coming and going was not included in our 30 days' furlough.

We found the headquarters of the regiment again moved from Redbone back to Vicksburg, inside the fortifications on the Warrenton road. As soon as we reached camp we were told of the sad news of the killing of William Payne and the capture of six others of Co. E, while on a scout to the Big Black river April 21st. It was a strange coincidence that William Payne was killed the day his sister, Miss Elizabeth Payne, and Lieut. Woodard were married while he was on furlough.

Among the duties of the Second Cavalry while stationed at Vicksburg and Redbone, was to picket and patrol the several roads, the Warrenton, Hankerson's ferry, Baldwin's ferry and Hall's ferry, leading from Vicksburg to the Big Black river, and keep them clear of all bands of rebels.

On the 20th day of April, Orderly Sergeant Z. Merrill received orders to send out a scout and he made the following detail: Ed. Moore, corporal in charge; Wm. Payne, Wm. Atkinson, Elonzo Herreman, Eugene Mathewson, Jas. Chandler and Antoine Gooler. All excepting Moore were of those recruits who joined the regiment the day before we went home on veteran furlough and lacked one day of being with the regiment one month.

The day after they went out a negro came into camp and reported that one man was killed and the others taken prisoners. He had a small pin-cushion, which he said belonged to the one killed, and Merrill recognized it as Payne's. A detail of sixty men with an ambulance immediately went out and they found Payne's body in the cane-break, where he fell, pierced with five buckshot and three pistol balls. He was taken to Redbone and buried with military honors, but at request of his father, was taken up, placed in a metallic casket and shipped home, and was buried in the Marcellon cemetery.

Antoine Gooler of Lamberton, Minn., the only one of the ill-fated scout now living, writes me the following account of the sad affair: "We started from camp on the afternoon of the 20th of April, 1864, and reached the Big Black river at about 2 o'clock the next morning and immediately started to return, and traveled until sunrise, when we met the rebels on Capt. Whittaker's plantation. We came upon them suddenly at a turn in the road, where they were waiting for us, for they knew we were out. We got within eight or ten rods of them before we suspected they were near. They fired, and we returned it, and then turned and made for a clump of cane-break, thinking we could get away.

"On arriving there we were obliged to abandon our horses. The clump proved to be small and we were soon surround-
ed by the rebels. They called for us to surrender and come up to them. When we got to within about 20 feet of them they fired, killing Payne and wounding Herreman and myself. They proceeded to rob us, wrangling over Payne's effects. One got his watch, another his chain, etc. Payne's body was left there and the rest of us were taken to Canton. From there, those that were not wounded were sent to Andersonville. Herreman and I were not able to travel and were kept there for a while and then sent to Jackson. We were sent from there to Vicksburg on the 29th of June, to be exchanged. I never saw more of Atkinson, Mathewson, Chandler and Moore."

In another letter from Comrade Gooler he says: "That story in regard to the killing of Wm. Payne because he would not surrender is not true. We had surrendered, knowing that it was useless to resist such odds—there were about 120 rebels—and were standing side by side when the rebels fired upon us, killing Payne and wounding Herreman and myself."

Atkinson, Mathewson, Chandler and Moore were taken to Andersonville, where Mathewson died in September. Atkinson was transferred to Florence, where he died in November. Chandler was transferred to Millen and died in October. Moore lived to be exchanged and reached Madison, where he soon died. Herreman and Gooler were exchanged and furloughed home from Vicksburg on the 14th of July and neither of them ever returned to the regiment.

Herreman died in August and was buried in the Marcellon cemetery. Gooler, who was wounded in the ankle, was discharged and is the only one living of that ill-fated scout from Redbone, Miss., forty years ago.

During the summer and fall of 1864 the regiment experienced its hardest service in scouting, raiding and fighting and lost many men by death through sickness, and quite a number were killed. It was about as unhealthy in our camps at Vicksburg that summer as it was at Helena two years previous. The latter part of July and the fore part of August twenty men in the regiment died. Gen. Slocum was in command until the fore part of August, when Gen. Dana was placed in command. Col. Stephens had command of the brigade of cavalry and Major Richmond of the Second regiment. Many changes were also made in the company officers. Capt. Beach and Lieut. Cannon of Company E resigned. Lieut. Waggoner was home on recruiting service and Orderly Sergt. Woodard was promoted to First lieutenant and was in command of the company. Many changes were also made in the non-commissioned officers.

On the 24th of May, 1864, about 20 steamers with the 16th and 17th army corps on board, under Gen. A. J. Smith from the Red river expedition, arrived and landed opposite our camp.

The rebels had blocked the river near Greenville and Columbia in Arkansas, about 150 miles above Vicksburg, and as the steamer Adams was passing down, fired over twenty cannon shots at her, killing several men.

To open the blockade and to punish the rebels, Gen. Smith with about 7,000 men, including infantry, artillery and cavalry, left Vicksburg on steamers the 3d of June. There were 150 men of the Second Cavalry with the expedition under Capt. Ring of Company I. Company E furnished 20 men, Lieut. Woodard in command.

We landed near Greenville on the 5th and it was continual marching and fighting until we returned to Vicksburg on the 13th. Gen. Marmaduke was in com-
12 HISTORY AND REMINISCENCES OF THE

mand of the rebels, about 10,000, infantry, cavalry and three batteries. They made a stand near Lake Village on the 6th and for about an hour there was fighting. Gen. Smith ordered the cavalry to form for a charge but the rebels saw the move and retreated and we pursued them. The rebel loss in the battle was about 100 killed and wounded. In one of their batteries they lost all but four men. Our loss was about 40 killed and 70 wounded. The Eighth Wisconsin infantry, the eagle regiment, lost 32 men, killed and wounded. The Colonel had one horse's head blown off by a shell and two others wounded under him. One man of the Second Cavalry was wounded. We burned the towns of Greenville and Columbia and finally returned to the boats on the 9th and the cavalry was taken across the river into Mississippi and we succeeded in capturing a lot of prisoners, horses and mules, and burned a rebel steamboat on the Sunflower river. One night a negro came into camp and reported that a lot of rebels were at a dance three or four miles from camp and a detail was ordered out, and they captured eleven.

On the march one day, some of the boys found a safe in an old deserted store, which of course they broke open and confiscated the contents, several thousand dollars in gold. We returned to the boats on the night of the 11th and the next day started on our return to Vicksburg. It rained six of the ten days we were out. A scout of twenty men from companies E and H under Capt. Sherman and Lieut. Woodard went out on the 28th of June, 6 or 7 miles on the Jackson road, crossed over to the Baldwin's Ferry road, then to the Hall's Ferry road, then to the Warrenton road back to camp. We saw no rebels that day but had all the blackberries and buttermilk we wanted to eat and drink. You remember, boys, the great quantities of blackberries that grew all over that region those days and which helped us out on our rations many times when they were poor and scant. I remember noticing that day on the Jackson road a few rods from the fortifications and Fort Hill, the monument which had been placed where the tree stood under which Gen. Grant and Gen. Pemberton met July 3, 1863, to arrange the terms of surrender of the city and garrison. The tree had long since disappeared, cut up and taken away for relics.

At daylight, on the morning of July 1st, 1864, a division consisting of infantry, artillery and cavalry under command of Gen. Dennis, left Vicksburg on another expedition out to Jackson, and it was one of the hardest ones the Second Cavalry was on during the war. The brigade of cavalry consisted of the 2d Wisconsin, 5th and 11th Illinois and 10th Missouri, commanded by Major Mumford of the 5th Illinois. Early on the morning of the 3d, we crossed the Big Black on a pontoon bridge, the 2d in advance and it was fighting all the way to Champion's Hill battlefield where we arrived at night and went into camp. During the night Gen. Slocum arrived and took command. The bugles and drums aroused us at 2 o'clock the morning of July 4th and at daylight we resumed our marching and fighting, the 2d in advance. We reached Clinton, 15 miles, about noon when we had a sharp fight, killing two rebels and wounding four or five. One man in Company C of our regiment was wounded. The Second Cavalry were camped in the cemetery and at sundown about fifteen hundred rebels charged upon us. We saddled and mounted and formed in line under a heavy fire, then dismounted and drove the rebels back some distance, then returned to the cemetery and slept that night in line of battle in front of our
horses. We killed four rebels and wounded seven that evening, and only had one man wounded, making two, that 4th of July at Clinton, Miss. Remember, I am speaking now only of the doings of the 2d Cavalry. The next day we resumed our marching and fighting again, the rebels retreating to Jackson. As we neared the city we met citizens with a flag of truce, proposing to surrender. One man of the 2d was killed that day and several wounded. The horse of Dave Pratt, Company E, was wounded. The rebels had received reinforcements and were making desperate efforts to kill or capture the whole force before we could get back to Vicksburg. Just before sundown on the 6th, we received orders to form the rear guard of the command which was marching out of the city on the Vicksburg road. The advance soon came upon the rebels and the fighting commenced again. Our regiment was ordered to the front and formed in line in front of the rebel batteries. Their shells fell all around us, one wounded a horse in Company F. After dark we moved back to some timber and went into camp for the night, with nothing to eat or drink and took turns in holding our horses in line. The next morning, the 7th, we moved forward again and it was fighting all the way to Clinton. There the rebels charged on our batteries but were driven back with great loss. We had to leave our dead and wounded on the field and lost about fifty taken prisoners. We finally reached Muddy Creek, across which a bridge had to be built before we could cross over, and go into camp with nothing to eat. Early the next morning we moved forward and fought our way to the Big Black river, crossed over and went into camp. There we were reinforced by six regiments of colored infantry and a battery, and a brigade of cavalry sent from Memphis. Rations and forage were also provided for us. Many of the men were sick and were sent into Vicksburg.

On the 11th the command recrossed the river and fought its way around by Utica, Port Gibson, Rocky Springs, Grand Gulf, and returned to Vicksburg on the 17th having been seventeen days on the expedition with fighting almost every day. It was very warm and rained a great deal of the time. We lost many men on that raid, and so did the rebels. Again we resumed our routine camp, picketing and scouting duties. The 2d Wisconsin Cavalry, the 5th and 11th Illinois and a colored regiment, did all the picketing and scouting and we were out about every other day and night. So many men in the regiment were sick and so many had died it was thought best to move camp, therefore, on the 10th of August, we moved three miles to the Baldwin's Ferry road near the fortifications, and about two miles from the city. Gen. Slocum had been relieved and Gen. Dana was then in command of all the troops there.

The fore part of September the pickets were doubled for it was feared that Gen. Forrest would make a raid into the city. A short time before, while Gen. A. J. Smith was out on a raid with most of the troops at Memphis, Forrest made a raid into that city and captured what soldiers were left there, including Gen. Washburn's headquarters at the Gayosa House. Our old Colonel barely escaped capture by jumping through a window and running to Fort Pillow in his night clothes. He then sent word to Forrest if he did not leave he would turn the heavy guns upon the city and shell and burn it to the ground. The citizens importuned Forrest to leave, which he did, but he made no such raid into Vicksburg. He probably was aware the Second Cavalry was there.
On the 28th of September the 1st battalion, Companies A, D, G and K, which we left in Missouri nearly two years before, rejoined us. They were on the steamer John J. Roe which sank before they reached Vicksburg; no men were lost but they lost about 100 horses. While in Missouri they were engaged in scouting and guarding wagon trains. They made an enforced march and took part in the battle of Prairie Grove and were also in the engagement at Lanes Prairie, losing five men killed.

September 29th an expedition left Vicksburg with Gen. Dana in command. Col. Osband of the 5th Illinois Cavalry, was in command of the cavalry which included the 1st battalion and company C of the 2d Cavalry and the 5th and 11th Illinois and a colored regiment. They went down in the vicinity of Natchez and returned on the 11th of October. The cavalry charged a rebel battery and killed 46 men and captured 40 prisoners and three cannon. The Second boys captured a rebel flag which they brought into camp under the Stars and Stripes. Two or three of company C boys were wounded.

I believe it was on that expedition that three of Company G boys, Lieut. Edward S. Minor, Joe Cooper and Thurman McIntyre, being in advance one day, captured an ex-rebel officer who offered them $5,000 if they would release him, but they would not accept it and turned him over to the Provost Marshall who soon let him go. The rebel cotton speculator, meeting Lieut. Minor soon after, told him he might as well have had the money as some one else. Edward S. Minor is now a member of Congress from the 8th Wisconsin District, and his home is at Sturgeon Bay.

After nearly two years from her visit to us at Helena, Mrs. Gov. Harvey again visited us on September 30th. A paper was circulated through the regiment and signed by probably every man present, giving something towards a gold watch to be purchased and presented to her. We formed on the parade ground, a brass band being present, and Mrs. Harvey in a carriage in front of the regiment. Capt. Ring made the presentation address and Mrs. Harvey very feelingly responded, thanking the regiment for the present. Mrs. Harvey followed the example of her noble husband, visiting Wisconsin regiments in the field, and such visits were cheering and inspiring to the soldiers.

Col. Guppey with the 23d Wisconsin Infantry, arrived on the 14th of October and some of Company E went to visit their old friends. Capt. DeForest with a detail of men went out to Redbone November 2d to arrest some citizens suspected of robbing Mr. McGrue the night he shot Harry Bane, a few days before. They returned with six; among them were Dr. Pettit and Geo. Savoy. Mr. McGrue was a union man and after the war was arrested for killing Bane and tried by a civil court at Vicksburg and was acquitted. Col. Osband left Vicksburg with 1,000 men, 300 of them of the 2d Cavalry, the 6th of November, and landed at Gaines Landing and went out on a raid but captured only a lot of sheep. Returned to Vicksburg on the 10th and found that over 100 recruits had arrived for the regiment. The 8th was election day but those of Company E that were on the raid could not vote for no arrangements had been made to do so. Some of the companies had made arrangements to vote and did so. In camp there were 30 votes cast in Company E, 23 for Lincoln and 7 for McClellan. There were 517 votes cast in the regiment, Lincoln receiving 490 and McClellan, 27. On the 14th of November news was received that Lincoln was elected and to celebrate the victory for war and the Union a salute
of thirty-four guns was ordered fired from each of the eight or ten forts around Vicksburg.

I now come to the last expedition or raid the regiment was ever on from Vicksburg and vicinity. At daylight, the 23d day of November, 1864, our brigade of cavalry and two batteries, Col. Osband in command, left camp with ten days rations and marched to the Big Black river. The next morning we crossed the river and made a feint of 10 or 12 miles towards Jackson and returned. Early on the morning of the 25th we started on a forced march of 34 miles towards Mechanicsburg, then towards Yazoo city to within 6 miles, when we took the Canton road, arriving at Vaughn's Station near the Big Black river above Canton on the 27th, having marched about 100 miles in a little over two days. We burned the station and railroad bridge and tore up and burned a long piece of the railroad track. The 28th we marched 20 miles and burned Pickets Station and then marched 12 miles towards Yazoo city, where we arrived the next day after marching 25 miles. We found a gunboat there which had come up the river with provisions for us. The 30th we rested and drew and cooked rations. That night the Colonel heard that there was a large force of rebels near the city intending to attack us, and the next morning, Dec. 1, 1864, he sent portions of the regiments out on all the roads to reconnoitre. The Second Cavalry under Major N. H. Dale, who was in command of the regiment on that raid, Lieut. S. Woodard being in command of Company F, went out on the Mechanicsburg road. We came upon the rebel pickets soon after leaving ours and had a running fight for about 12 miles when the rebel concentrated their force and made a stand in the edge of some timber. The Major ordered Companies E and F, to dismount and deploy as skirmishers, E to the left and F to the right of the road.

Cavalry when forming to go out on a march always counts off by fours and when ordered to dismount to fight number four remains in the ranks holding the three dismounted horses. There were 22 of our company dismounted, Lieut. Woodard in command. We were ordered to a rail fence which we finally reached and exchanged shots with the rebels, who were in the timber beyond a small open field, for about half an hour three of our boys being wounded—William McCormick, William French and John Landon. We finally fell back to the road where we left the regiment but they were not there. The rebels had attacked them with such force they were obliged to retreat, of course taking our horses with them. We could hear the rebels returning from the pursuit and we ran a few rods from the road and laid flat on the ground and they passed by talking and laughing over their success and did not see us. We then ran farther into the woods where we were safe for the time being and dressed the wounds of those who were shot the best we could and held a council of war. We were well armed with Burnside carbines and Colts' navy revolvers and it was finally decided to make the attempt to reach our forces at Yazoo city avoiding the road. We soon had to cross an open field and as we reached the fence and road on the opposite side, Major Bradford rode up with a battalion of rebel cavalry. They knew we were left when the regiment retreated and were out looking for us. We were taken completely by surprise and surrendered without a shot being fired on either side. Of course we could have killed some of them and all been killed ourselves but we did not feel like doing it. They immediately proceeded to search and rob most of the
boys of their money, watches, knives, hats, boots, etc. I was one of those that was not robbed and having a few dollars in greenbacks with me saved it by sewing it in my shirt collar that night and later it was very useful. I also saved my boots by cutting them on the instep which was the indirect cause of my having a great deal of suffering during my imprisonment. The following are the names of those captured that day, all being of Company E except the last two who were of Company F:

Stephen Woodard  Wm. C. Albee
M. G. Ellison  E. A. Fisher
John A. Brown  Moses Goodwin
Thomas Howard  John Laudon
Horace Gibbs  Matt Landgraf
Joseph Corning  Peter Donoher
Willis Lasbure  Wm. McCormick
Martin Oleson  Scott Rensimer
Wm. Whiting  James Cook
Edward Pierce  Wm. P. French
Josiah Williams  E. C. West
— James Logue

All of the above excepting James Logue lived to reach the Union lines and be exchanged the next spring. The official records give 5 men killed, 9 wounded and 25 missing of the regiment in that engagement, but I can give the names of but two of the killed: James Cullen, Co. I and G. W. Gray, Co. L. Major Dale was wounded in the ankle. The rebels reported a number killed and wounded. Our captors did not keep us long waiting but marched us to the headquarters of their brigade, commanded by Gen. Griffith. They put us in an old building for the night, strongly guarded inside and out. We had had nothing to eat since early in the morning and the rebels gave us nothing that night nor the next morning until we had marched 5 miles to Dover and but little then. Our guards were changed at Dover and they marched us 15 miles farther and went into camp. Again we were put in an old building and all they gave us to eat was a few sweet potatoes which they rolled in on the floor and which we roasted in the fireplace. The next day we crossed the Big Black river and marched to Canton, 15 miles, and were put on an old freight car and taken to Meridian and were put in the stockade there. They gave us some corn meal which we boiled in a kettle and ate the best way we could. Whiting was paroled at Meridian, found friends through being a mason. After two or three days they put us on a car and our next stopping place was at Selma, Ala., where they kept us in the streets a long time in a hard rain. At last we moved on and finally reached Cahaba, Ala., and were put in the prison there where we remained until the next spring.

Dr. Jesse Hawes of Greeley, Colo., who was a member of the 9th Illinois Cavalry and was captured and confined in the prison, visited the place after the war and several years ago wrote a book of 480 pages entitled "Cahaba" which every one ought to read, but none of the books are now to be had either of the author or publisher. I am indebted to the book for some facts which I give in regard to the prison and the treatment of Union soldiers confined there.

Cahaba is on the west bank of the Alabama river just below where the Cahaba river unites with it. It was the first capital of Alabama and at one time had about 5,000 inhabitants. The prison was an old cotton shed, located on the banks of the river. The walls were of brick and about 14 feet high, covered partially, a long place in the center being open. It was 193 feet long and 116 feet wide. Bunks were placed around the walls with spaces of about thirty inches. About 600 men, packed like sardines, could lie upon the banks. The remaining 2,500 men there that winter had to sleep upon the bare ground.

The water supply was abundant but
SECOND WISCONSIN CAVALRY REGIMENT

warm and very impure, coming from an artesian well in town, entering the prison through a covered trough under the west wall. In the center there was a ditch a foot deep, two or three feet wide, and about twenty feet long, in which a couple of barrels were sunk with the upper ends open. The water was conveyed to the river under the east wall in the same manner it entered the prison. The rebel surgeon, R. M. Whitfield, in his report found in the Confederate Archives, says: "In its course to the prison the water is subjected to the washings of hands, feet, faces and heads of soldiers, citizens and negroes. In it are rinsed buckets, tubs and spittoons, of groceries, offices and hospitals. In it can be found the filth from hogs, cows and horses, and filth of all kinds from the streets and other sources."

Further on in his report he says: "It is only useless to remark that I have made repeated complaints to have these defects remedied."

Such was the water furnished us. The following were the rations of food: About one pint and a half of corn and cob meal, ground coarse, a small piece of bacon and a small amount of salt. Occasionally cow peas, a sort of bean infested with bugs, were issued, and occasionally in lieu of bacon they gave us a very small ration of fresh meat; they called it beef. Those who had money—none had any but those who had it secreted—could exchange it for confederate scrip, about one dollar for ten, and buy of friendly guards bread, sweet potatoes, etc.

A small amount of green pine wood was furnished us to cook our scant rations and one "skillet" to about ten men. The common way of cooking was to boil water in the skillet and stir in meal, making mush. We would gather around and eat from the skillet with wooden spoons which we made of the pine wood. Sometimes we would pour hot water over the meal and place the dough in the kettle and bake it over the fire. Such was the food furnished us and is it any wonder that a great many were sick and died. Rather, it is a wonder that any lived any length of time. I am satisfied that if it had been a few months earlier in the season not a single one of the Second Cavalry boys would have lived to reach the Union lines.

A stockade had been built around the prison which was composed of two-inch planks placed about three feet in the ground and reaching twelve or fourteen feet above. On the east, south and west sides the stockade was about fifteen feet from the brick wall. On the north side it embraced a space of about seventy-five by one hundred and forty feet. The yard was used only in the day time and only for cooking. At night all were required to enter the building and the door was bolted and guarded. About a dozen guards were placed inside and outside the stockade near the gate. Several pieces of artillery commanded the prison near which there was always a detail of men. A walk was placed about the stockade on the outside near the top upon which sentries paced at all hours of the day and night and every half hour would call the time and "all is well." About five feet from the stockade, inside, was the "dead line," over which it was almost sure death to cross, for some of the guards only wanted an excuse to fire upon the helpless men.

Our guards were mostly conscripts, old men and boys. Some of the older men were quite humane. Capt. Howard Henderson was in command of the prison the summer before and it was unfortunate for us that he was promoted to Colonel and Commissioner of Exchange for he was a gentleman and had a kind heart. Many of his deeds of kindness
to prisoners could be related. Col. Samuel Jones who had command of the prison while we were there was right the opposite of Henderson, very cruel and heartless. He was never known to show any pity to the poor unfortunate beings in his power. To a prisoner he remarked one day, "You damned Yan­kees will get enough of this kind of existence before you get out. If I could have my way I would hang every devil of you." And to another who was de­tailed to bury a comrade said: "I’m only sorry the damned blue-bellies are so tough; they don’t die fast enough." Jones should have been hung with Wirz and Jeff Davis should have been strung up between them. It is said that Jones escaped in disguise from the United States, but afterwards returned and made his home at New Orleans.

Mrs. Gardiner who lived near the prison performed many acts of kindness by passing through a hole in the stockade vegetables and books. A Miss Marks was a kind nurse to the sick men outside and in the hospital. Some of the guards would shoot from the stockade a prisoner who happpened to get over the “dead line” and sometimes into the crowd without any excuse whatever. One named Hanks shot three in one week. Another, “Little Charley,” shot at least two and bayonetd two and was given a furlough for “zeal as a guard.” One of the guards had a brother in the pris­on and whenever he came in on duty would hand him something to eat. Be­fore being placed in the prison all were enrolled and searched and very little money, watches, knives, etc., escaped being taken. Our boys did manage to secrete some money, a jack knife and a fine comb, all of which we made good use of. Our greatest plague was lice; gray backs we called them. They swarmed everywhere, upon the ground, the banks and our clothing and bodies. It was impossible to keep free from the pests and only by “eternal vigilance” as it were, did we escape being carried off bodily. It was sickening and heartrend­ing to look upon the sick, homesick and discouraged boys who were unable to help themselves and it was little we could do for them. They simply laid down and died for the want of food and care.

One of the methods of punishment inflicted upon the prisoners for slight offences was placing them upon the ladder resting against the stockade on the outside. One day I got a pass to go out and see one of our boys, W. C. Albee–who was in the hospital sick with the measles. In returning I picked up an armful of wood, hoping I could carry it in, but I ought to have known better, and probably did, but the need of it and the temptation was great. I was stopped by the guards and ordered to drop the wood and climb the ladder and of course I obeyed. Some twenty minutes I was required to hang with my hands and arms to a round on the under side with the guards near by ready to shoot or bayonet me if I failed. There were odd characters in the prison, among them “Rigney,” the little hunch-back boy and member of the 3d Kentucky Cavalry. His associates were the “muggers” and gamblers of the prison, Tom Hassett, Pat Ponsonby, Pat Kelly and Perry. Perry had deserted from a confederate regiment and enlisted in the 3d Kentucky Cavalry. While at Demopolis in March, on our way to be exchanged he was recognized by some rebels and taken out and shot. His real name was Hogan. The guards upon the stockade would announce “fresh fish” when a new lot of prisoners were to be admitted and the “muggers” would gather at the gate to see and mark them and at night would proceed to rob them. A police court was organized with Wm. Rea of Ohio.
as judge, which for a time checked the raiders, but later "Big Tennessee" was the man they hated and feared the most. He was a large powerful man and he had a heart, large and kind accordingly. His name was George Pierce and he was a member of the 3d Tennessee Cavalry.

One night soon after being admitted to the prison a comrade of his was robbed. The next morning he took "Big Tennessee" to the robbers and demanded the return of his property but they denied ever having seen him before and threatened to punish him if he did not go away. As "Big Tennessee" took the part of his friend they turned upon him and struck at him. Quick as a flash he knocked down two and then caught the other two by the hair and bumped their heads together and flung them upon the ground. After that "Big Tennessee" was called many times when the boys got into trouble with the robbers and all he had to do was to order and it was obeyed. It is thought he lost his life by the explosion of the Sultana the following spring. At intervals rebel officers would enter the prison to recruit for their army. A number did enlist to save their lives and with the intention to desert the first opportunity. A few men were detailed to go to the woods near by, under guard, and cut wood for the prison. Our ration of wood was about one armful for ten days. No snow fell there that winter but it rained a great deal and we suffered greatly from the cold, especially nights. But very few had blankets and our clothing was very scant. For a long time after entering the prison I had a very sore foot which pained me a great deal. It was caused by spilling hot mush from a tin cup on it through the cut in my boot while we were at Meridian and afterwards taking cold. The prison surgeon lanced it a couple of times and it finally got well.

Almost every morning we were driven back for roll call and a wagon would come in for the dead. We knew nothing of how the war was progressing except what was told us by new prisoners. January 11th, 250 from Meridian were admitted. Very rarely we could buy half a sheet of writing paper from the guards for $1 confederate money and if we could get a pencil could write a short letter to friends, but all letters had to go unsealed and of course we had to be very careful what we wrote. I wrote two short letters home while there and received one, a month and one day after it was written. One day a letter was read to us from our old colonel, Gen. Washburn, which was addressed to "Prisoners of Cahaba." Through the efforts of Gen. Washburn and Col. Henderson a special exchange was arranged for a few men, among them Washburn's headquarters, guard and clerks taken by Forrest when he made his raid into Memphis. A special exchange was also arranged for Henry St. John and Wm. Rea, who were Masons, as was Col. Henderson, the confederate commissioner of exchange. The summer of 1862 arrangements were made between the Union and confederate governments for an exchange of prisoners, man for man, but the summer of 1863 it was suspended, among other reasons, in consequence of the confederate government refusing to exchange the officers and men of colored regiments, not recognizing them as prisoners of war. The latter part of the war it seemed to be the deliberate purpose of the confederates to systematically starve and illtreat men confined in their prisons, that they might have less enemies to fight.

There were plans to escape from the prison and a few did escape through the closet and over the stockade on very dark and stormy nights. Dr. Hawes and three or four comrades escaped that way, but with the aid of a treacherous
HISTORY AND REMINISCENCES OF THE

A negro and bloodhounds were recaptured in a few days. At another time five men Conn, Trenaman, Buffington, Tubbs and Green escaped in the same manner and after many days of great suffering and nearly reaching the Union lines were all recaptured. Three of them were taken back to Cahaba, but Conn and Buffington succeeded in escaping from a car. Buffington finally succeeded in reaching the Mississippi river above Vicksburg and was taken on board a gunboat more dead than alive. Conn also succeeded in reaching the Union lines after several weeks of great suffering. Sergeant Owens, for attempting to escape, was taken out to a blacksmith shop and shackels were riveted upon his ankles. In a short time he had cut the rivets with the blade of a knife and removed the shackles nights. He planned another escape, and one dark, stormy night succeeded by way of the closet and over the stockade. He swam down the Alabama river and crossed it several times and then traveled nights, but was finally again recaptured and taken back to prison.

He was again manacled and more securely but he gathered a few friends about him and planned to escape by tunneling under the guard house, brick wall and stockade. It was only about 20 feet to the outside but it was slow work for one at a time with only a knife and piece of tin to work with. Before it was completed a great scheme for all the prisoners to escape was laid before Owens and the tunnel was abandoned.

Among a lot of prisoners brought in sometime in January was one in citizens clothes whose name was H. S. Hanchett. He was a captain in the 16th Illinois Cavalry and was Assistant Adjutant General to Gen. Capron. Previous to enlistment he was an attorney at Woodstock, Ill. He was captured by Gen. Forrest in Tennessee with about a dozen others, among them E. C. Spencer of the 8th Michigan Cavalry, and they agreed to work together in any attempt to escape. The commissioned officers were not placed in the prison at Cahaba but were paroled and were allowed the freedom of the town. Capt. Hanchett was in prison in disguise, having exchanged his uniform after being taken for a citizen's suit. He had not been in the prison long before he matured a plan to escape and at the same time release every man confined in the prison, which has been called the "Insurrection."

His plan was, with a few trusty men, to disarm the nine guards inside the building at night when the corporal came with the relief, rush out and capture the guards and arms outside the stockade, march to Selma some ten miles up the river, get arms, artillery and ammunition at the arsenal there, also horses, cross to the east side of the river on a ferry boat and march to the Union lines at Pensacola, Fla., some one hundred and fifty miles away. Hanchett selected and confided his plan to about twenty-five men. Among them were Spencer and Owens. None of the Second Cavalry boys were in the plot. Just before daylight the morning of the 20th of January, 1865, the attempt was made to carry out the plan. Two men had taken their places near each of the nine guards and two or three near the door. As the corporal with the relief was heard approaching the door, the signal was given and instantly the guards were seized and disarmed and their cries for help, murder, etc., were smothered as much as possible. As the corporal opened the door he heard the stifled cries and instantly sprang back and bolted the door just as several men sprang for him. The work of disarming the guards was well done but made a moment too soon. They were marched to the closet and placed under guard.
SECOND WISCONSIN CAVALRY, REGIMENT

Rigney, who knew nothing of the plot, was a self-constituted guard. Outside, the "long-roll" was being sounded and the rebels were mustering their men. Inside it was all confusion. Hanchett and Owens were making frantic appeals for the men to "fall in." Never will I forget that night. With all others I was awakened and arose from my bed on the ground. Soon all realized that an attempt had been made to escape from the prison and failed.

Hanchett had been in the prison but a couple of weeks and was little known. Owens was well known and supposed by many to be the leader, and as he was considered a fanatic and crazy on the subject of escaping from the prison, but little attention was paid to him. Their appeals were useless and too late. The rebels had double shot with canister the two nine pound Napoleon guns used to cover the prison and wheeled them inside the stockade to the prison door which was opened and Col. Jones demanded that the guards and arms be surrendered within three minutes or he would "blow us to hell for breakfast." Before the door was opened those who had been prominent in the insurrection, feeling that all hope of escaping was past, mingled with the crowd to conceal their identity and all lay flat on the ground. As there was some delay in surrendering, Jones was about to order fire when a rebel Lieutenant stepped in front of the guns and said, "Don't fire; you will kill me if you do," called to the prisoners to bring out the guards if they are alive. A prisoner told him that the guards were not hurt and that they were coming as fast they could through the crowd. They finally reached the door, some of the prisoners gathered up the guns and surrendered them, and the rebels all passed out and bolted the door. Soon after daylight officers and guards came in with fixed bayonets and drove all back to be counted. In doing so he ran his bayonet through a poor, sick man, which caused his death.

None of the prisoners were found missing and an officer demanded that the leaders of the insurrection be delivered up and swore that not a damned mouthful would we get to eat till they were. Later a detail came in and took out Rigney. One of the guards said that he wounded with his bayonet the man that disarmed him and orders were given for all prisoners to undress, tie their clothes in a bundle and hold them over their heads with both hands while being inspected, but no wounds were found; one of the prisoners did have a slight wound in his hand. Threats were made and bribes offered, all to no purpose.

Finally, the disarmed guards came in, the men were formed in lines and they passed along to see if they could identify any. A few were asked to step aside and were taken outside. Among them were Owens, Blakely and a couple of New Jersey men. The latter turned traitors and gave Hanchett away and in the afternoon of the second day he was taken out and the next morning rations were issued to us again. Some of those taken out were soon returned to the prison. Seven were retained and put in the dungeon which was inside the town calaboose. After a time three more were returned but Hanchett, Owens, Rigney and one other were retained in the dungeon six or seven weeks and endured great suffering. One of the returned men said that the rebels bound Rigney to the mouth of a cannon and threatened to discharge it if he did not reveal the names of the leaders. He told them to fire away, Gen. Washburn would kill a dozen in retaliation. Rigney knew nothing of the plot but the night of the attempt to escape he recognized some of the leaders.

The rebels having learned through the
two traitors that Hanchett was the leader and that he was in prison in disguise, threatened him, then offered a mitigation of punishment if he would reveal the names of his accomplices and his plans but he would not turn traitor. At the time of the general exchange in March, Owens, Rigney and the other man were taken from the dungeon and forwarded to Vicksburg for exchange. On arriving at Vicksburg they reported the circumstances and condition of Hanchett to the General in command and he at once made a demand for his release. Dr. Hawes gives the following account of the fate of Capt. Hanchett, related to him by J. W. Rush, one of the conspirators. After the war Rush settled at Larned, Kansas and was twice elected state senator. The facts were told him by the Confederate General through whom the exchange of Hanchett was demanded, whom he met shortly after the war at Louisville, Ky. “In exchange for Capt. Hanchett a Confederate General confined at Vicksburg was offered if the captain were delivered immediately without trouble or delay. When the order for the release of Capt. Hanchett was received at Cahaba the commander of the prison, Col. Jones, selected two villainous men to act as his guard and gave them instructions to find some excuse for shooting him while going from Cahaba to Selma. Hanchett was taken from the dark dungeon, his strong frame so reduced that he was scarcely able to stand, even under the stimulus of hope, placed in the custody of the assassins and started towards Selma. He was shot down in cold blood before he was a mile from town, a fate perfectly in accord with a confinement rarely paralleled in the bounds of any civilized country in the nineteenth century.”

The two traitor wretches were paroled and we never learned their ultimate fate. Soon after the insurrection the commissioned officers on parole were sent to Andersonville, the rebels believing they were concerned in the plot. Lieut. Woodard was among them. He says they learned there would be an attempt made to escape but did not know when it was to take place.

After the insurrection the vigilance of the guards was increased and our condition grew worse as the long dreary days and nights passed by. The suffering from hunger, cold and vermin was great and many of the men became sick, homesick, discouraged and died. The latter part of February it rained almost every day and the whole country was flooded. The rebels said there had not been such a flood there since 1833.

The Alabama river overflowed and on the first day of March the water covered the ground of the prison and continued to rise until the fifth when it was between two and three feet deep. Only a few of the men, comparatively, could get out of the water by climbing upon the bunks, and as we could build no fires our scant rations were eaten raw, if at all. Once a few hard tack were brought in and distributed.

Dr. Hawes says that with several other sergeants he had an interview with Col. Jones in the outer yard and plead with him to allow the men to march out upon dry ground. Hawes said to him: “I guarantee that every man in the stockade will not only not attempt to get away but you can surround us with a double chain of guards and in addition we will give our parole of honor, punishable by death if broken, that we will not attempt to escape.” Jones replied: “Not so long as there is a Yankee’s head above water can you come out of that stockade.” Finally we were allowed to go out and carry in cord wood with which platforms were made and upon which we would climb, taking
turns as those did upon the bunks, so all could be out of the water part of the time. At last, on Monday the 6th day of March 1865, while the water was still about two feet deep in the prison, officers and guards came in and announced that eight hundred would be taken out for exchange. While the roll was being called I stood upon the platform and when finally my name was called I sprang into the water and with ten others of the Second Cavalry boys, marched out of the prison and was put on board the steamer Henry J. King. If the country had not been so overflooded and bridges so washed away they would have taken us to Selma and there taken cars for Jackson, Miss. But we went down the Alabama river bound for Mobile which at that time was still held by the rebels. When within about forty miles of the city we met a dispatch boat with orders for us to turn back and go up the Tombigbee river to Gaines Landing and there take cars for Gainesville, thence across the country to Meridian, Jackson and Vicksburg. We arrived at Demopolis on the morning of the 9th and laid over a few hours.

Peter Donoher met there a brother he had not seen for years, having gone south before the war and being there enlisted in the rebel army. He was with Gen. Pemberton's army in Vicksburg during the siege, and as Peter was with Gen. Sherman's army outside the fortifications, they were fighting each other and knew it not. The rebel brother had heard some way that Peter was in Cahaba prison, and was on his way there to see him. After the close of the war he remained in the South and married there. About thirteen years ago he came North to visit relatives and friends about the old home in Marquette county. I met him at Montello one day and had a pleasant visit with him, talking over those eventful days at Vicksburg the summer of 1863.

We reached Gaines Landing on the morning of the 10th, and took cars for Gainesville and there changed cars and arrived at Meridian on the 11th, and were put in the stockade where we were confined a few days when on our way to Cahaba in December. Rations were issued to us and we sat up most of the night to cook them. James Logue of Company F died there.

We were put on cars again and arrived at Jackson the night of the 12th, where we remained the next day and signed paroles and cooked rations to last through. The remainder of the distance, from Jackson to the Union lines at the Big Black river, about 40 miles, we had to march, which took us two days, and on the morning of the 16th we crossed the river and were once more in "God's country." A wagon train was there for us and we rode to parole camp, Camp Fisk, four miles east of Vicksburg, arriving about sundown. We were about eleven days on the way and suffered greatly from hunger and cold, for we were very weak and our clothing was very scant.

It was very tedious riding on the open platform cars without any enclosure or seats, and they ran very slow. We were scarcely able to walk, and the march from Jackson was no picnic for us, although it seemed to be for the natives who would rush out to the road to see what Yankees looked like. We had been at the parole camp about ten days when the remainder of the Cahaba prisoners and some from Andersonville arrived. Among the latter was Lieut. Woodard.

I have described Cahaba prison and the treatment Union prisoners received there somewhat more in detail than I should, but for the reason that, with the exception of Dr. Hawes' book, little has
ever been written about Cahaba, and many do not even know that there was such a prison. Still I have not told one-hundredth part of the inhuman treatment inflicted by the rebels upon prisoners there, nor the sufferings they endured.

Dr. Hawes gives the names and addresses of those known to be living in 1888, and says: "As the result of careful inquiry I estimate that of the three thousand persons confined in Cahaba in 1864-65, more than twenty-five hundred were dead a year later and less than seventy-five are now alive."

He gives the following statement by Senator Collins, one of the conspirators: "About a mile from Cahaba where the river bends to the east we caught the last sight of the grim walls of "Castle Morgan" and in a few moments it was shut out from our view by the river bank and as it disappeared a prayer of thankfulness went up from every loyal heart on board of that rickety old steamboat, and all expressed a fervent hope that we might never see its accursed walls again, that our feet might never again be compelled to press the ground on the spot where for the last ten months there had been greater misery than at any other on the whole face of the earth. This statement may be doubted and even denied by some but when the facts are known Cahaba must go down in history as worse in a great many respects than Andersonville or any other military prison of the Confederacy. In the first place it was five times more crowded than Andersonville. There was no greater supply of rations and they were of no better quality, with no provisions made for cooking except a scant supply of green pine wood, while at Andersonville the meal was baked into bread outside the prison and thus cooked was issued to the prisoners; but at Cahaba nine tenths of all the meals issued to the prisoners was either made into mush or eaten raw on account of the scarcity of fuel to cook with.

"Just after the attempted outbreak we were compelled to fast nearly three whole days without drawing a single ration. Andersonville prisoners never suffered this and during the flood our treatment was the crowning infamy of all. It is true the misery and suffering at Andersonville was awful beyond description and the tales of woe as related by its surviving inmates seem almost incredible, yet Cahaba was even worse if human suffering from infamous and inhuman treatment could be worse."

Dr. Hawes was among the last lot of prisoners to reach the Union lines. He relates the following incidents:

Upon the western side of Black river was a small hill. As I passed the Federal officer an ex-captive said to him, "If that hill were solid gold and you could give it to me to return to the horrors of a month ago, with all its uncertainties, even for a week, I would not consider it for a moment."

A most dramatic occurrence took place that morning, to a full understanding of which it will be necessary to go back to the previous year. The color bearer of the 13th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment was Martin Becker. In an engagement of the fall of 1864, Becker was captured with others of his regiment and to save his colors he tore them from the staff and wrapped them about his body. All through the long months of captivity he carefully secreted them about his person or in his humble bed. When the attack was made upon the guards at Cahaba in January, 1865, Becker, who was one of the liberators was wounded in the hand and escaped detection because the guards were ordered to carefully inspect the bodies of the prisoners and no attention was paid to hands. While being examined
along with all others, the flag was rolled tightly up and hidden in a boot and as long as possible was watched over by his comrade George Culp of the 14th Iowa. Culp was one of the last to be examined, and one of the first to return to his bed after examination was Becker. The flag was carefully secreted and the knowledge of its being in the possession of a prisoner was confided to but a very few. The brave Wisconsin boy who had guarded his flag with so much devotion, waited with impatience for his name to be called that he might pass over the bridge that connected the Union and Confederate lines. He had prepared a substitute for a staff and when a little more than half way across the bridge he drew the flag from beneath his ragged garments and fastened it to the staff. Oh, what shouts went up from the prisoners as they saw it! Strong men shouted and men too weak and sick to care for any common occurrence, cried with emotion. Pandemonium was there for many minutes. Becker, I learned, lived to go to Colorado, and died, it is believed, in Leadville.

We remained at the parole camp until the 4th of April when arrangements for our exchange were completed and we went into Vicksburg and left there on the 8th on the steamer Ben Stickney and rejoined the regiment at Memphis on the 9th, the day Gen. Lee surrendered to Gen. Grant. The boys were all glad to see us and to us it seemed like getting home. All ex-prisoners were entitled to a furlough of 30 days home, but I did not accept of one, thinking that the war was about over and that we soon would be mustered out of the service. If I had known what yet was before the Second Cavalry before muster out, I certainly would have accepted of the furlough. All the other boys left for home on the steamboat City of Alton, Wednesday night, April 26th. The same night the Sultana left Memphis with about 2200 passengers, mostly ex-prisoners from Cahaba and Andersonville. When a few miles above Memphis her boilers exploded and she burned to the water's edge. Fourteen hundred and forty-three were killed or drowned and of the seven hundred and fifty-seven rescued, nearly three hundred died in the hospitals at Memphis. When we heard of the accident early in the morning many of us went to the wharf and saw many men come floating down the river, some alive and many dead. We were very glad to learn that our boys were not on that boat. It has always been a mystery to many what caused the explosion. The following published by the Associated Press explains it:

"St. Louis, Mo., April 7, 1888.

"The awful explosion of the steamer Sultana near Memphis twenty-three years ago, in which nearly two thousand Union soldiers lost their lives, has always been a mystery. The survivors at their reunion have recently made a number of statements regarding the affair, but the most sensational story has been told by a resident of this city, William Streeter.

"This statement fixes the explosion as the result of design. He claims that the noted blockade runner and mail carrier named Robert Lowden, better known during the war as Charles Dale, was the author of the terrible disaster. Streeter claims that Lowden told him after the close of the war that while the Sultana lay at the Memphis wharf, he smuggled aboard a large lump of coal in which was concealed a torpedo. This he deposited in the fuel pile in front of the boilers for the express purpose of causing the destruction of the boat. What has become of Lowden is unknown."

I will now return to where we left the regiment, or rather the regiment.
The regiment succeeded in getting back to Yazoo City that day, and in a few days, with the assistance of a gunboat and some transports the whole force eluded the rebels and returned to Vicksburg.

On the 8th of December the regiment left Vicksburg on transports for Memphis. Soon after arriving there they went into competitive drill, the prize being the new Spencer carbines to be awarded to the best appearing and the best drilled cavalry regiment. Several regiments competed but the Second Wisconsin Cavalry took first prize and were highly complimented by Gen. Grierson. On the 21st of December with other troops they started on the “Grierson raid,” marching about 400 miles through Tennessee and Mississippi. At Egypt station they encountered the enemy and captured nearly 500 prisoners who were turned over to the Second Cavalry to guard. They passed through Lexington and Benton and reached Vicksburg Jan. 5, 1865, and after a rest of a few days were transported back to Memphis. Soon after they went on the “mud raid” over in Arkansas and Louisiana, and after about four weeks’ explorations returned to Memphis about Feb. 20, where we ex-prisoners found them on the 9th of April as I have stated.

History was being made very rapidly those days.

On the 12th day of April we received at Memphis the news that Gen. Lee surrendered to Gen. Grant on the 9th and there was great rejoicing. The city and camps were illuminated, speeches made, cheers given and a salute of two hundred guns was fired from Fort Pickering. Five days later we received the news that President Lincoln was shot on the 14th. What a change! The cavalry paraded the streets of Memphis dressed in mourning. Flags were at half mast and also it was the same on the 20th when the funeral ceremonies were observed. On the 26th of April Gen. Johnston surrendered to Gen. Sherman and the war was over. The Union was saved but at what a fearful cost of life, suffering and treasure!

The Second Cavalry Regiment had been in the service about three years and a half and had seen hard service and as the war was over, nearly every man wanted to be mustered out and go home. But the regiment had to remain in the service about eight months longer and go farther and farther away from home, through the states of Louisiana and Texas.

Gen. Washburn, our old colonel, who was still in command at Memphis, received orders to muster out some regiments and as it was represented to him by a few commissioned officers that the regiment wished to remain in the service a petition was circulated through the regiment and signed by about fifteen commissioned officers and seven hundred enlisted men, praying that the regiment be one of the first to be mustered out.

The following is a copy of the petition:

"To Major Gen. C. C. Washburn, commanding District West Tennessee:

"We, the undersigned, volunteers of the Second Regiment Wisconsin Volunteer Cavalry, in consideration of the war being ended and the rebellion crushed, and an order having been issued to reduce the army to a peace basis, and many of us having left our wives and families, willing to make the sacrifice of life and all that is near and dear to us in this life for the sake of maintaining our free institutions and the liberty our Revolutionary fathers obtained at the sacrifice of their lives, and know well, also, that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance,—we are and always shall hold ourselves in readiness to help to maintain our free government, and, if necessary, are still willing to forego the unspeakable pleasure it would give us to be at home with our families and friends, where many of us have left business
Second Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment

27

whereby we can realize two or three times the amount of pay we now receive.

"And, also, we have been in this unhealthy climate so long that we feel that another summer spent here will prematurely hurry us to our graves, and we will leave our once happy families to mourn the unnecessary loss of those they esteem more than life itself. We are sorry to believe that this sacrifice of remaining here, or in the service this summer, or year, will be attributed by us to the selfishness of some officers of this regiment. Therefore we pray you will favor us with the privilege of being ordered to our respective homes among the first mustered out of the service in your department, to become good and loyal citizens once more; to remember you with respect and love we regard as due your Excellency."

Every man in Company E present, save one, signed the petition, and I never knew why our prayer was not granted. Those of the regiment that had but a few months to serve, were mustered out which took eight or ten from Company E. May 9th all the mounted men of the regiment started on a scout to Grenada, Miss., where they remained doing garrison duty until the fore part of June.

The first days of June some of the ex-prisoners home on furlough returned; some never returned, being discharged on account of having but a few months to serve. Colonel Stephens was in command of the regiment, and whenever there was an opportunity he still drilled the regiment with the saber.

A subscription paper was circulated through the regiment and money raised with which a fine saber was purchased and presented to him.

I would be glad if I could now go home with the regiment and close this story, but we will have to go to Texas first, so we will start.

June 14th we broke camp at Memphis and marched to the wharf and went aboard the transport Shamrock and once more went down the Mississippi river. Part of the regiment followed on other boats a day or so later. There were four other cavalry regiments in the expedition; the 5th and 12th Illinois, the 1st Iowa and the 7th Indiana. Col. Stephens resigned and did not go with us, so the command of the regiment fell upon Lieut. Col. Dale. We stopped a short time at Helena and Vicksburg. I will not attempt to describe our feelings as we arrived at those places where the headquarters of the regiment had been so much of the time during the past three years and where lay sleeping many of our comrades, while we had seen the end of the war and were on our way farther south than we had ever been before. We also stopped a short time at Natchez and many of us went up into the city.

We arrived at the mouth of Red river early on the morning of the 18th and went up that river to Alexandria, where we arrived just at dark and did not go ashore till the next morning. There were but two or three regiments there then and the town was in ruins, having been burned by Gen. A. J. Smith when on the famous Banks expedition the year before. Gen. Geo. A. Custer soon arrived and took command and our troubles commenced. If Gen. Smith had been in command I would not have this sad story to tell. Lieut. Col. Dale was disliked generally by the officers and men of the regiment. He had been tried by a general court martial on some charges, but was acquitted. On the 7th of July a petition was circulated through the regiment and generally signed requesting Dale to resign, and it was presented to him. Instead of resigning, he took the matter to Custer who issued an order placing all the commissioned officers who signed it under arrest, and reducing to the ranks all the non-commissioned officers. There were fifteen commissioned officers and
seventy-five non-commissioned. I have a copy of the order and the names of all the officers.

All of the officers except one retracted and were released and restored to their former rank and duty. Lieut. L. L. Lancaster of Company L, the leader, refused to retract, asserting that he signed the petition with full knowledge of its contents and he meant and believed all it contained. He was tried by a general court martial upon the charges of conspiracy and insubordination, found guilty and sentenced to be shot at 6 o'clock Friday evening, the 28th of July, 1865. The same court tried for desertion a man by the name of Wilson, who, I believe, was a member of the Fourth Illinois Cavalry. He too, was found guilty and sentenced to be shot at the same time. Gen. Custer approved the sentence of both. They were taken to the jail and later put in the dungeon. Col. Dale got up a petition praying that the sentence of Lancaster be commuted, signed it, got the commissioned officers of the regiment and the staff officers of Custer to sign it, and delegated Major Skews and Capt. Noble to present it to Gen. Custer, which they did, and Custer's only answer was, he would consider the matter.

As the days passed by and the date for the execution drew near and nothing was heard from the General in regard to the fate of Lancaster, a very bitter feeling began to be manifest among the men of the Second Cavalry, and also of the other regiments, against Gen. Custer which was intensified later on by his inhuman treatment of the men. The order for the execution of the doomed men was read to the regiment on dress parade the evening before it was to take place. About 5 o'clock Friday evening July, 28th, 1865, "boots and saddles" sounded and the five regiments, mounted and armed, marched out about a mile to the place designated for the execution and formed a hollow square. In front were Gen. Custer and staff and the detail of eight men with loaded guns, one with blank cartridge, for execution. Directly in front of them were the open graves for the doomed men. Lancaster and Wilson, blindfolded and their hands tied behind them, sitting upon coffins in an old army wagon, with their backs to the front, were driven around close to the lines in front, to the open graves and placed upon the coffins beside them. The warrant for the execution was read by the provost marshall, a prayer was offered by the chaplain and the provost marshall commanded, "attention," "ready," then stepped to Lancaster and led him from his coffin and commanded "aim!" "fire!" Wilson fell over on his coffin dead, riddled with seven balls. He never knew that Lancaster's life was spared. An order was then read commuting the death sentence of Lancaster to dishonorable discharge from the service and three years imprisonment with hard labor on the Dry Tartugas Isles.

Our carbines were loaded and God only knows what the result would have been if Lancaster had been shot that day. If Gen. Custer had had any humane feelings in his soul he would have issued an order immediately after receiving the petition, granting the pardon of Lancaster, and he would have at least commuted the sentence of Wilson. It has been said that Gen. Washburn interceded for Lancaster and also Mrs. Custer. Gen. Custer told Col. Dale that he wanted to shoot Lancaster. There is no doubt about that, and the only reason he did not was because of the great influence brought to bear upon him in favor of Lancaster and he dare not do it.

I will now give some of the experiences of Lancaster as related by himself in a book written by a friend and neighbor, Antoinette Barnum Ferris of Eau

When first arrested Lancaster was taken to the jail but in a few days was placed in the dungeon. I quote from the book: “The night of the 27th the sergeant of the guard came to his door about midnight and asked him if he would not like to go outside to which he readily assented. He was taken outside and to the rear of the yard and eight hundred dollars in greenbacks were placed in his hands, together with two derringers with necessary ammunition and he was told to go through the gate, where at a certain place he would find a good horse in waiting; that the guards and sentinels understood the arrangement and he would find no check or hindrance from any quarter and to skip. The lieutenant hesitated but a moment and giving back the money and revolvers said: ‘No boys I can’t do it. I’ll stay here; I am guilty of no crime and I would die a hundred deaths rather than play the part of a coward and I’ll never be called a deserter. I shall be shot tomorrow night. Let them shoot me if they want to. I shall die with clean hands and a clear conscience.’”

After the regiment received orders to be mustered out, Gen. Sheridan, then at New Orleans, issued an order dated Dec. 1st, 1865, for Lancaster to be released from imprisonment and for him to report to Madison for discharge. He was released some time in February, 1866, and arrived at his home in Eau Claire, March 8th. While Gen. Washburne was a member of congress after the war he succeeded in getting Lancaster an honorable discharge but without back pay. Through the efforts of friends twelve years later Congressman Humphrey succeeded in getting a bill passed restoring to him his right to back pay, bounty, etc.

Gen. Custer, Col. Dale and many who witnessed that sad scene at Alexandria, La., the evening of July 28th, 1865, are long since dead, but Lieut. Lancaster is still living at his old home in Eau Claire, an honored citizen, a member of Eagle Post, No. 52, G. A. R. and is also a member of the I. O. O. F.

We spent the time at Alexandria after the execution in routine camp duty and getting ready for our march through Louisiana and Texas. One day while we were at our mess table, three soldiers under a strong guard were marched by; two of them had barrels over their shoulders on which was written “thief.” The other had his head shaved. They were marched through the camps of all the regiments. After so long service the five regiments were so reduced in members that probably there were men enough in the five for two full regiments, but Custer, being a Major General, must command a division, therefore he divided the small brigade and made two of it. The first, composed of the 5th and 12th Illinois and 7th Indiana was commanded by Col. Forsyth. The second composed of the 1st Wisconsin and 1st Iowa was commanded by Col. Thompson.

Early Tuesday morning, August 8th, we left Alexandria on our long march. The country through which we passed up to the 19th was sandy, with heavy pine timber and thinly settled. The latter part of the march we struck prairie land and on the 13th of August crossed the Sabine river and were in Texas. We passed through the town of Jasper, forded the Angelina river and crossed the Natchez on a pontoon bridge. Forded the Trinity river, passed through the towns of Cold Springs, Waverly, Cypress City and on the 26th reached Hempstead on the Houston and Texas railroad near the Brazos river. We had marched over 300 miles in nineteen con-
secutive days and needed rest but Custer did not intend we should have any. Soon after going into camp he issued orders for us to graze our horses three hours each day and to drill mounted in double ranks—new tactics for us—four hours each day. As to the drilling we would not try to learn anything but simply went through the movements mechanically and that was the end of it. We had plenty of orders issued us those days but rations at times were scarce. I would like to give some of his orders entire but they are too long and I will merely give the substance and make a few quotations from one or two. While at Alexandria, Custer issued special order No. 2 in which he forbade all forgery by the men, and says: “Every violation of this order will receive prompt punishment. Owing to the delays of court martials and their impracticability when the command is unsettled, it is hereby ordered that any enlisted man violating the above order, or committing depredations upon the persons or property of citizens, will have his head shaved and in addition will receive twenty-five lashes upon his back, well laid on. This punishment will be administered by the Provost Marshal. Citizens of the surrounding country are earnestly invited to furnish these headquarters any information they may acquire which will lead to the discovery or violating the foregoing order.”

The day before we left Alexandria he issued an order of some fifteen separate paragraphs and says: “The following rules will be strictly observed:

1.—The command will habitually move in column of fours.”

In that order, for slight offenses, men were to be dismounted and “arranged into a foot battalion under the command of Capt. Elliot of the 7th Indiana Cavalry. The dismounted men will be required to carry their carbines, blankets and haversacks, and will march immediately in the rear of the rear brigade.” One day Custer ordered a negro’s head shaved and twenty-five lashes for taking a few peaches. On another occasion, the fore part of September, he caused two soldiers to receive twenty-five lashes and their heads to be shaved. Custer’s inhumane treatment of the men in his command that summer was reported to the states interested and at the time he was killed by the Indians, according to history, he was in “disfavor” with the authorities at Washington.

The report of the Adjt. Gen. of the state of Iowa in 1887, contains charges and criticisms of Gen. Custer by Col. A. G. McQueen of the 1st Iowa Cav. McQueen, among other charges, says: “Horace Cure of the 1st Iowa Cav. by order of Gen. Custer had his head shaved and received twenty-five lashes on his bare back because he would not tell who brought beef into camp.” “Seven men of the 12th Ill. Cav. and five men of the 7th Ind. Cav. received similar treatment a few days before for killing said beef.” O. S. Sisson of La Crosse, secretary and treasurer of the 2d Wis. Cav. Association says: “This last chapter of the services of this regiment and others who were brigaded together at Alexandria, was the most painful part of the service and the outrageous assaults and disgrace heaped upon officers and men by a superior officer is too appalling to describe. Not a Second Cavalry man on the face of this green earth today need be appraised of the fact that Gen. Custer, who met his untimely death at the hands of the Indians is the man alluded to and heroes of his torture are alive today to proclaim the fact of this statement.”

I don’t think it strange that the men hated Custer and that many from all
the regiments deserted that summer. I can compare his inhuman treatment of the men under him that summer to nothing I saw or experienced in my four years' service, but the inhuman treatment of the Union prisoners at Cahaba by Col. Jones.

That expedition into Louisiana and Texas after the war was over was worse than useless. There were no armed rebels in the country and we did not enlist to march down toward Mexico to bluff Napoleon III from establishing a monarchy and placing Maximilian upon the throne. It cost many lives, much suffering and expense, and nothing was accomplished. It was simply a great picnic excursion for General Custer, his wife, his father, his brother, his staff, and the wives of one or two of the officers. The five cavalry regiments were their escort.

We left Hempstead on the 30th of October, passed through the towns of Brenham and Bastrop, and after marching about 125 miles, went into camp on the 4th of November, three miles below Austin, on the left bank of the Colorado river.

Nov. 7th was election day. Only 26 votes were cast in Company E. About 10 o'clock an order was read for each company to turn over all government property and make out muster-out rolls as soon as possible. After the order was read no further interest was taken in the election, and there was great rejoicing throughout the regiment. In the evening our camp was illuminated with candles placed in branches of trees, etc.

Company H started up their old "Dutch chant" and sang as never before. On the 15th we completed turning over government property, and Capt. Moore, the mustering officer, signed our muster-out rolls and discharges, but the discharges were not given to the men until we arrived at Madison.

Early on the morning of Tuesday, Nov. 17th, 1865, we left camp near Austin, Tex., and started on foot for home. As we were not used to marching on foot, our feet got pretty sore but we finally reached Brenham, about 100 miles, on the 22d. Custer was not with us on that march and we did not have to march by fours, and for slight offenses have heads shaved and receive twenty-five lashes. We never saw more of Custer nor had any desire to. We left Brenham on cars the 23d and stopped a few hours at Hempstead. There that evening Col. Dale accidentally fell into a well. He was helped out and was not seriously hurt. We reached Houston on the morning of the 24th where we remained one day, then crossed Galveston Bay on boats and reached the city on the 26th. The evening of Nov. 28th we left Galveston and crossed Gulf of Mexico on the steamer Alabama, which was captured from the rebels on the coast of Cuba the eighth time she ran the blockade.

We were thirty-six hours in reaching the mouth of the Mississippi river, about 200 miles, and about 100 miles from New Orleans, where we arrived the evening of the 30th. We landed the next morning and visited the city, riding on street cars.

The evening of Dec. 2d we left New Orleans on board the White Cloud, No. 2 and arrived at Vicksburg on the 4th where a stop for about one hour was made. Most of the boys went into the city and visited some of the old places for the last time.

We passed Helma before daylight the morning of the 7th and as the boat stopped only a few minutes, no one went ashore.

Arrived at Memphis about noon and remained there about an hour. Of course many of the boys had to go up into the city and some got left, but
overtook us before we reached Madison.

We reached Cairo before daylight on the 9th, being six days on the way from New Orleans, about 1100 miles.

We left Cairo on box cars about noon. As we started a man of company D fell from the top of a car and was run over and killed. Passed through Freeport and Beloit and arrived at Madison about 4 o'clock a.m. the 11th, being twenty-four days on the way from Austin, about 2,000 miles.

We were served a free breakfast and boarded at a hotel until the 15th when we were paid off, given our discharge, and after buying and putting on citizens' clothes, bade each other good-bye and left for home, never to all meet again "till the roll is called up yonder."

The regiment took part in the following engagements:

Cotton Plant ......... July 7, 1862
Oakland, Miss. ......... Dec. 2, 1862
Lick Creek, Ark. ...... Jan. 12, 1863
Cold Water, Miss. ...... April 19, 1863
Heron Lake, Tenn. ...... May 23, 1863
Siege of Vicksburg, ...... June 13 to July 4, 1863
Clinton and Jackson, Miss., ...... July, 1863
Redbone, Miss. ...... Sept. 13, 1863
Bayou Pierre, ...... Oct. 10, 1863
James Landing, Ark. ...... June 6, 1864
Clinton to Jackson, ...... July, 1864
Neutonia, Mo. ...... Oct. 4, 1862
Prairie Grove, Ark. ...... Dec. 7, 1862
Van Buren, Ark., ...... Dec. 28, 1862
Halls Plantation, Miss., ...... Oct. 3, 1864
Woodville, Miss. ...... Oct. 6, 1864
Yazoo City, Miss., ...... Dec. 1, 1864
Egypt Station, Miss., ...... Dec. 25, 1864

Number men when organized .............. 1127
Increase by recruits .............. 998
Total .................. 2125
Re-enlisted .............. 368
Loss by death .............. 271
Missing .............. 5
Deserted .............. 103
Transferred .............. 33
At muster .................. 1136
Discharged .............. 677

The first reunion of the regiment was held at La Crosse June 12, 1888, 81 members being present. Capt. D. L. Riley of Company C, Spirit Lake, Iowa, was elected president of the Association and O. S. Sisson of Company B, LaCrosse, was elected secretary and treasurer. They are still the officers of the association, having been re-elected at every reunion held since. The second reunion was held at Milwaukee at the time of the national encampment of the G. A. R., commencing Aug. 27, 1889, 179 being present. The third was held at Prairie du Chien, June, 1890; the fourth at Madison, June, 1891; the fifth at Madison, July 3 and 4, 1894. The sixth and last one held was at Chicago at the time of the national encampment in 1900.

And now, comrades and friends, I close this incomplete and imperfect "History and Reminiscences of the Second Wisconsin Cavalry Regiment." And, as after forty years we have again followed the regiment in its four years of wanderings in the South during the great civil war, many incidents of camp and march will occur to you, as many have to me, which I have omitted. But I trust those that I have mentioned will be of interest to you and also of interest to your children and grandchildren in after years.

AULD LANG SYNE.

"Shall we forget those far off days Which made us comrades all? Shall we forget how swift the feet That ran at Duty's call? Shall we forget the honored dead That sleep beneath the sod— Who gave their lives for liberty, Our country and our God?"

No! here we pledge fraternity With every human life That sang the song of vict'ry won, Or fell beneath the strife! And when at last we answer, "Here!" As Death each name shall call, We'll leave these ranks with charity And loyalty to all."

EMMET C. WEST.

Pardeeville, Wis., March 30, 1904.
"Conrad Koblitz: Born, Bohemia, 1842; enlisted Co. H, 2nd Wis. Cavalry, Dec. 28, 1863; was on second Grierson raid; served under General Custer in Louisiana and Texas; was at one time Orderly to General Custer; was Regimental Color-bearer."

(Fred A. Stare: Story of Columbus, Chap. 334) (Conrad Koblitz, Columbus, could not have been on the first and most famous Grierson raid, which started from La Grange, Tenn., on April 17, 1863 and terminated at Batom Rouge, La, on May 2, covering more than 500 miles through the heart of the Confederacy, and diverting Confederate forces from the relief of Vicksburg. The 2nd Wis. Cavalry was not included in this first raid. However, the 2nd Wis. Cavalry was moved upriver to Memphis on Dec. 8, 1864, and put under the command of General Grierson, where it took part in the "Grierson raid" into Tennessee and Mississippi, covering over 400 miles and engaging the enemy at Egypt Station, Miss., and capturing nearly 500 prisoners.

Among the prisoners captured at this point was a young man named David Snow, from Fall River, Wis., and this brings up a most interesting story: David Snow was the son of Orson Snow, one of the voters at the first Town Meeting that organized the township of Fountain Prairie, Columbia County, Wis., in 1849. In 1861, the 17-year-old David enlisted in the "Columbia County Cadets", which became Company B, 7th Wis. Vol. Inf. The 7th Wisconsin, a part of Gibbon's Brigade, first saw action at Gainesville, Va., on Aug. 28, 1862, where nearly one-third of the Seventh Regiment was lost in killed and wounded. Young Snow received a slight wound in this engagement. Two weeks later, on Sept. 14th, at South Mountain, another third of the regiment was killed or wounded, and David Snow received a severe wound which resulted in his discharge, for "disability, wounds", in December following. The following summer -- 1863 -- after hearing of his Company's devastating action on the first day of the battle of Gettysburg -- he walked to Janesville, re-enlisted, and asked to be returned to his old
outfit. His request was granted and he rejoined Company B in the field in Late August. On Oct. 19th, he was engaged, with others of his Company on picket duty, when a sharp cavalry fight took place between Wade Hampton and Fitz-Lee's rebel cavalry and the Union cavalry under General Kilpatrick, and the latter were driven back over the pickets of the Seventh Wisconsin, and 32 officers and men of the 7th were captured, including five men from Company B, four of whom were from Fall River. They were taken to Andersonville prison, where two of them died: Abram Frost, Fall River, from disease; and James Hilliker, Fall River, shot by a guard as he reached over the deadline for a cup of water. David Snow came very near death from dysentery, scurvy, and malnutrition, and became convinced that if he did not get out of prison soon, he would surely die, so he seized upon a reckless expedient: Confederate officers came through the prison from time to time, trying to persuade prisoners to change their allegiance and enlist in the Confederate army. For the most part they were met with derision and scorn but David Snow, in desperation, decided to go through the process, hoping, once out of prison to get a chance to escape, or an opportunity to be captured by Union forces. So, in the early fall of 1864, he agreed to join the rebel army, was taken out of prison, and enrolled in the 10th Tenn. Inf., C.S.A. The first time in action they met the Grierson command near Egypt Station, Miss, and young Snow was among those captured by the 2nd Wis. Cavalry, on Dec. 24, 1864, thus successfully accomplishing what he had set out to do. He was confined briefly at Alton, Ill., until his story was confirmed, then released and immediately enrolled in the 5th U.S. Infantry, where he served for the rest of the war.

The above information was gathered from a photostatic copy of the official service record National Archives, of Private David Snow.