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# War Memories.

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ROBERTSON.







Mr & Mrs R. P. Penman.  
With Christmas greetings  
of the narrator.  
Their friend & well-wisher.

R. S. Robertson

1898.









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R. S. Robertson



# PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE WAR

## A RECORD OF SERVICE WITH THE Ninety-Third New York Vol. Infantry

AND THE

FIRST BRIGADE, FIRST DIVISION, SECOND CORPS,

ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

BY

ROBERT STODDART ROBERTSON,

ORDERLY SERGEANT AND 2D. LIEUTENANT CO. "I," 1ST LIEUTENANT CO. "K."

A. D. C. TO GEN. NELSON A. MILES, BREVET CAPTAIN U. S.

VOLUNTEERS, BREVET CAPTAIN, MAJOR AND COLONEL

NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS.



SWAIN & TATE CO., PRINTERS AND PUBLISHERS,  
MILWAUKEE, WIS.

counting room, the store, the office and the pulpit. Rich vied with poor to prove their American manhood, and enrolled their names side by side on the recruiting lists which were open on every hand. Company by company they marched to the camps of instruction and there formed into regiments in which they were to win a deathless fame, but not until they had been taught the rudiments of the science of destructive war.

None were yet educated enough to know why they could not at once march on to sweep from the face of the land the hosts which were organizing to oppose what they thought must be an ever victorious march, from which they should quickly return, clothed in a halo of glory, and welcomed by the plaudits of the grateful country, which was supposed to be ready to crown them with the victor's laurels, as its conquering heroes.

The writer shared in the aspirations and patriotic ardor of many of his fellows, and early in the fall of 1861 became one of the multitude of which was sung :

" We are coming, Father Abraham,  
Three hundred thousand more."

Having opened an office for the practice of law in Whitehall, Washington County, N. Y., early in the spring, and beginning to see a practice opening before him, it was something of a sacrifice, but youthful blood and patriotic desire were the stronger, and the call was obeyed.

A county convention was called and held at Argyle, where, after brisk, stirring and patriotic speeches, it was resolved to raise a regiment to represent the County of Washington, New York, in the war, and John S. Crocker, of Cambridge was selected to recruit, organize and command the regiment.

The holding of this convention was the only step taken by the county to forward the cause, and it made no appropriation of means, nor did it give any financial assistance to those who commenced the labor of recruiting for the " Washington County regiment."

Each town was to furnish a company, and to the writer was assigned the task of attempting to organize a company from

Whitehall, associating with him James C. Parke and Frank Churchill, who were to be first and second lieutenants respectively. A call was issued reading as follows :

"SONS OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, AWAKE!

"Washington county is now forming a regiment for the field, and she calls loudly upon her patriotic sons to help put down the great rebellion which is now in our midst.

"Col. J. S. Crocker has been authorized to organize a regiment to be called the Washington County Regiment—which is not to be consolidated with any other.

"Let all obey the call and prove that the spirit which animated the Father of his Country still animates the Sons of the County which bears his name.

"The undersigned are organizing a company in the town of Whitehall, and those desirous of enlisting will find no better opportunity or better regiment.

"Come one! Come all!

"Apply to R. S. Robertson, at his office over the Commercial Bank, and to Jas. C. Parke, at the store of J. P. Blakeslee.

"R. S. ROBERTSON,

"JAMES C. PARKE,

"FRANK CHURCHILL."

"WHITEHALL, Oct. 22, 1861."

A recruiting office was soon opened and recruits offered to the number of about thirty, when we were requested to forward them to the depot for volunteers at Albany.

On the 25th of November some twenty took their departure, after being presented with a white silk banner by the young ladies, bearing the inscription, "Our Country Calls." \*

Arriving at the barracks we were surprised to find that no preparations had been made to receive us, and there was no way to obtain admittance until morning, so we quartered the men at Weldon's Hotel for the night. †

The next morning we were received and found the squad to consist of nineteen beside myself, one having disappeared. Of these three were rejected on medical examination, and the remaining sixteen flatly refused to be mustered without me, as

\*This banner was subsequently stolen by one of the "heroes" and pawned for drink. The writer redeemed it and has it still in possession.

†Among my relics of the war are the receipted bills for all my recruiting expenses, including the bill at Weldon's, never refunded to me.

they feared my desertion of them. It took but a brief examination to pass me, and the seventeen of us were mustered into the United States service for "three years unless sooner discharged," to date from Nov. 16, 1861. Capt. G. W. Stackhouse was the mustering officer, and we were *temporarily* attached to the Argyle Company, under Capt. Wm. Randles.

The "companies" were as yet but skeletons, my contribution of seventeen being a marked addition to the squad we joined. There were now about 300 men mustered into these skeleton companies, and myself and others were at once sent out to recruit more, under the threat that we would suffer from consolidation if we did not fill our ranks very soon. This dreaded result came to us about the middle of December. Four companies claimed to have been recruited by B. C. Butler for a sharpshooters' regiment were assigned to our regiment, thus destroying the prospects of four of our sets of company officers. These companies were Capt. Colvin's, from Warren county; Hobart's of Albany and Columbia counties; \* Barnes' of Essex, and Voorhees' of Saratoga and Fulton. Soon after we were still further condensed to make room for the company of Capt. McConihe, of Troy. Our consolidation was finally completed on Christmas day by the transfer of a company from the 76th New York, under Capt. McNett, occasioned by a quarrel between Col. Green, of that regiment, and McNett, in which the latter was shot in the face by the former while under arrest and unarmed. The breach was too serious to be healed, so McNett and his company were assigned to us, and to make room for it Capt. Johnson's company was broken up and the men distributed to other companies, he being assigned to command Randles' company, the latter being assigned as first lieutenant. As no commissions had yet been issued to the officers, those who determined to go, took such commissions as they could get and many of us took none.

The regiment was now formally organized and was numbered the 93d New York Volunteer Infantry, or "Morgan Rifles," and was officered as follows:

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\* This company repudiated Butler's claim, but he was made lieutenant colonel of the regiment on the grounds that he had furnished four companies for it.

## FIELD AND STAFF.

JOHN S. CROCKER—Colonel.  
 BENJAMIN C. BUTLER—Lieutenant-Colonel.  
 AMBROSE CASSIDAY—Major.  
 STROBRIDGE SMITH—Surgeon.  
 THEODORE C. WALLACE—Assistant Surgeon.  
 HAVILAND GIFFORD—Adjutant.  
 ANDREW K. HANSTUN—Quartermaster.  
 CHARLES H. EDGERTON—Chaplain.

## COMPANY OFFICERS.

Company A.—ORVILLE L. COLVIN, Captain.  
               HENRY C. NEWTON, 1st Lieutenant.  
               JAMES M. SOUTHWICK, 2d Lieutenant.

Company B.—ELIJAH HOBART, Captain.  
               JAMES W. RACE, 1st Lieutenant.  
               WILLIAM C. SWAIN, 2d Lieutenant.

Company C.—DENNIS E. BARNES, Captain.  
               WATERS W. BRAMAN, 1st Lieutenant.  
               MILO E. WASHBURN, 2d Lieutenant.

Company D.—GEORGE M. VOORHEES, Captain.  
               HENRY P. SMITH, 1st Lieutenant.  
               PHILEMON B. MARVIN, 2d Lieutenant.

Company E.—ANDREW J. MCNETT, Captain.  
               WILLIAM H. BRADFORD, 1st Lieutenant.  
               LYMAN WARREN, 2d Lieutenant.

Company F.—GEORGE B. MOSHIER, Captain.  
               JOHN BAILEY, 1st Lieutenant.  
               SILAS S. HUBBELL, 2d Lieutenant.

Company G.—WALTER S. GRAY, Captain.  
               WM. VAN SCHAICK BEEKMAN, 1st Lieutenant.  
               FRANCIS BAILEY, 2d Lieutenant.

Company H.—HIRAM S. WILSON, Captain.  
               EDSON FITCH, 1st Lieutenant.  
               EPHRAIM T. WEEKS, 2d Lieutenant.

Company I.—NATHAN J. JOHNSON, Captain.  
               WILLIAM RANGLES, 1st Lieutenant.  
               JAMES M. CRAWFORD, 2d Lieutenant.

Company K.—SAMUEL MCCONIHE, Captain.  
               JOSIAH T. YOUNG, 1st Lieutenant.  
               GURDON G. MOORE, 2d Lieutenant.

I donned the chevrons as orderly sergeant of Company "I," and at once entered upon duty.

We now settled down to barrack life in earnest. There was a daily system of study and drills to develop the latent sparks of military genius, and as officers and men were alike ignorant, some of the latter were guilty of being more proficient than some of the former. There was the school of the soldier, the school of the company, and the school of the regiment. There were squad drills and company drills, and some regiments were far enough advanced to have regimental parades, and these excited the envy of those yet in the chrysalis state.

The barracks consisted of a large brick building erected, but not yet used, for a state penitentiary, supplemented by rows of low buildings, with boarded and battened sides, the interior occupied by four rows of bunks, three tiers in height, and a large barrel stove at each end. One of the first military duties taught was that of guard duty, but it was not there that the duty was fully learned. Strict as were the orders which forbade the egress or ingress of inmates or outsiders without the pass or countersign for the day, it must be stated that few were able to refuse a friend's request to be passed, especially when the request was accompanied with, "it will be my turn for guard duty tomorrow, and I will remember you," and this will probably account for the well patronized theaters and gayety halls, the favorite of which rejoiced in the euphonious name of the "Shebang," no doubt conferred upon it by reason of the high order of entertainment it afforded.

Those of the wooden barracks were looking down upon the more aristocratic dwellers within the warm penitentiary walls, and something like jealousy existed between the two parties, particularly when the brick-walled soldiers were seized with small-pox. It did not last long, however, when it was found that those in barracks were equally favored and both had delegates in the pest house. Vaccination was added to the list of amusements, but it was not liked, partly because it was compulsory, and partly because it had unpleasant consequences. The winter was a severe one and little real comfort could be found in



the camp. We thought the fare execrable and the sleeping accommodations abominable, but many a time later, fond memory brought to mind the really comfortable quarters (comparatively speaking) which our first home in camp afforded.

In February, 1862, orders came for hastening the organization of regiments to take the field, and rumors of an intended consolidation of all skeleton regiments were rife, and finally took form in an order from the governor to that effect. As had been done in our case, incipient companies were broken up and the men distributed to four companies of the maximum, ruthlessly destroying the ambitions of many an expectant officer, and the same process was carried into effect with regiments. Many who were recruiting for companies and for the field officers' positions were thus left, either to begin again, return home, or go into the ranks without a commission.

Then followed preparations for breaking camp, and at 4 P. M. of Feb. 14, 1862, the regiment was sent by rail to New York; was detained for hours by a collision, and arrived at 3 P. M., marching from Thirty-first street to the barracks at City Hall Park in the midst of a blinding snowstorm, whence, after a very poor meal, the regiment was sent to Riker's Island, a bleak and uncomfortable place for a winter encampment.

On the 19th we received our arms, the Enfield rifle, and began to feel like real soldiers.

One death had occurred in Albany, Jerry Delaney, of Company "B," having succumbed to pneumonia resulting from the measles.

On the 21st the second death occurred, that of Geo. Austin, of Company "I," from congestion of the lungs. He was given a soldier's burial on the 22d.

We remained on the island until March 6, enduring the discomforts of an extraordinarily severe winter. The barracks were mere shells of upright boards and board roofs. The winds tore off many of the battens on both roof and sides, and more than once we were drenched with cold rains, and once a furious storm threatened the utter demolition of our buildings and us with freezing.



On the 6th, the steamer Atlas came to the wharf and we embarked for Amboy, where we took cars for Philadelphia, arriving at 1 o'clock in the morning, and were the recipients of the magnificent hospitality of the patriotic people of that city at the "Cooper Shop" Volunteer Refreshment Saloon. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour and the fact that ours was the fifth regiment fed by them that night, we were refreshed by a splendid collation, served by the hands of the best ladies of the city, who were banded together for the purpose, and were divided into regular reliefs for duty when occasion required. They deserved the reverence and love of the soldier, and few who were the recipients of their tender care and generous bounty, will ever fail to revere the memory of the Philadelphia Ladies' Volunteer Relief Corps, or forget the kind words of sympathy and solicitude for our welfare, which came from the warm hearts of our lovable servitors.

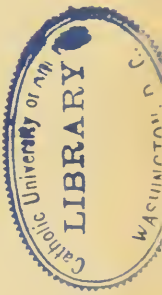
Early on the 7th we were again on our way, but did not reach Baltimore until evening. A fairly warm reception awaited us there and our supper was again served by fair hands, the loyal ladies of Baltimore having an organization similar to that of Philadelphia. A very poor breakfast of bread, pork and coffee awaited us in Washington the next morning, at "The Soldiers' Rest," a barrack near the B. & O. station, after finishing which we marched to Prospect Hill, near the Bladensburg Turnpike, where we had our first experience in attempting to pitch tents, a feat which we succeeded after awhile in accomplishing, but not without much vexation of spirit and some symptoms of a disease said to have been experienced by the army in Flanders. Here we remained, engaged in daily drills and parades, laboriously learning the details of a soldier's life, until the 18th of March, when we struck tents, and marched through Washington to a new camp on Meridian Hill, where we were assigned to the brigade of Gen. Innes N. Palmer, a part of the division commanded by Gen. Silas Casey, in Gen. E. D. Keyes' 4th Army Corps. We were now a part of the Army of the Potomac, and the air seemed filled with rumors of an early movement in

some direction, but the general impression was that Casey's division was intended for a special service on an expedition to the South Atlantic coast. Whatever the proposed destination, the division was under orders to be ready to march on a moment's notice, and on the 29th of March all extra baggage was ordered to be packed and disposed of. Heretofore we had been barrack and camp soldiers, and the accumulation of baggage was something wonderful, in the light of future experience. Nothing that could be thought of by loving friends, who had an idea that the sufferings of camp required for their alleviation a large stock of albums, needle cases, dressing cases, and other articles of "bigotry and virtue," had been omitted, and it was a serious question to determine what could be dispensed with. After the decision was made, the knapsacks were still heavier than would be convenient to carry, after Uncle Sam's mules should see fit to decline to carry them for us.

The time passed in daily drills and reviews until the 28th of March, when, at 6 p. m., we broke camp and marched across the Long Bridge to Alexandria. The route was so filled with marching troops that it was 2 o'clock in the morning before we filed into the streets of Alexandria, and, shivering with cold, sought sleep on a brick sidewalk, which seemed to have been laid with the hardest side of the bricks up. As many of us as could breakfasted at the Marshall House where Ellsworth was killed. The adage of "the early bird" was fully realized by the hungry throng who came late to breakfast and found the hotel larder exhausted.

We were then marched out about two miles northward, in the midst of a heavy snowstorm. As we were tired and sleepy we threw ourselves upon the ground with only the cover of our blankets and slept. Awakening, we found ourselves covered with an additional blanket of snow, some three inches in depth, but it certainly created no discomfort to the sleepers.

On the evening of the 30th we marched to the wharf and embarked on the steamer "Commodore," crowding every space



from the lower to the upper decks. We laid at the wharf until morning, when we steamed down the Potomac, still in ignorance of our destination.

In the early morning of April 1, we found ourselves under the walls of Fortress Monroe, and landed shortly after noon. Close to us lay the Monitor, which only a few days before made itself forever famous in history by its successful fight with the Merrimac. Not far away, looking towards Newport News, were the masts of the Cumberland and Congress, which had been sunk by the Merrimac before the Monitor came upon the scene, and drove the saucy Merrimac to its hiding place near Norfolk, from which place it made almost daily excursions out into the open waters, but made no further warlike demonstrations. The Monitor was an object of great curiosity, not only on account of the novelty of its construction, but by reason of its successful fight and the condition of its turrets, the solid walls of which bore the indentations of the missiles it had received, some of which were several inches in depth. With a glass we could see the confederate batteries on the opposite shore and Craney Island. In the evening we marched out to Hampton and made our bivouac in a churchyard under the shelter of the weeping willows and the walls of the ruined church. Capt. Johnson and myself chose a grassy spot between two graves and slept soundly till morning. On waking, I found Johnson scraping the moss off the headstone near him to learn, as he said, with whom he had been sleeping. That day we were marched to near Newport News, but by misdirection went first to Big Bethel and made a circuit of about five miles, and encamped in a low and swampy place in the midst of a drizzling rain. Having no teams we were compelled to pack our rations from Hampton or Newport News; more often from the former place. It was a season of almost continuous rain, and our position was not only filled with discomfort, but the relief of drills was not afforded us except occasionally. We could hear heavy firing from the direction of Yorktown, and once the Merrimac steamed so near us that we were called out to be ready for emergencies, but the emergency was not forthcoming.

## SIEGE OF YORKTOWN.

On the 15th of April, I was appointed second lieutenant of Company "I," by regimental order, vice J. M. Crawford, resigned, and the following day we broke camp and marched fourteen miles in thirteen hours to Young's Mill, to take our place in the front, sleeping with only the shelter of the woods for the night.

It was the first time we had seen the camp of a great army, and the scene seemed grander than any conception we had formed of it, but it soon became as an old story often repeated. Thousands of camp fires lit up the pine woods in every direction, casting their weird shadows down the forest aisles and over the many groups of soldiers, who were either cooking or eating their rations, or narrating tales of other days, before seeking rest. By degrees the lights and shadows faded into each other and into darkness; and the great host slept—all but the silent sentinels, who slowly paced their monotonous rounds.

The next morning we were assigned to a position near Warwick Court House, on the left flank of the Army. It was in this camp we made our first acquaintance with a friend that "sticketh closer than a brother," the famous, historic, æsthetic, persistent and omnipresent "Greyback." There were washings and pickings, and boilings, and scrapings galore, but for the future our new-found friend was to be always with us, and to constantly remind us of his undying affection by unceasing demonstrations. The sand fly, the jigger and the tick were to dispute with him for the possession of our hearts, but none proved so faithful, so active in displaying their love, or so prolific in offspring, as the immortal *pediculis humanus*, whose memory will be green in the heart of the soldier when the names of other comrades shall have been forgotten.

As a city. Warwick Court House was a disappointment. It consisted of two old houses—sadly out of repair and in need of paint, one small cross-roads store, the court house, clerk's office and jail, the latter being about the size of a northern smoke

house. Yet some of its papers, which I picked out of the mud, bore date of 1692. The town's antiquity was its only redeeming feature.

On the 22d of April we marched four miles to Lee's Mills, camping in the dense pine woods, but throwing out a picket line in the open. In front of us was Warwick Creek, across which dams had been built by the enemy, causing an overflow which served as a moat to their earthworks, which lined the opposite bank and whose guns were plainly visible. Each man on the picket line dug himself a rifle pit, and was compelled to keep himself closely hidden to avoid the constant fire of sharpshooters on the other side, and officers posting or relieving them were in constant danger. Our own sharpshooters were not idle, and our batteries were frequently employed to silence a too persistent and vicious attempt to pick off our officers and men, and to develop the position of the enemy.

On the 24th, Col. Crocker and Maj. Cassidy rode out to inspect the picket line of the brigade, and failed to return. The following day we heard from them through a flag of truce, they having unwittingly passed through an unprotected gap in the line, and been captured by the enemy. The command of the regiment now devolved upon Lieut.-Col. Butler. The ground upon which we were camped was low, and the back water of the creek, added to by heavy rains, kept us in stagnant water, out of which we could only keep by piling up brush for bedding. The drinking water was also bad, necessarily being taken from swampy pools, and nearly all the rank and file, as well as the officers were attacked in the rear by an enemy as dangerous as that in our front, and most of us were unfit for duty, even when compelled to take the places of those who were completely disabled, and thus our camp life before the walls of Yorktown became almost unendurable.

While lying here we witnessed a specimen of woodman's skill that was somewhat remarkable. The 7th and 11th Maine were composed principally of lumbermen. They were set to work chopping the pine trees in front of our line of camps, commenc-

ing at the rear and working outwards. No tree was felled, but all left standing nearly cut through until all were thus cut. Then the working party returned to the inner line of trees, and at the ward of command cut through the trees on that line causing them to fall outward upon the others, thus causing them all to fall. There was a rushing sound in the air, and the whole of that forest of pines was lying prone, with their points outward, furnishing an impenetrable abattis of considerable extent, along our front. Instantly our uncovered camp became the target for hundreds of the enemy's shells, and we were compelled to lie close to the ground while shells flew screaming over us, until our own batteries got the range, and after a long duel succeeded in silencing the enemy's guns. That night many forgot sickness and weakness while throwing up intrenchments that should shield us in the morning from a similar storm.

On the 29th, our brigade was hastily formed, and with loaded guns, moved in line of battle obliquely to the right through the woods, and beyond the slashings until we could see the enemy's earthworks in our front. Not long did our advance continue, for we were received by a sharp volley, the first real baptism of fire we had received, if we except the sharpshooters' fire of the preceding days. Not a man of our regiment was wounded, however, though many a close call was experienced, and we were soon ordered to retire, the object of our reconnoissance being accomplished. That evening the brigade was complimented by Gen. Palmer in person, for its coolness under fire and good maneuvering.

On the 3d of May an incipient mutiny occurred. Company "B" of our regiment had been recruited originally as sharpshooters expecting to join Gen. Berdan's command. and, upon the consolidation, had been assigned to the 93d, but was promised to be armed with rifles. Disgusted with the Remingtons, with saber bayonets, which had been given them. they stacked them and refused to serve. The company officers were all ordered in arrest, and the company placed under guard. Capt. Hobart had, before the men mutinied. made a full report of their



grievances and wants, which it seemed Col. Butler had pigeon-holed and not forwarded to headquarters, and, upon learning this fact, Gen. Casey ordered Butler in arrest as well, and the command of the regiment devolved upon Capt. McNett as the senior officer. But, as all troops were expected to be needed at a moment's notice, a parley was held, which resulted in the company resuming its arms until better ones could be issued, and peace was restored to our camp.

The next day a glad cheer resounded through our lines, for it was discovered that the enemy's works were abandoned. Yorktown was evacuated, and soon we were ready for pursuit. Our turn to move did not come till late in the afternoon, and as we filed through the enemy's works we could but admire their strength and reflect how serious a matter it would have been to attempt to carry them by assault, deserted as they were. Our route to, and through them, was not without danger, for the retreating enemy had placed buried torpedoes upon the route, and several were killed and mangled by unexpected explosions. After a rapid march of about nine miles, we went into bivouac at 11 by the side of the road.

#### WILLIAMSBURG.

The following day, May 5, was rainy, but the boom of cannon could occasionally be heard from the north. Troops were marching and artillery being dragged along the muddy roads, and soon our orders came to join the procession. It was hard marching, but hearts were willing, for we were on the heels of a flying enemy. Soon orders came flying to close up and march more rapidly. And still the rain poured, and the mud held back our struggling feet. After five miles of this hard march we found ourselves, that is, two regiments of our brigade, the 92d and 93d New York, where the booming of guns and sharp volleys of musketry proved that our further advance was to be hotly contested. The remainder of our command was not yet up, and we were assigned under Gen. Peck to the support of Gen. Couch's division, which was engaged under the earth-



works of Fort Magruder, one of the defenses of Williamsburg. We formed line, threw off knapsacks, and were pushed forward into the smoke and darkness of the woods, where we lay under fire, giving and receiving volleys all the rest of the afternoon. A natural ridge gave us such protection, however, that we had not a single casualty in our ranks, while we were convinced that our fire was doing good execution in our front, a fact which was attested by the burial parties of the next morning.

At night we pushed forward through a portion of the slashings, close up to Fort Magruder, to relieve a regiment which had exhausted its ammunition, and slept upon our arms in the midst of the rebel dead, thoroughly soaked by a drenching rain.

We were near enough to hear words of command inside the enemy's lines, and that, with the rumbling of wheels, convinced us that the enemy was retreating.

This was reported by Col. Butler to Gen. Couch's headquarters, and permission was asked for us to push forward, but this was for some reason refused.

At last morning dawned clear and bright on the dismal scene, and we shook ourselves like spaniels as we rose from our watery beds, welcoming the sunrise. Soon the surmises of the night were confirmed. The Johnnies had folded their tents and stolen away. The regimental bands, so long silent in the trenches at Yorktown, now began to play, and really they made better and sweeter music than the shells and yells of battle.

We were drying ourselves as best we could in the sunshine and by the breakfast fires, and eating the last hard tack our haversacks contained, when the order came, "fall in," and our division was soon marching through the mud towards York River to intercept, it was said, a portion of the rebel forces which was supposed to be retreating by that route. Finding no enemy, we returned by another road which brought us to Williamsburg and Fort Magruder again, but this time into what was yesterday to us, "the other side."

We had left the lines at Yorktown in such haste, and the roads were broken so badly, that we had nothing to eat and must wait

for the supply trains and forego pursuit. The common "hard-tack" here commanded the highest market price, twenty-five cents being offered and refused for a single specimen. It was a poor specimen too.

All around us were relief and burial parties busily engaged in bringing in the wounded and laying the dead to rest in long trenches, one of which contained 150 uncoffined dead. Further down the road towards our yesterday's position, they lay in irregular rows as they had fallen, some still grasping a musket, and some ghastly with mutilation.

Behind a fallen tree we found the body of a boy, beautiful as a girl, and with a sweet smile upon his delicate face. He looked as if he had fallen into sleep and were dreaming pleasant dreams, but it was the sleep of death, a dream of glory. "Somebody's darling," we thought, as we tenderly covered his shallow bed.

All through the quaint old town, hospitals were established for both Union and Confederate wounded, and the knife, the probe, and the saw were everywhere in use.

For many of us such scenes were new, and we could scarcely accustom ourselves to the horrors which environed us, and were glad when our detail was over and we could visit the famous old College of William and Mary, where so many of Virginia's eminent sons had been prepared for their subsequent careers.

There was little of interest besides the College buildings, for the town itself was of such a tumble-down and dilapidated character as to be positively shabby, although there were evidently some efforts made to keep up an appearance of gentility.

During this day and the next we were driven to forage the country for food. Occasionally some stray cattle were found and turned into roast beef as rapidly as possible, but we would really have suffered but for the hordes of rabbits which swarmed all about us, and made good eating, only for the lack of salt and pepper.

The day following, our supply trains came and rations were distributed once more, this time to the most ravenous crowd we had yet been a part of. That evening we got orders to march, but they were countermanded, and we had a good night's rest.

Early in the morning of the 9th we were on the way and marched a distance of twelve miles, sleeping in a corn field by the roadside.

Making another march of twelve miles on the 10th, we camped for the night at Roper's Church, where Gen. McClellan had established his headquarters. While here we learned of the death of Lieut. Jas. M. Southwick at the hospital near Warwick Court House, where we had left him ill with camp fever. It was our first loss by death among the commissioned officers, and he was a youth of such lovable disposition and exemplary life, that his loss was sadly deplored by all who knew him.

Here too an episode occurred which had an important bearing on the future of the regiment.

Lieut.-Col. Butler was a stickler for dress parades and drills on all possible occasions, and to our great disgust ordered us out for parade.

After the parade he put us through the manual of arms so long that Gen. Palmer sent an aide with an order to dismiss the men and let them rest.

He afterwards sent for Butler and reprimanded him in severe terms for not permitting the men to rest from drill during a marching campaign.

Butler took the reprimand as an unwarranted interference with his prerogatives, and he lost no opportunity of belittling his commanding officer, and succeeded in annoying him so much that he longed for an opportunity to be rid of him. The opportunity came later.

The 13th saw us again started on a wearisome march to New Kent Court House. The distance was only eight miles, but the route was so obstructed by felled trees, which we had to remove, and our halts were so frequent, that we failed to reach there until 2 in the morning, camping in a dense pine woods. A heavy rainstorm added to our discomfort, but could not prevent us from sleeping soundly, after the fatiguing march we had made.

Here we were stopped for several days by a continuous rain which made the roads impassable for artillery and trains. As

we had no cover but our shelter tents, we endured a good deal of discomfort, for they afforded but slight protection from the steady rain. A good umbrella would have been a God-send—a last century gingham better than what we had.\*

#### WHITEHOUSE LANDING.

On the 17th we marched at 8 p. m. to Baltimore Crossroads, a distance of six miles, reaching our destination after a hard march in the darkness and mud. The region through which we have been passing for some days is a beautiful one, but the towns are mere hamlets with little but the court house, jail and a cross-road store to entitle them to a name.

At this time Gen. Palmer found his opportunity to get rid of Col. Butler.

On the 19th an order was received at headquarters to detail a regiment for special duty, and he complied with it by detaching our regiment from the brigade, and sending it to guard the stores at Whitehouse Landing, on the Pamunkey.

We made the march of six miles between 5 and 7:30 in the morning. All over the open country immense fields of wheat were growing, and the scene was a busy one, for troops were landing and being pushed to the front, and a depot of supplies was being established. Four companies, "A," "F," "H" and "K," were detached for guard at McClellan's headquarters, at Savage Station, and the remaining six companies staid at Whitehouse to guard the depot of supplies. A short distance below the wharf was the residence of the confederate general, Fitts Hugh Lee, abandoned by his family upon our approach. Upon the front door was nailed a paper, reading: "Northern soldiers who profess to reverence Washington, forbear to desecrate the home of his first married life, the property of his wife, now owned by his descendants. A GRAND-DAUGHTER OF MRS. WASHINGTON." Beneath was written: "Lady—A Northern officer has protected your property in the face of the enemy and

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\*The writer had contracted malarial fever before Yorktown, and on all the march was in a state of alternate chills and fever. In this camp he became delirious, but on the morning of the 18th awoke to find the fever gone. He would not, however, recommend laying out in the rain as a cure for malarial fevers.

at the request of your overseer." Furniture and clothing were left, though somewhat in disorder, and pictures and books were packed in an upper part of the house.

During all our stay there a strict guard was maintained over the house and its contents, but its subsequent fate will be described hereafter.

Our camp life at Whitehouse was neither arduous nor unpleasant, but we had little to vary the monotony of drills and guard duty until the last of May, when heavy cannonading was heard, and on the 1st of June, trains laden with wounded began to arrive from the front after the battle of Seven Pines, and all who could, volunteered to carry them to the transports in the river.

This proved a labor of love, for most of them were our late comrades of Casey's Division, and many a familiar face was among them. From them we learned that the division was thrown unsupported across the Chickahomony, had been surprised in its tents, the battle having been fought in the heart of the camp. It had fought stubbornly and bravely until overwhelmed by numbers, when it was compelled to yield the camp to the enemy. Not till night were any other troops sent to their assistance.

Much blame was cast upon Casey and his division on account of the result of this engagement by the reports of rival generals, and McClellan himself reported that "Casey's Division had broken and fled unaccountably."

Its immense loss in killed and wounded sufficiently attested the gallantry of its fight, and McClellan later retracted his hasty and incorrect report and gave due credit to the division for holding out as long as it did against such vastly superior numbers, and when taken at such disadvantage.

The impartial historian will probably criticize more severely the generalship which placed the division unsupported in the isolated position it occupied, than the bravery and devotion of the gallant soldiers who were sacrificed.

The day following, a detail of 100 men, under Capt. Hobart with myself, embarked on a small steamer and steamed some

twelve miles up the windings of the Pamunky as convoy to a gun-boat, going as far as "Piping Tree" and destroying as we went every small boat and dug-out we could find.

The river was deep enough for vessels of larger draft than ours, but so narrow that the deck and sides were swept by the low over-hanging boughs, and so crooked that the vessels had to be warped around the jutting points, the bow and stern scraping the opposite shore.

At Piping Tree some of us were sent ashore to patrol the roads some distance to the north and to watch for signs of the approach of any force.

Returning without any such discovery, the gun-boat gave the signal to return, and our steamer had the advance down the river, it being too narrow to permit the gun-boat to pass. The object of the trip was to discover, if possible, the expected advance of McDowell's column to join the right flank of our army. We failed to discover it simply because there was no such movement made, although doubtless McClellan had every reason to believe it would be, and felt the disappointment keenly.

Towards evening of the 13th we heard a volley up the railroad a short distance which startled us, and soon the train due from the front came in, its officers shouting to us to fall in, as they had been fired upon by a force of rebel cavalry, which seemed to be 2,000 strong.

All was commotion for a time. Col. Ingalls commenced loading stores and baggage upon transports, at the same time sending such force as he could spare from the work up the road to check the enemy's advance.

We had in line some 400 men, including teamsters and sutlers, employes who either volunteered or were impressed for the occasion, and the small field pieces.

We intrenched our guns and little force as best we could, and remained under arms all night, looking for and expecting an attack, but morning came with no signs of an enemy near.

Scouting out towards Baltimore Cross Roads we learned from the people we met, who could not conceal their glee over the



manner in which the Yankees had been outwitted and frightened, that Stuart, with a force of 1600 cavalry and a battery of four guns had made a raid intending to destroy the depot of supplies at Whitehouse Landing, but not succeeding in stopping the railroad train to prevent our being advised of his approach, and supposing we had a large force as guard, abandoned that enterprise and contented himself with carrying away the army and medical supplies from the hospital at the Cross Roads, and departed.

He had crossed the Pamunkey at Hanover Ferry, destroying some wood barges, and had he succeeded in intercepting the train, might easily have surprised and captured us, as we had no intimation or thought of danger from that quarter. As it was, he made a dashing and daring circuit around our army without any successful result.

The next evening (Sunday the 15th) a small force under Capt. Barnes and Lieut. Swain was sent a short distance up and across the river to Hills' plantation, where it was reported that another cavalry force was loitering, intending to destroy a large wood supply provided for the use of the railroad and our transports. Later Adj. Gifford and myself were sent with another small force on a small steamer with instructions to lie off the landing, and, if we heard firing during the night, to land at a designated point and go to the assistance of our comrades.

In the morning, the steamer had to return for coal, and we landed and joined Barnes' party to await its return. We found that had we landed in the night where ordered, we would have been separated from our friends by an impassable bayou. Even had we found a means of crossing, we would have come upon their front and been received as enemies. So much for definite orders from a commanding officer who has no knowledge of his surroundings.

The officers of the party received a cordial invitation from Mrs. Hill to dine with her, and she and daughters entertained us handsomely at a well supplied table covered with linen—something we had become unaccustomed to.



Later in the day Gifford and myself, with twenty men, were landed near "Indian Town" with orders to arrest one William Johnson, a citizen, who was reported as visiting our camp and giving information to the enemy.

Our camp was frequently visited by people from across the river who offered to barter fowls and vegetables for sutlers stores, and there was reason to believe that some of these hucksters were acting as spies and communicating with the enemy.

Arriving at Johnson's residence we found our errand a peculiarly distressing one, for his good wife was expecting an interesting family event, and her husband was absent to procure a nurse. The poor woman was greatly distressed and almost hysterical in her prayers that we might leave her husband with her. Our orders were imperative, however, for Johnson was charged with carrying on a regular correspondence with rebel headquarters. So, on his return with the nurse, he was carried across the river and conducted to headquarters.

The next day, upon our representations of the condition of his family, Col. Ingalls permitted him to visit his wife, under guard, and make arrangements for her welfare, after which he was sent with several others who had been captured in the surrounding country to Fortress Monroe. A guard was sent over for the protection of his family.

On the 21st of June we had one of those episodes which make a red letter day in army life. We entertained the officers of the gunboat Marblehead at dinner, the party consisting of Lieuts. Martin, Laha, Allen and Fisher, and Purser Mulford of the navy, and Capts. Barnes, Johnson and Voorhees, and Lieuts. Smith, Braman, Swain and myself, of the army. To those who know how the army and navy can fraternize upon such an occasion, no details of the dinner are necessary. Suffice it to say that nothing procurable was lacking, and that the dinner was voted a complete success.

The following day a small party of us procured permission and paid a visit of curiosity to Indian Town, so called from the fact that a remnant of Powhatan's tribe has its home here upon the very site of one of his seats of government, and traditionally

claimed as the place where Capt. John Smith was taken while a prisoner. It has been asserted that it was here that Pocahontas saved his life. As iconoclasts are destroying part of the romance, perhaps they will deny the whole tradition, but the fact remains that descendants of Powhatan's tribe have quite a community here, though by intermixture with the negroes, many of them have kinks in their hair and have all the other characteristics of the black race, but here and there would be seen a tall, straight form, the copper skin, and the hair and features of the true Indian. They are indolent and shiftless, but were said to be peaceful generally, and only quarrelsome when drunk.

On the 26th many rumors were rife in regard to the movements of the army on the Chickahominy, but we were in ignorance of the real state of affairs. There had been heavy fighting for some time, witnessed by the large number of wounded constantly being sent down to the hospital transports, and the heavy cannonading in the front, and the liveliest apprehensions were excited. The sutlers, as well as the government, had large accumulations of stores at the landing, and, in their alarm, they were vainly seeking transportation for their goods, lest there be a sudden evacuation.

Among the rumors was one that Stonewall Jackson had turned Porter's right and that there was danger that we would be cut off from communication with the army.

Our affairs were to-day complicated by the arrival of Col. Thos. F. Morris, with a commission as colonel of the regiment issued upon the presumption that Col. Crocker's capture created a vacancy.

Why he was recognized under the circumstances is hard to account for, but he assumed command and acted for some time as our colonel. The line officers made no objection because he was considered an improvement on our lieutenant-colonel.

On the 27th, Gen. Casey arrived from the front and took command. At once the whole Landing was the scene of activity and excitement, and the certainty of some important movement, involving the abandonment of this point as a base of supplies, became evident.

Gangs of men were put to work chopping down the trees along the river, and even the beautiful grove in front of Lee's mansion went with the rest, in order to leave an unobstructed range for the fire of the gun boats.

The transports were rapidly laden with stores, and as fast as they received their loads, started down the river. Every man was pressed into the work and all worked like beavers.

It now became a certainty that our right under Porter had received a disastrous blow, and, added to our other labors, was the task of caring for the great train loads of wounded constantly coming in from the front.

On the 28th telegraphic orders came to send all the ammunition and provisions possible to the front. At noon another dispatch directed no more trains to be sent out, as the last had been destroyed by the rebel forces, which had gained possession of the road, and we commenced again to load the vast accumulation of stores upon all the available transports in the river. Very soon the telegraph operator at the wharf rushed out of his tent in alarm and exhibited to Col. Ingalls the latest dispatch he had received. It read: "Go to —, you — — — Yankees. We will be there in twenty minutes." We received orders to burn the remaining stores, and piling hay and other combustibles, wet with whisky, over the immense heaps of rations and ammunition, and firing the piles, we soon had a conflagration which destroyed government property to the value of more than a million of dollars. Sutlers stores in immense quantities shared the same fate. Canal boats and barges laden with ammunition were fired or sunk. One locomotive was steamed up and ran into the river. Another, headed towards the front, was sent to find its fate in a ravine over which the bridge had been destroyed, and another was rendered useless by uncapping its cylinders and otherwise mutilating it. When this work of wholesale destruction was well under way, and the smoke of our sacrifice was ascending to Heaven, what men could be spared from the weary companies were formed in line and pushed out towards the front to ward off any attack that might be made by

the enemy until the transports were ready for our embarkation. Towards dark the enemy's skirmish line appeared in our front and exchanged shots with ours, but we were soon ordered to embark. All but our skirmish line was withdrawn to the steamer Knickerbocker, and then it was called in. The gang plank was being drawn in when attention was called to another conflagration. The famous "Whitehouse" was in flames. Col. Ingalls sent a large detail to extinguish the fire, but it was found impracticable, and the detail quickly embarked, as the enemy's skirmish line was already in possession of the river bank. Our lines were hastily thrown off and we steamed out into and down the river under the enemy's fire.

It transpired that the guard at the house, out of a spirit of revenge for the many hours of extra duty they had been compelled to endure guarding a rebel general's house, had concluded to fire it before leaving, and successfully accomplished their desire.

The next afternoon we reached Fortress Monroe, where we remained until the morning of July 1, hearing the wildest rumors in regard to the army near Richmond. Some had it that it was annihilated, and McClellan either dead or a prisoner of war. Others, that it had cut loose from its base, been joined by Porter, and had victoriously entered Richmond.

The bloody and terrible seven days fighting and marching it endured to make its new base of supplies on the James River are historic.

In the morning of July 1st we started up that magnificent river, with its historic memories, anchoring at night. We were surrounded by transports, laden with troops, with here and there a gun-boat for convoy and protection, and the view at night with the river lit up by the signal lights from so great a fleet, was one long to be remembered.

#### HARRISON'S LANDING.

At noon of the 2d we reached Harrison's Landing, where we found the Army of the Potomac was closely huddled, after its seven days' battle, culminating in Malvern Hill. Towards

evening we disembarked and marched in mud and drenching rain into an immense field thickly studded with sheaves of wheat lately harvested, towards the old "Westover Mansion." We were making ourselves at home for the night, when unwelcome orders came to take another position. Every man thrust his bayonet into a sheaf and shouldered it. When the march commenced it was a column of marching wheat sheaves, the men being invisible. Through darkness and deep mud we threaded our way amidst artillery, army wagons, ambulances and ranks of sleeping men, until late into the night, when we were halted, and spreading our wheat sheaves over the surface of the liquified soil, sank into restful slumber, unmindful of the heavy rain from which we had no protection.

Waking in the morning we found ourselves sunk so deep in the mud that pools of water had collected around each recumbent form until the skin resembled a washwoman's thumb on washing days. We were not far from the Harrison mansion, the home of Benjamin Harrison, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and the ancestor of two presidents.

Without breakfast and wet as drowned rats, we resumed the march and were pushed out some two miles to the front, and with Shield's Division (just arrived from the Shenandoah Valley) formed in the center and most unprotected part of the line, the flanks being somewhat protected by two streams which flowed in diverging courses, north and southwesterly, towards the James.

One of the enemy's batteries was feeling our position, and its frequent shells were a source of annoyance and danger, but not sufficiently so to prevent us from seeking means to dry ourselves and prepare breakfast.

Seeing a plainly-dressed man in common army blue overcoat watching a cup of coffee boiling, and drying his clothing over a fire of rails, I joined him and was discussing affairs of the day without any idea of his rank, when a staff officer rode hastily up and saluting my companion said: "General, Gen. Shields directs that you silence or capture that battery." "Well,"

was the cool reply, "I guess I can do it," and forming part of his brigade, he moved it rapidly through the woods, and by a flank movement and a sudden rush, captured and brought in the battery amidst the cheers of the multitude who witnessed the gallant charge. It was my first acquaintance with Gen. Nathan Kimball, of Indiana, who has filled since the war, the honored positions of state treasurer of Indiana, surveyor-general of Utah, and later postmaster for many years in Ogden.

On the 4th of July the national salute was fired and a grand review of the army was held by Gen. McClellan. Shattered as the army had been, it was now fast recuperating, and its *esprit du corps* becoming fully restored.

The enemy's lines were withdrawn from our immediate front, so that we were not harassed by the continual fire of their guns on picket line, and the camp began to assume an orderly condition.

The following day we were assigned to the 2d (Wessel's) Brigade of Peck's Division, but before orders were received to report for duty, the assignment was revoked, and the regiment assigned to headquarters of the army, for guard duty there and at the wharf, which now presented a busier scene than that at White House Landing. This detail was made at the special request of Col. Ingalls, who said he could not keep house without us. We were encamped on a fine site between the Harrison and the Westover houses, and not far from the road leading to Charles City Court House, a road shaded with trees of perhaps more than a century's growth, one of which measured nineteen feet in circumference about six feet from the ground, but which were destined shortly to fall for the use of the vast army encamped there. In our front rolled the river in a semi-circle of which our camp was the center. Its broad expanse was covered with gun-boats, transports and vessels of every description, including barges and tows of canal boats. The wharf was a floating one, a platform laid over canal barges for some distance out into the water. Commissary and quartermaster's stores were accumulating on land, and in the vessels at



anchor, which were also magazines of ammunition and ordnance stores. To the right, as we looked to the river, was the Harrison house, and to the left, the Westover. Near it, and not far from our camp, a small grove contained the God's Acre of the vicinity, on whose stones were recorded the virtues of the deceased of more than two centuries.

Some of these quaint old epitaphs are worth preserving, not only for their historical associations, but as specimens of quaint grave-yard literature. Among them were the following:

"Here lyeth interred ye body of leftenant Collonell Walker Asten, who died ye 6th of April, 1656. He was in this country 28 yeares. Also here lyeth ye body of Walker Asten, ye son of leftenant Collonell Walker Asten, who departed this life ye 29th day of january, 1666, being aged 27 yeares and 7 monthis."

One read: "Hic recondunter cincies Gulielmi Byrd Armegetriet Regii hujus."

"Provinciae Quae floris qui hanc vitam cum eternitate committavit 4 Die Decembris 1704 post quam vixissit 52 annos."

Another recorded the decease of his wife:

"Here lyeth the body of Mary Byrd, late wife of William Byrd, Esq., and daughter of Warham Horsemander, Esq., who died the 9 day of November 1699 in the 47th year of her age."

A large stone was covered by the following inscription:

"Here, in the sleep of peace, reposeth the body of Mrs. Emelyne Byrd, daughter of the Hon. William Byrd, Esq.

"The various endowments of nature, improved and perfected by an accomplished education, formed her for the happiness of her friends. For an ornament of her country. Alas, Reader! we can detain nothing however valued from unrelenting death. Beauty, Fortune, or exalted honor. See here a proof, and be reminded by this awful tomb that every worldly comfort fleets away. Excepting only what arises from imitating the virtues of our friends. And the accomplishments of their happiness. To which God was pleased to call this lady on the 13th day of November, 1737, in the 29th year of her age."



A flat tablet supported by masonry recorded the death of Benjamin Harrison, who died Dec. 11, 1710, aged 37, and one beside it the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Harrison, who died Dec. 20, 1773, aged 57.

And another recites that:

“Here lyes the Body of Mr. Charles Anderson, who was minister of this parish 26 years and dyed the 7th of April, 1718, in the 49th year of his age.”

Everywhere around this peaceful spot, as far as the eye could reach, the plains were white with the tents of a great army resting after weeks of terrible fighting, and preparing for the future, and conspicuous among the camps was the one where was gathered some 10,000 negroes of all sexes and ages, collected as “contraband of war.” Sometimes in the evening, and always on Sunday, these people, always happy and contented, but now much happier because of their new-found freedom, made the air vocal with their melodious songs of praise and thanksgiving. It was a series of grand concerts, which few who heard will ever forget, or fail to recall with pleasure.

On the 8th of July, President Lincoln arrived towards evening and reviewed the army by moonlight. The evening was a beautiful one, and the scene magnificent as well as novel.

Thousands upon thousands of muskets flashed in the rays of the moon as the President rode slowly down the lines with McClellan and his retinue, and thousands of voices joined in shout after shout of pleasure and glad welcome to the man whom the soldiers regarded not merely as their commander-in-chief and President, but as the soldier's friend. His simple presence seemed to infuse new life and spirit into the hearts of those who had become so dispirited from the disasters of the late bloody campaign.

Nothing occurred to vary the usual monotony of camp life, under a burning Virginia sun, which made duty severe and almost unendurable, until the night of the 31st, or rather the morning of August 1st, when an unexpected surprise party paid us a complimentary visit. About 1 o'clock the whole camp was

aroused from peaceful dreams by the boom of cannon and the shrieking of shells flying over us in every direction. The bombardment came from three different points on the opposite side of the river, making a converging fire upon our camps. Mules and horses were stampeding, the contraband camp was in an uproar of excitement, the terror-stricken darkies alternating their lamentations with prayers for deliverance. Even trained officers and soldiers were terror stricken, and many sought shelter in ravines and wherever a shadow seemed to afford a shelter. We could see the fuses of the shells as they left the guns, rising in the air and seemingly taking a parabolic curve towards each eye that was watching, and then would come a feeling of relief as we listened to their shriek while they passed over our heads. It was no wonder brave men were terrified, for there seemed nothing to do but to wait the will of the enemy to cease their work, but relief came soon, though it seemed an age. The 1st Conn. Heavy Artillery, with several heavy siege guns, lay near the river, and after the first fright succeeded in turning some of their guns towards the enemy, and obtaining the range, let fly some bolts the size of a nail keg. Never was sweeter music heard than the boom of those big guns, and the roar of their missiles as they rushed through the air, and it was not long before the hostile guns were silenced.

During the bombardment the river was full of shipping, and the plain over which the shells went whistling was densely covered with camps, but the range of fire upon the shipping was too wild to be effectual for damage, and there were little or no casualties on land on account of the range being too high. Three covered our list of wounded and none of the regiment were killed.

It was remarkable that so little damage could have resulted from such a furious bombardment. The only damage which resulted to our camp was from a shell which struck the first tent on a company line, and passing down the line gathered up all the tents in that row and carried them off in the darkness.

Early in the morning of the 3d a large force was sent across

the river to the residence of Edmund Ruffin, a former member of congress, and a violent secessionist, who was said to boast that his hand had fired the first gun upon Fort Sumter.

The attacking force had come down in rear of the house, concealed its batteries from our view until evening and then took the positions selected in daylight from which to make their attack.

To prevent a recurrence of such an attack the house and other buildings were leveled to the ground, and the surface in all directions denuded of its orchards, groves and forests so that the country for a long distance was now open to view, and in range of our siege guns and batteries, which were ordered into position and protected by field works.

Ruffin's house was well filled with choice literature, and the returning troops brought armsful of books, which served as a circulating library for our camps during the remainder of our stay at the landing.

On the 11th of August we were set to work packing stores of all kinds to the transports, and the extra baggage and knapsacks of many of the troops were also being thus disposed of. This work continued until the 14th, and a large number of troops were embarked and steamed down the river, others marching southward, so that the morning of the 15th we found the six companies of our regiment the sole occupants of the landing. At dark we embarked upon the steamer *North America*, but laid at anchor during the night, steaming down the river at 6 A. M. the following morning, reaching *Fortress Monroe* the next day, Sunday. Monday we were landed and marched to *Hampton*, where we pitched our tents among the ruins of that desolated village, and where we found the advance of the marching army.

A pleasant surprise awaited us here in the arrival on the 19th of Col. Crocker and Maj. Cassidy, they having been exchanged as prisoners of war. We gave them a hearty welcome back from their imprisonment in *Libby* during the past four months. the effects of which were plainly visible in their emaciated frames and pallid faces. Col. Morris now left us, as it was

clear there had been no vacancy to which he could be commissioned. The time passed in daily drills, with occasional visits to Fortress Monroe and Norfolk, and frequent crabbing excursions to the mouth of Hampton Creek, until the 1st of September, when in the midst of a heavy storm of wind and rain, we were ordered to strike tents, and at dusk embarked on the steamer Nantasket for Alexandria. The wind continuing, we lay at the wharf in the midst of a great fleet laden with soldiers till morning. When we started the wind increased to a gale, and we began to drift, and finally it was concluded to put about. In this we narrowly escaped going to the bottom, for on turning the head of the boat from the wind, the squall struck her on the quarter with such force as to make her careen as if for a downward plunge, and to spin rapidly about. Fortunately she righted with no further damage than pitching us to the opposite side, a composite mass of men, guns, boxes and baggage, from which we extricated ourselves as best we could, and congratulated ourselves and each other on an escape with only a few bruises from so imminent a danger. Our next danger was of being drifted upon the beach, as our anchors dragged, and the sea rolled so heavily we could not reach the wharfs. The upper deck of a steamer near us was blown off, carrying its living freight into the surf, but where they were fortunately drifted upon the beach, with few casualties.

The wind falling, the fleet started again in the afternoon, reminding one of the great Armada of history, as it spread out in the waters of Old Point Comfort, and notwithstanding the roughness of the sea, we floated finely on into the night, the morning finding us steaming up the Potomac, and noon bringing us to Alexandria, where bad news awaited us, the defeat of the army at a second Bull Run, and its falling back on the defenses of Washington. All of the Army of the Potomac, as fast as it arrived, had been sent out to re-enforce Pope; McClellan was even stripped of his body and camp guard, one company of the Sturgis Rifles, and the four companies of our regiment, they going as far as Fairfax Court House.

We proceeded to Washington, and landing at the Seventh Street wharf, marched out to Meridian Hill, where we once more pitched our camp.

On the 5th of September, the four detached companies were ordered to rejoin us and did so, and we now held a dress parade with a full regiment of ten companies for the first time in months.

We also expected an assignment to some brigade, as McClellan was no longer in command. What was to be done with the regiment was a question of interest to us, and what move was to come next was of intense interest to the whole army, which was much shattered by its late reverses, and in a bad state of demoralization.

The Army of the Potomac had not yet lost confidence in McClellan; it really loved him, and perhaps idealized him beyond his real merits. Anyway, it was deeply interested in the questions, who was to command it, and what was to be done. The work of re-organizing and returning the scattered men to their regiments was all the time going on.

#### THE MARYLAND CAMPAIGN.

On the 6th, rumors that Lee's army was moving into Maryland in full force became rife, and the camps soon began to show signs of activity, under the usual orders "to be ready to march at a moment's notice." The next morning, Sunday, we were aroused at 3 A. M., struck tents and formed for the march, but the road was not open to us until 8, when we marched six miles to Tennallytown, arriving at noon, halting for a short time, as we expected, but it proved to be for the day. That night we laid out in the cold September air with no shelter but a blanket, but the army was content, for it was announced that McClellan had again been called to the command, and great joy was expressed in all the camps as the welcome news went the rounds.

On the 8th we marched ten miles through a beautiful country to Rockville and encamped near McClellan's headquarters.

The next day the whole regiment was assigned to duty as an independent command at army headquarters as a camp guard, to report to and be directed by Maj. Granville O. Haller, of the 7th U. S. Infantry, one of McClellan's aides and commandant of Headquarters Camp. The duties consisted in furnishing the daily guard for the camp, a guard for the headquarters train while on the march, and to strike tents and put them up again whenever a change of camp should be made.

On the 11th we marched after 4 P. M. to Middlebrook, eleven miles; on the 12th to Urbana, eleven miles farther, and on the 13th, eight miles, to Frederic City, where we were received with every demonstration of joy by its loyal inhabitants, who had decorated their houses with flags, and now came out into the streets where they had placed barrels of water, and stood with cups and dippers to refresh us, and here and there buckets of lemonade and steaming coffee were added.

Our march to this point had been through green fields and beautiful scenery, and a loyal people had shown us the contrast between union and secession, as we compared our reception in Virginia and here. Everything they had was freely offered, and the good fare furnished, with the green corn just ready for roasting, became a complete cure for the diseases we had nearly all acquired in the miasma of the Peninsula swamps.

The climax was reached here, where everything they had saved from the ravages of Lee's occupation was freely offered us. Sweet faced women carried baskets of fruits and flowers, and old women and children carried water to the parched lips of the weary, ragged and sunburned soldiers.

It was a wonderful outpouring of patriotism, and it brought the good people of Frederic close to our hearts.

On Sunday, the 14th, we marched again, and again the eye was constantly gratified by a beautiful and varied landscape. Reaching the summit of a hill we could look back and see the beautiful little city we had left, while beyond stood Sugar Loaf Mountain, an isolated peak rising high from a seeming plain. About noon, as we toiled slowly to the summit of another hill,



we heard the sound of artillery, and as the top was reached, another magnificent scene was presented.

Before us, South Mountain Range rose like a wooded wall, and up its steep and rocky sides our troops were climbing, some in irregular lines, and some in column, while volleys of musketry and the roar of artillery from the summit and lower ledges told of what they had to meet. They climbed on, occasionally halting for a return volley, and sometimes disappearing in clouds of smoke, now making a dash where the ground permitted, all the time advancing till the summit was reached. It was a grand sight to witness, and when their faint sounding cheer informed us that the victory was theirs, the whole marching force below sent up a great cheer to show our appreciation of their gallant fight in the face of such difficulties.

We did not reach the mountain top till long after dark, and could see nothing of the battlefield as we wound upwards over the crooked and stony road. Once, in the darkness, I stumbled over a corpse, and we passed burial parties gathering their dead by the light of candles, and near the "Mountain House" a sad party was committing Gen. Reno's body to the grave. Among the wounded lying on the porch of the Mountain House, was Gen. R. B. Hayes, later President of the United States.

It was far into the night when we finally halted at Middletown, some eight miles from our starting point, but a long and wearisome march in length of time, and on account of the stony road and the darkness, as we passed over the mountains.

The next day we marched to Boonsboro, a distance of eight miles, but the roads were so obstructed that our halts were frequent, and it was late in the night before our march ended.

On the next day we marched to Keedysville, near Antietam Creek, on the other side of which was Lee's army. Heavy cannonading was going on till noon, and in every direction troops were marching and countermarching to their positions. In the early evening, Gen. McClellan's headquarters were established well to the front, and it was determined to erect the tents there for the night. Hardly had the lines been established and the

tents begun to be erected when a battery opened upon us, and haste was made to locate in some more sheltered spot, which was selected close to the little village of Keedysville. Gen. McClellan, however, did not occupy his tent that night, but slept with some of his aides on the line of battle. The scene that night was one of splendor, and standing upon the high ground we could trace the camps by the innumerable camp fires, as the weary army sought to relieve its hunger before sinking to the peaceful slumbers which preceded the dawn of a day of bloody battle.

Before the sun of the 17th of September shone over the beautiful hills and valleys through which coursed the Antietam, troops were again in movement in every direction. Field guns and the heavy guns of the Reserve Artillery were being put in position on every available crest, and soon the air was resounding with the roar of artillery, the bang and crackling of musketry, and the cries of the contending armies. Our regiment was kept under arms all day, not far from where lay the reserve of the army, Fitz John Porter's splendid corps of some 10,000 men, none of whom were called into the engagement, which lasted throughout the day. Some of us obtained permission to go to the hill where McClellan established his field headquarters, a position commanding a fine view of most of the field. From this advanced position we could see many of the movements, and became such interested and absorbed spectators of the inspiring scenes, the brilliant charges, the incessant volleys, and the heroic scenes the great battlefield presented, that we were unmindful of the scattering shots and occasional shells that saluted our ears. To the right was Hooker's Corps, gaining ground step by step, and nearly enveloped in smoke, out of which, from time to time, irregular masses of blue would emerge, as a dash was made on the enemy's line, culminating at last in a grand sweep which turned the rebel left and brought Hooker's men to the famous Shaker Church. In front of us, occupying the centre, was Sumner's Corps fighting in the cornfields

near the Sharpsburg road, and every eminence was occupied by field guns, belching shot and shell, and causing the earth to tremble.

Away to the left, hidden from our view by intervening woods, heavy volleys of musketry and the roar of artillery indicated where Burnside was struggling for the lower bridge of the Antietam in the effort to turn Lee's right flank. It was an ever varying panorama of battle, worth all the risk to witness. Night finally put an end to the battle, only the skirmish lines which were close together keeping up a continuous irregular fire. In our front was the cornfield to the right of the bridge, through which one of the charges were made, and where the dead and wounded still lay thickly studding the ground. All night, working parties of both armies were busy gathering them in close to the skirmish lines, and, occasionally, braving the shots of the hostile skirmish line to relieve those outside the line, whose groans and cries for help were irresistible. In the midst of such surroundings, sleep was impossible to many. The calls of humanity were too frequent and urgent, but many were so worn out that they slumbered as peacefully as did the dead around them.

Early the next day we were under arms, and for some time expected a renewal of the bloody work of the day preceding, but no orders came. Men wondered and grumbled, for all believed that victory must be ours if allowed to press onward. All day we lay there, the discontent increasing, when long lines of trains could be seen moving riverward in the rear of Lee's army. Yet all was still, and we were told that we had but a few rounds of ammunition per man, and that the artillery had but few cartridges. The question could not but be asked: "Is it possible that Lee's army can have any more than we?" And it was freely asked, even among those of the rank and file. It was the first time it had entered into the minds of his army to severely criticise McClellan, and deplore what looked like timidity. Had the question been submitted to the Army of the Potomac during that idle day we can hardly doubt that it would have decided to

advance and to strike another blow upon its disheartened enemy, which was now known to be preparing for, if not actually making, a retreat from the bloody field where its impudent advance had been so summarily checked. But it was not to be.

All day numerous burial parties were engaged in the sorrowful task of collecting the bodies of comrades, and burying them in trenches near where they fell.

The sunken roads common to that section had served as intrenchments for many a charging force, and in these the dead lay thickest, but many a swelling slope, which in yesterday's sunrise had been covered with corn or ripening harvests of grain, were now thickly dotted with the silent forms of those who had so gallantly dared and died under the shadows of the battlefield, and the late green fields were torn and furrowed by the trampling of contending hosts, and the wheels of artillery. Desolation had come in a moment to destroy the beauties of one of the fairest spots of earth.

The next morning we had the well-earned field of Antietam to ourselves, Lee having crossed the river in safety during the night.

On the 20th Companies I and D were detailed to guard the reserve artillery under Gen. Hunt. In the night an alarm caused us to break camp and move about four miles, to escape a raiding force in our rear, the greater part of the army having moved to near Berlin.

The following day we marched back to Smith's farm in the vicinity of Sharpsburg, where the artillery and ammunition trains were parked again. His house and barn were filled with wounded rebels. Visiting the quaint old town we found nearly every house a hospital, and in the fields all about us were huts of straw extemporized to shelter the hosts of wounded from the rays of the sun. Burial parties were performing their sad duties in every direction. It was a scene once witnessed could never be forgotten. The halo of romance vanishes from the battlefield as soon as the excitement and battle fury has passed away. Sadder scenes can nowhere else be witnessed, and the fetid air

corrupted by festering corpses becomes almost unbreathable. It surely "smelled to Heaven."

On the 23d Company D was ordered back to the regiment, leaving us of Company I alone to guard the artillery reserve.

On the 1st of October we moved our camp some four miles to the bank of Antietam creek, near the bridge which Burnside carried so finely on the 17th, and which would have enabled him to turn Lee's right, had it not been for "Stonewall" Jackson's arrival, opportune, or inopportune, according to the standpoint from which viewed.

Here we remained with little to do but perform the ordinary rounds of guard duty, or to ride about the beautiful country, locating the positions of the contending forces, enjoying the prospects, and the beautiful autumn days, until the 12th, when we were relieved by a company of the 32d Massachusetts, and ordered to rejoin our regiment near Harper's Ferry.

In the morning of the 13th we started on our route, passing through Harper's Ferry, rather past it, on the Maryland side, and after a march of fifteen miles came to a halt for the night, near a large camp, and found our nearest neighbors to be the 123d New York, a real Washington county regiment, raised at the expense of the county, a year after it had resolved, but neglected to "raise" us.

Historic Harper's Ferry is truly a ruggedly magnificent spot. The Potomac, joined by the rushing waters of the Shenandoah, cuts through almost perpendicular walls, and the quaint little village makes one think it is looking for crevices by which it can cling to its overhanging walls. A part of our route was under hanging walls of rock hundreds of feet in height, while below us rushed and roared the impetuous, boiling river, flowing between Maryland and Loudon Heights.

In one place where artillery was being dragged up the heights, twelve horses were straining to their utmost on each gun.

Here the war really begun, when old John Brown took possession of the town in his insane effort to arouse and free the slaves, and we passed the schoolhouse where he quartered his little band the night before he invaded Virginia's "sacred soil."

I wonder if it were given him to know that "his soul was marching on."

Resuming our march in the morning, we rejoined our regiment in "Pleasant Valley," near Brownville. The Valley is certainly appropriately named, for a more pleasant agricultural region can hardly be found, and we regretted that we were compelled to leave it so soon.

Heretofore, we had been an independent command, but on the 19th the "Provisional Brigade" of the Army of the Potomac was organized, under the general command of Brig.-Gen. M. R. Patrick. It consisted of the 93d New York, Head-quarter's guard; the 8th United States infantry and 20th New York, Provost guard, and the Sturgis rifles, a company organized as McClellan's body guard.

The strictest discipline was enjoined, and severe daily drills held. We were also put through a rather severe course of instruction under Maj. Haller, who was a most efficient drill officer and competent instructor, and to this beginning, long kept up, we owed much of the efficiency the regiment exhibited when fate later threw it into a fighting division.

The same vigorous and almost exhausting system of daily drills, and schools of instruction was inaugurated, throughout the army, and although the men were inclined to rebel, the work soon began to prove its value by the improved appearance of the army, and an entire recuperation from the disorderly habits acquired during the long marches and battles of the past few months, and the "*esprit du corps*" of the whole army was vastly improved.

Sunday, the 23d, Bishop McIlvaine officiated as clergyman in the Episcopal church, and Gen. McClellan sent us a special invitation to attend. It was a remarkable congregation that assembled to hear the illustrious Divine. The General in Chief was accompanied by other commanders who have become famous, and every grade in the army was represented in the little church, and among the outside worshippers, to whom its small capacity forbade entrance. There was but one lady in the



audience, and her sweet voice led in the hymns, almost drowned at times by the masculine voices, but it was soon noticed that men ceased singing to listen to the voice that reminded us of the voices at home, so long unheard as to be forgotten, until reminders like this carried us back in memory to the far distant loved ones.

On the 28th we marched to Berlin, a distance of seven miles.

Pontoon bridges were laid here, near the site of a destroyed railroad bridge, over which the army was once more to cross the Potomac into Virginia.

To leave the green fields of hospitable Maryland for another Virginia campaign, was something unpleasant to contemplate, but all were ready, if not willing, to go.

We had pitched our camp on a slightly sloping hillside overlooking the river, of which we had a beautiful view, and where we could watch all the preparations for crossing.

One of the comic episodes which memory retains occurred the first night of our stay here. One tent, occupied by Cpts. Johnson and McConihe, with Lieut. Randles and myself had not been pinned down at the sides, and in retiring for the night, Johnson got the down hill side. Sometime during the night he alarmed us by suddenly calling out "Sam ! Sam ! somebody has punched our tent full of holes." He had rolled out under the guy ropes, and was looking at the stars.

For twenty-four hours, beginning on the evening of the 29th, infantry was marching in broken step across the swaying pontoons, losing themselves to sight in the Virginia hills beyond. Then for two days more, we watched the crossing of artillery and baggage trains, and our turn came Sunday morning, the 2d of November.

After a march of eight miles we halted for the night at Wheatland, Loudon county. The day following, the march was resumed through Philamont to Bloomfield, a distance of eighteen miles. On the 4th we marched eleven miles to Middletown, on the line dividing Loudon and Fauquier counties, and the following day to Rectortown, on the Manassés Gap railroad, where we halted

for two days, but as we had but scant shelter and there was a cold drizzling rain the first, and ice and snow the second, the days were far from restful.

On the 8th we rose from the frozen ground with stiffened joints and sore muscles, for our fires of rails had not fully sufficed to supply the want of shelter, but a hard march through drifting sleet of twenty miles to Warrenton, was simply sufficient to produce active circulation, and limber the joints, although this merely changed the form of the twenty thousand or more aches which made life a burden to most of us.

It was a cold day for the Army of the Potomac, for in addition to the chill atmosphere, our hearts were chilled by the news of the result of the New York elections, and the sorrowful tidings that McClellan was to be retired from command. The former gave aid and comfort to the enemy, and, therefore, brought us no comfort, while the latter added materially to our sadness, for McClellan was loved by his army much as Napoleon was loved by the French soldiers, and it had not yet doubted his capacity for command. Neither could it understand why the change was to be made now, if at all, for the enemy was beyond the Blue Ridge, while we occupied every gap, and, at the same time, were rapidly marching towards Richmond on a shorter route than Lee could possibly use. In effect, we were between him and the Rebel Capitol, forcing him to a long detour and a desperate battle before he could hope to reach it, if at all. The army was in good spirits, and believed itself to be marching triumphantly to Richmond, and thus it was universally considered an inopportune time for so serious a change.

The tidings were confirmed on Monday, the 10th, and a general review was ordered and held, and McClellan, for the last time, reviewed the army he had so long commanded, and thus took leave of us, Burnside being assigned to command.

Never before did the Army of the Potomac present a more soldierly appearance, and never did a commander receive a more heartfelt ovation. Enthusiastic shouts welcomed his appearance, as he rode slowly, with uncovered head, along the line,

looking every inch the soldier, and his farewell was followed by the silence of grief, for McClellan, with all his faults of procrastination and indecision, enjoyed the love and esteem of all, from the highest to the lowest, in his grand command.

He, himself, was visibly affected, and, at last, overcome by his feelings, abandoned the review, and turned down the road to avoid more troops which stood ready to receive them. These, realizing that he was going, threw down their arms and rushed to intercept him, even sentinels leaving their posts to join the throng which was sadly giving the last farewell to their idolized general. Never was such a scene witnessed in all the history of the Army of the Potomac. Other commanders won the respect and esteem of the army, were followed with devotion and ardor, but McClellan was its first love, which it never gave, in the same degree, to another. Whatever his faults, history must accord to him the power which sways the affections and binds the heart. No man, without virtues of a high order, could have won the heart of such an army.

The next day we were ordered out for review by the new commander, but he failed to arrive in time, and the review was dismissed. Later he appeared, and, after a general introduction to the headquarters officers, he quietly, and without ostentation, assumed command. Our regiment was retained as headquarters guard. The Sturgis Rifles had been recruited expressly as McClellan's body-guard, and, at his request and their's, were mustered out of service, a company of the 9th New York Militia (zouaves) being detailed to take their place.

While at Warrenton, the ladies exhibited their secession proclivities in many ways. They kept the graves of the Confederates buried there, daily strewn with flowers, would walk the streets with a secession knot of ribbon or a tiny Rebel flag, and turn up their sometimes pretty noses as they passed a Union soldier, and turn off from the sidewalks, into the dusty or muddy streets, to avoid passing under the flags flying from the buildings used as headquarters.

A conspiracy was entered into which proved successful. One afternoon when all the fashion and beauty of the town was out,

flags were stretched across the streets leading from the central promenades, so that when the ladies sought to return to their homes they found themselves every where confronted by the hated emblem of loyalty. All afternoon they walked, at first with eyes flashing fire and indignant frowns upon their faces, but finally the ludicrous phase of their fantastic dress parade overcame them. By and bye one made a dive and passed under without touching the flag and the others followed, some laughing at the joke, and others crying at their discomfiture. It is believed that no soldier ever returned the taunts of these pretty secessionists by a word that a gentleman should not utter in the presence of a lady.

Sunday, the 16th, we left our pleasant surroundings and marched twelve miles to Weaversville, crossing Cedar Run near Cattlett's station. Monday we marched nine miles farther to Spotted Tavern, camping under heavy guard by reason of rumors of a cavalry raid in our rear. Tuesday eleven miles in the rain to Hartwood, and Wednesday seven miles to Falmouth. On reaching the banks of the Rappahannock, it was a beautiful as well as curious scene which greeted our eyes. On the opposite side, lower down, was Fredericksburg and the frowning heights above it. Squadrons of hostile cavalry could be seen occupying the fords, with an occasional infantry line taking position on the hills, while freshly dug rifle pits lined the river bank. Below us lay the pretty village of Falmouth. Long columns of our infantry were appearing on every highway and byway which approached the river. The country about was densely wooded on both sides of the river, with occasional large and small intervals of cultivated lands.

Sunday, the 24th, it was discovered that Headquarters was in range of some hostile batteries, and we moved some three miles to Belle Plain, an open spot overlooking Fredericksburg, above which we could now see great lines of earthworks crowning the hills.

Here we remained engaged in the usual routine of camp life, watching the enemy's defenses grow in strength and extent, and

with little to disturb our equanimity, except building huts and chimneys to the tents to protect us from the cold which became intense and caused much suffering, until the evening of the 10th of December, when an unusual movement of troops and artillery gave us our first information that an attack upon the enemy was contemplated.

#### THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

Early in the morning of the 11th, we were aroused by the thunder of artillery, and found that our guns, including the siege pieces, had been massed on the river bank and were shelling the town and the heights beyond. Soon a detail from our regiment was called out to assist the 50th New York engineers in laying a pontoon bridge across the river. As the boats were pushed out and the planks about to be laid, a sharp fire saluted us at short range from the rifle pits on the other side. Several companies were embarked in pontoons, crossing the river under this galling fire, and landing, quickly cleared the rifle pits, their occupants hastily seeking the shelter of the houses in the streets of the town. The work of laying the bridge was soon completed, and a living stream rapidly passed over, and by 5 o'clock the town was in possession of our troops, which were massed thickly in the streets. While this was being accomplished, Franklin's Grand Division was marching down the river to cross for a flanking movement on Lee's right.

The morning found the lines enveloped in a dense fog, but the sun soon dispersed it, and the artillery duel of the day previous was repeated. One hundred and forty guns firing as rapidly as they could be loaded created a thunder that was deafening, and the concussion caused the ground to tremble, frightening rabbits from their holes and causing them to seek our companionship, unmindful of the danger of furnishing a soldier's dinner, in the midst of so infernal a din as that which drove them from their shelter. Under this bombardment our troops were pushed out and were now lying at the foot of the hills, the

great mass being centered at the foot of Marye's Heights, and thus in the continuous roar of artillery and the heavy volleys of musketry the day wore away.

Gen. Patrick had called for a large detail to go with him for provost duty into the city and I accompanied it. The troops bivouacking in the streets had been allowed to do much as they pleased. The deserted houses had been ransacked and great had been the destruction of property. Furniture, cooking utensils and crockery had been carried out and used to make men comfortable, while vases, pictures, ornaments and books had been wantonly destroyed. War carries with it the spirit of destruction, and there are men in every army who need no teaching to make them reckless destroyers of what ought to be saved. Here would be seen a man playing on a piano while one or two others were dancing on the cover. There would be seen jokers dressed in silks and hoops which by and by would be piled in the street for a bed to sleep upon.

Nothing was too fine or too rare or costly to escape the general destruction, and the rich homes of the city must long feel the losses it endured during those days of desolation.

Early on the morning of the 13th the battle again began to rage, our infantry being now engaged.

Some of us obtained permission to go as far as the Lacy House, where we could overlook the scene of conflict. Just in front of us were the dense masses of blue forming lines of battle and emerging upon the plain, while farther out the grand tournament of the contending armies was in progress. It was a magnificent scene, yet a terrible one, which was pictured before us as if it were a panorama, and no pen could fitly describe its terrible magnificence. Masses of blue were closely hugging the slope of Marye's Heights, from which poured down upon them a leaden hail. A beautiful veil of blue smoke would sometimes obscure the view, but when it lifted, the battle scene was grand. Away to the left the dense smoke from Franklin's volleys showed his advancing line. We could see nought of the enemy but the flash and smoke of his volleys, but every movement of



the heroic troops of Sumner's grand division in our front was plainly visible. A mass would form for a charge up the Heights. We could see the great gaps made in the mass by shells, and the constant dropping of men under the withering musketry volleys from the famous stone wall, and from the earthworks higher up. Bravely they pressed on until human endurance could bear no more. There was no retreat, however, they simply laid down, and hugged the ground for shelter on that bullet and shell swept slope.

As darkness came on, the lines of both sides were clearly marked out by the blaze of fire from the muzzles of the guns, as the deadly contest was kept up. Now one could see a little blaze starting from a given point and extending like a flash of zigzag lightning far along the line. Then would come a flash which enveloped the whole line at once, and here and there the fuses of shells were describing parabolic curves in the air. At last the shadows of the night seemed to fall like a curtain to cut off this grand spectacle, and the warring hosts sunk to rest on the field which had proved the valor of America's heroic sons.

Before the Sunday's sunrise, the battle reopened. Now the artillery ceased its great thunders, except from an occasional gun, but the volleys of musketry were still terrific in their reverberations, but no movement of the troops was visible.

By noon the battle began to wane, and soon all sounds had died away, and the veil of smoke began to lift.

Our gallant comrades still lay hugging that slope where death had reaped such a harvest from the ranks, but a peaceful quiet had succeeded to the din of the last three days.

We could but wonder what the next movement upon this fateful field would be. Would the enemy rally and attempt to drive our army into the river, or would another attempt be made to scale their heights? Or, would our gallant boys be permitted to withdraw in safety? The latter we hardly dared to hope for. The former was dreaded.

Another day passed without a renewal of the battle, or any change in the position of the two armies, and the night of the

15th, our army was withdrawn, under the cover of darkness, and a heavy storm of wind and rain.

This was easy to accomplish for those in and near the town, but not so easy for those in the front line. To these, orders were sent to withdraw in perfect quiet, each command to seek its shortest route to the river, and cross at the first opportunity. Thus by daylight of the 16th, all were safely across, and the rifle pits along the river bank were quickly filled once more by a heavy picket line of the enemy.

Burnside's great battle of Fredericksburg was over, and was a failure. The loss of life was great, and accomplished nothing.

Many a gallant comrade who had so bravely marched over the river, had found it the river of death, and there was mourning for the choice spirits lost, in every camp, and in some camps, in every tent.

It was now understood that we were to settle down for winter quarters, and all went to work with a will to build log huts, or square pens of logs, upon which the tents were raised, and all were more comfortable than before.

Part of our regiment was set to work preparing a new location for the Headquarters camp, but after policing a large space of ground and building a number of log houses, it was decided not to change the location.

Christmas day had been intended for feasting, but our supplies failed to reach us in time, and our invited guests were regaled on common army fare instead of the banquet they expected, but all entered into the spirit of the occasion, and made it a day to be remembered. The last course consisted of coffee and hard tack, and was the same as the first.

Thus ended the eventful year, 1862. A year of changes : of pleasures and pains : of ease and hardships : of plenty and hunger : of warm friends made and lost : of reviews and battles : of idleness in camp, and long weary marches : and these through fields bounteous in harvests, and decked with all the beauties of nature, or forlorn and naked through the desolating forces of war.

In the early spring, our right was in sight of the steeples of Richmond, having marched thither from Fortress Monroe. We left thousands in the swamps of the peninsula, many more upon the field of second Bull Run, and the fields of Maryland. We sustained defeat and enjoyed victories, but the general result was to leave us further from the rebel capitol than when we began.

1863.

Little occurred to break the monotony of camp until the 20th of January, 1863, when large bodies of troops were seen marching up the river in the midst of a sleety rain. All the troops in our vicinity were under marching orders, with five days' rations, and all night, the column was wearily passing, wading painfully in the deep mud. All night and the next day the rain continued, accompanied by a high wind, which made the marching of troops very difficult and the movement of wagons and artillery impossible. On the 22d the army was ordered back to its quarters, and, towards evening, began to come in in straggling parties, drenched with rain, covered with mud, and worn out with fatigue.

The heavy guns could not be dragged back through the mud, so troops were left for their protection, and they remained for the winter where they were.

On the river bank, the Rebel pickets shouted derisively to ours: "How are you, Burnside?" And, at one place, they painted on a board, in large letters: "Burnside stuck in the mud."

The object of the movement had been to cross at the upper fords, and turn Lee's left wing, but it was a complete failure, and will long be remembered as Burnside's mud march.

Its worst result was the demoralization of the army, which had lost heart, and was filled with discontent and murmurs. Burnside made serious charges of insubordination and willful disobedience of orders against some of his Grand Division commanders, and recommended the dismissal of Hooker and Sumner, but this recommendation, not being complied with, he resigned his command, and, on the 26th, Hooker was assigned to fill his place.

Doubtless, Burnside, who was a man of ability and the highest character, but wanting in the qualities which go to make a military leader, had serious cause for charging upon his immediate subordinates a want of co-operation and obedience, but it is difficult to see how either of his movements could have been successful under the existing conditions, even if a warm co-operation in his efforts had been accorded him.

Jealousies could not but exist where commanders of equal, and, sometimes, superior rank, and greater experience in the field, were compelled to serve under command of, and be subordinate to, one whose military ability they doubted, and whose command they were aspiring to.

About this time I had the recreation of a fifteen days' leave of absence, which I enjoyed in a rapid visit to the scenes of home, reporting back to the camp at Falmouth on the 11th day of February.

Washington's birthday was appropriately celebrated throughout the camps, and, a few days later, we were visited by a number of statesmen from the North, who came in stovepipe hats and patent leather shoes, to find why the Army of the Potomac did not move. One representative was our guest, and, although we were living well, we determined to play a practical joke upon him. At dinner, nothing but coffee, salt pork and hard tack graced the board, and a hatchet was gravely passed from hand to hand, with which the crackers were broken.

Then he was taken, in an ambulance, to visit other camps, and the jolting he experienced over the corduroy roads was something terrific, while the frequency with which the ambulance had to be pried out of the sought-for mud holes convinced him that the commanders of the army knew better than the statesmen at home when the army should move. Returning late at night, a surprise awaited him, for the table he saw so poorly furnished at noon was now laden with all the luxuries that the markets of Washington and Baltimore afforded. He soon realized, and enjoyed, the joke that had been perpetrated, and, in the enjoyment of the banquet and the speeches that followed with the

wine, declared that he would stand by the army hereafter, whether it was in motion or in camp.

Lieut. Moore of Company K having resigned, Capt. McConihe and Lieut. Ball petitioned that I be commissioned to fill the vacancy, and on the 5th of March, having received notice of being commissioned, I was assigned to duty with that company, and severed my connection with Company I, and on the 31st was mustered in the new rank to date from Feb. 21, the date of my commission.

On the 5th of April, President and Mrs. Lincoln visited the camp, remaining several days, reviewing the different corps, and making themselves conversant with camp life. It was not an unfrequent occurrence to see the president strolling about some camp alone, talking freely to the soldiers, as they gathered in groups to welcome him, and sometimes it was not till he had gone that those he talked with knew who had thus honored them with a visit.

Nothing occurred for some days to break the usual routine of camp life until April 14th, when we had orders to prepare eight days rations and be ready to march at a moment's notice. All were on the *qui vive*, and many were the speculations as to what was intended, and as usual the camp was full of conflicting, and sometimes preposterous rumors, but no further orders coming, these died away, until the 27th, when curiosity was again on tip toe, on account of the arrival of Secretaries Stanton, Seward, and Montgomery Blair, who held a long consultation with Gen. Hooker.

It also became known that the 5th, 11th and 12th corps had left camp and were marching towards either Kelly's or United States ford, for the purpose of again assaying to turn Lee's left.

#### CHANCELLORSVILLE.

In the morning of the 18th, Hooker with his staff and escort started northward, taking rations on pack mules and leaving headquarter's tents standing.

In every direction tents had been struck and troops were trudging through rain and mud in the same direction. The next

morning (29th) volleys from across the river were heard, and we found that the 6th corps, under Sedgwick, had crossed above the city on pontoons, and was pushing its way up the slope towards Maryès Heights, while the 1st corps had crossed lower down and was pushing forward to join it.

On the following morning, we could still see Sedgwick's command on the slope above the city, but the 1st had been withdrawn, and was now marching to join the army up the river and our regiment with a battalion of the 8th United States were the only forces on our side of the river.

The next day we heard heavy firing up the river, and was informed that our forces were in Lee's rear, and that success seemed assured. The movement was the same as the one contemplated by Burnside when he failed by sticking in the mud.

On the 2d, news of Stoneman's cavalry having made a successful raid in Lee's rear was received, and that his destination was Richmond, which he hoped to capture before Lee could follow. Great was the joy among those left at headquarters, because it was firmly believed that Lee must already be in full retreat, but experience had taught that it was safe to wait for the end before giving up wholly to rejoicing.

It was late that night when we slept, and soon after retiring we were roused at 1 o'clock of Sunday the 3d to be informed that Companies I and K had been detailed for a dangerous duty and were to start at once.

Rousing and forming our two companies, we marched in the darkness to the Lacy house, overlooking the river and Fredericksburg. Here we loaded arms, and were then informed of the nature of our task, which was, to cross the river in pontoon boats, and clear the rifle pits so that a pontoon bridge could be laid. As we descended the steep bank with the 50th New York Engineers a volley from the other side wounded five of the Engineers, one of them mortally. Our orders were then changed, it being determined to lay the bridge as far as possible before sending us over, so all went to work with a will. We could see the gleam of muskets in the moonlight, but worked on without



being much annoyed by shots. The head of Gibbons' division sent down from up the river to cross here, now appeared on the bank above us, and at the same time a commotion in the rifle pits aroused attention and caused us to drop bridge-making and take to our arms. The river was about half bridged, and daylight coming on, we could see the "Johnnies" hastily abandoning their line. A small force was now embarked in boats, and crossing, took position to protect the working party, and the bridge-laying was at once resumed.

We were glad enough to see one of our signal flags waving in the lower end of the town, and to be joined by a staff officer of the 6th corps, who waited for the completion of the bridge to guide the crossing troops to their destination. Neither did we grumble at the good fortune which impelled that detachment of the 6th corps to come in the nick of time to save us from a fight to effect the crossing.

We had no orders, but went out with the rest to the point where the troops were forming for the assault on Mary's Heights, but were soon called from the interesting scene and recrossed the river. We were allowed to remain at the Lacy house, however, and thus witnessed the movement.

The corps was formed in columns by regiments, and advanced steadily up the slope. The rebel batteries opened a rapid fire upon them, and we could see the gaps cut through the living hedge of blue, which closed quickly again, while the mass moved steadily onward. When about half way up, a volley of musketry was poured into them which caused the lines to shake and quiver, and momentarily pause, but it was but for a moment, when the whole column seemed to gather strength and with loud shouts charged over the works.

The dense smoke hid them from our view for a time, but it clearing, we could see our colors floating from the breastworks so lately belching its shells and bullets upon our gallant boys, and could hear their distant shouts of victory. The bloody Heights were ours.

Returning to camp we found that five more companies of the regiment had been called upon to guard the lower bridge, so we could claim some share in the credit of the day's work.

Two thousand prisoners and twelve guns were captured, including the 18th Mississippi, with its colonel, Griffin, and twenty-five field and line officers.

It was a detachment of this regiment which had captured Col. Crocker and Maj. Cassidy before Yorktown, and they now had the pleasure of tendering to their former captors the hospitalities of our guard tent.

May 4, early, heavy cannonading was heard up the river towards Chancellorsville, and Sedgwick's command began to move, as was said, to attempt a junction with Hooker. but shortly after noon volleys of musketry and some cannon shots across the river alarmed us. We were speedily put under arms, a large detail was made to proceed again to the Lacy House, and found that a rebel force had come in by way of the Bowling Green Road, and had re-occupied part of the Heights, attacking Sedgwick's rear on Salem Heights. The bridge we had laid was rapidly taken up, and all the batteries remaining with us were placed in position to assist the 6th Corps, which was in danger of being cut off, the rebel force being already between it and the river.

Sedgwick was making a gallant fight and our batteries did good execution. Some twenty-pounders got the range while the enemy was forming in masses between us and our friends and cut great gaps in their ranks. They steadily closed up and pressed onward. Sedgwick was pushing his way towards an upper ford of the river, while at the same time he kept part of his gallant force presenting an unbroken front towards the enemy. Thus the fight waged on until darkness hid the contending forces from our view and caused us much anxiety, not only for the fate of our comrades across the river, but for ourselves, as our regiment and the 8th Regulars would prove a small and inefficient force if our friends in grey should conclude to cross the river and attack us. Several hundred prisoners

were sent down to us from Chancellorsville, and between guarding so many of them and apprehensions of an attack, the night brought us little rest or sleep.

Early in the morning we learned that Sedgwick had safely recrossed at Bank's ford, but this good news was offset later by the news that Hooker had been disabled by a shell splintering a column of the portico at Chancellor's house and felling him with one of the fragments. Later came the still more disheartening news that the army was seeking the means of retreat to avoid annihilation, and all hope of a victory was gone. A heavy storm that night aided their crossing, and the morning of the 6th found them once more plodding on a dispirited march to their old camps. Hooker came riding in looking sad and broken and at once retired to his tent. We could see the enemy marching into their intrenchments on the Heights, and soon forces were emerging from the city streets to take possession of the rifle pits, from which they for some time kept up a desultory fire at us, but at too long range for harm.

On the 7th the President and Gen. Halleck visited camp and had a long consultation with Hooker, and again the air was filled with the wildest rumors—one being, that they had ordered another attack, of which they would be spectators, but of course this rumor and its mates failed to materialize.

Gen. Hooker issued an order complimenting the troops for their bravery, and saying, that "for reasons well known to the army, the movement was abandoned." Making inquiry I could find none to whom the reasons were well known.

The 11th Corps was blamed on all sides, and was dubbed "the Flying Dutchmen," but subsequent events seemed to prove it undeserving of the severe censure it then received.

All was quiet on the Rappahannock until the 6th of June, when for several days firing was heard daily up the river, and some movements were going on among the troops, but the most diligent inquiry failed to elicit any information as to what was going on, and even Hooker's staff seemed to be as densely ignorant as we.

On the 12th a general movement begun, and we heard the startling news that it was to be a race for Washington instead of "on to Richmond."

On the 13th we received orders to pack everything for which there was transportation, and destroy the remainder. There was no sleep for us that night, for we were to march at 3 o'clock in the morning of the 14th, and, as we were utterly alone, a vigilant watch was kept lest a raiding force might wish to gobble us in.

At 3 we left the heaps of ashes and rubbish which marked the spot which had for so many months been our home, and marched through dust, and in stifling heat, to Dumfries—twenty-one miles—at which place we slept, with only the earth for a bed, and the sky for a blanket.

At 4 the next morning we were again en route, and toiled through an excessively hot day, making a weary march of seventeen miles to the village of Occoquan, an insignificant town on the river of that name. Waiting here for pontoons to be laid, we were amused and interested in watching the swimming of a thousand or more cattle over the river.

About dark we crossed and went into camp on the high ground above the river. Following us came the cavalry rear guard of the army, which hastily took up the pontoons as soon as they had crossed, and, posting a strong picket guard, sought slumber on the ground with us, until an early reveille should once more arouse us for the march.

We marched at day break of the 16th, reaching Fairfax Station, after a rapid march of eight miles, before 8 o'clock in the morning.

Here we found part of our baggage, and enjoyed the luxury of a bath in the creek, and clean clothing, a luxury best appreciated after such a march as we have endured.

Here, too, we received orders still further to reduce our baggage, but mine was already reduced by some marauder, and to such an extent that the order could not affect me.

Here we lay, awaiting orders, until the 18th, when we marched to Fairfax Court House, a distance of only four miles.

but a hard march, because made in the midst of a heavy thunder-storm, which was very acceptable as a relief from the heavy and suffocating clouds of dust which, for the past few days, had hung over our marching columns. Here we were again stuffed with rumors, this time in a form which soon became tangible, to the effect that Lee was advancing in three columns, one of which was directed upon Washington, another towards Pennsylvania, and the third somewhere near us, and, as there were several cavalry fights near Bull Run to-day, there is prospect that the battle may be fought upon the already twice-memorable battlefield.

Sunday. the 21st. heavy artillery firing was plainly heard from the cavalry fight at Aldie, and, as that is forty miles away, it is quite phenomenal that we should hear it so plainly, every detonation being distinct and clear.

On the 25th we received orders to march at 3 on the following morning, and, during the day, the cavalry came in from Aldie, and passed northward.

At 1:20 the reveille sounded, and all was astir as the guard was relieved and rations distributed. after which a hearty breakfast was cooked and eaten, and we fell into line. We marched at 4, and trudged rapidly, but wearily, through the mud and rain, and, with few brief halts, through Hunter's Mills and Drainsville, where we struck the Leesburgh pike, crossing the Potomac on a pontoon bridge at Edwards' Ferry at 6 p. m. and going into camp at Poolsville, Md., at 10, after a laborious march of thirty-two miles.

The next morning the weary march was resumed through Barnesville and Urbana to Frederick City, with but one halt, a distance of 22 miles, making our bivouac on nearly the same spot as that we occupied last fall on our way to Antietam.

The next day, Sunday, the 28th, Hooker was relieved from command of the army, and Gen. George B. Meade was assigned to the command.

This seemed like swapping horses while crossing a stream, but the army was becoming accustomed to surprises of the kind, and accepted the change without a murmur.

Meade was little known, except as commander of the 5th corps, while Hooker, whatever his faults, had secured a large share of the affections of the army. His leave-taking was affecting, and all regretted the necessity for it, for he had endeared himself to the rank and file by devoting much personal attention to their wants and comfort. He had provided rations of soft bread and vegetables while in camp, and, by order, had established corps badges, which did much to better the *esprit du corps* of the army.

A distinctive badge was provided for each corps, to be worn on all occasions, and the divisions were distinguished by the color of the badge—red white and blue for the 1st, 2d and 3d divisions, respectively.

That of the 1st corps was a circular patch, of the 2d, a trefoil ; of the 3d, a diamond : of the 5th, a maltese cross : of the 6th, a Greek cross : of the 11th, a crescent ; and of the 12th, a five-pointed star. Our provisional brigade was excepted, and had no badge assigned, although the badge for officers, attached to army headquarters, was a golden spread eagle within a silver wreath. The envious outsiders dubbed it “quail on toast.”

#### GETTYSBURG.

Early in the morning of the 29th we were again upon the road, marching through Woodbury and Ladiesville to Middleburg, a distance of twenty miles. The day was showery, and many had blistered feet owing to the long and rapid marches of the past few days, and all were weary almost to exhaustion.

An amusing incident occurred on the route. Near one of the small towns the roadway was bordered by tall cherry trees, hanging full of luscious fruit. The trees had as many living occupants as the limbs would bear, and these while resting from eating, kindly threw down well laden boughs to those below. Gen. Robert Tyler of the reserve artillery had been seated on a horse block for some time, and seeing a branch fall near him, reached for and got it just as a private of the 20th Indiana named Meacham was about to pick it up. The latter, unaware



of the rank of his successful rival, administered to the General's posterior a kick which sent him sprawling in the mud, and sent his spectacles flying.

The fun of the bystanders seemed to enrage the General more than the kick, and he ordered me to place the man under guard until evening, but during the march he disappeared and I heard no more of it.

On the 30th a steady rain was falling, but the order was still onward, and we plodded along some five miles in the mud to a point a little beyond Taneytown where we halted about noon. This was the birth place and home of Roger B. Taney, once chief justice of the United States, and well known as the writer of the Dred Scott decision.

July 1 we rested from marching to enter upon the diversion of making out our muster and pay rolls, a task at no time pleasant, much less so where we must use cracker boxes in lieu of tables, and had not sufficient shelter to keep our muster rolls entirely dry. There was some heavy fighting near Gettysburg during the day, and the body of Gen. Reynolds was brought with others to the rear. Again the camp was full of exaggerated rumors, which, cut off as we were, from outside communication, took an exaggerated form. According to them, McClellan was recalled, and made commander-in-chief, vice Halleck; and Gen. Butler, secretary of war, vice Stanton. Various were the opinions expressed as to the supposed state of affairs, but there was only one opinion upon the fact that a critical day for the fate of the Union had arrived.

On the 2d, the roar of battle could be heard, and we were ordered to march expecting to go to the scene of battle, but instead marched fourteen miles to Westminster where the supply trains were parked, without unharnessing the teams, and we remained under arms to guard them. We could hear the artillery firing at Gettysburg, and that evening and the following day received much information in regard to the great battle being fought there, and at last the welcome news that our army was victorious, but had sustained tremendous loss.

We celebrated the 4th by marching at 3 P. M. back the fourteen miles which lay between us and Taneytown, most of the march being made either in heavy thunder storms or showers, but everywhere along the route we received news which confirmed the victory, and so our march lost some of its weariness. The night was spent in a vain attempt to keep dry and catch a little sleep.

Early in the morning (Sunday) we marched to Rock Creek, near the Pennsylvania line, where we were halted for orders until 3 P. M. and then started in another direction to Gettysburg, our line of march being over the hardest fought portions of that historic field. The demolished buildings, the fences torn down to make breastworks, the trampled crops of corn and wheat, and last of all the rows upon rows of still unburied dead, and the barns and other sheltered places filled with maimed and dying of both armies, formed a never-to-be-forgotten scene, and proved how great had been the struggle, how dearly bought the victory. Our camp for the night was close to the cemetery, and in the midst of the debris of the battle.

The day following we could give more attention to the field, which we eagerly studied from Cemetery Ridge to Round Top, everywhere finding evidences of the deadly storm, in festering corpses of men and horses, with whose sickening odor the air was fetid, and almost unendurable. Thousands of prisoners were being brought in, and we witnessed some 3,000 ragged and weathered out Confederates marching to the rear under the guard of but two men, one at the head, and the other of the rear, of the long and motley column.

We met many of the inhabitants, and, for miserly sentiments and nearness, they took the palm over the much-abused Yankee. At some wells soldiers were forbidden to draw water without payment, and one man took his pump out to prevent his water being used without pay. The pump was replaced, and he put under guard and compelled to pump for all who wanted to drink. I paid a dollar and a half for a loaf of bread which would cost no more than seven cents in New York. One was lamenting and groaning because his cornfield had been trampled and his

fences torn down to be used as breast works. Another had a dead mule in his dooryard, and wanted pay for hauling it away. Another had a few bricks knocked off his chimney, and, actually, presented a bill for 37½ cents to the quartermaster, to whom some wag had sent him. The joke took, and his papers were endorsed and he sent to another, and to others still, until he had made a long and weary round, coming, at last, to Gen. Howard. The General, touching his empty sleeve, said: "My friend, give it to your country, as I did this." But nothing but a stupid look appeared upon the oaf's face, as he left to seek some one who would pay his beggarly bill.

In contrast with this, we heard of one young girl who was killed by a musket ball while baking bread for the soldiers, and two young ladies from Baltimore, named Callow, students of the seminary, were loudly praised for their bravery and devotion to the wounded in the midst of terrifying dangers. Human nature surely showed its strongest contrasts here. It remained for these and old John Burns, to redeem the good name of the people of Gettysburg.

Orders came to march again, for Lee was rapidly retreating towards the river, and one column was preparing for a rapid march to intercept him, while another was to rapidly follow his rear.

On the 7th we made a rapid march over the border into Maryland again, through Taneytown to Woodborough, a long march of twenty-six miles, accomplished between daylight and dark. The rains continued to fall, and the march was a severe one, but was renewed the next day, in which we trudged through the midst of a drenching rain to Frederick City. Here, one of the first sights which greeted us, as we formed to pitch our camp, was the body of Richardson, the spy, hanging from the limb of a tree close by. Pinned to his breast was a placard, with this inscription, in substance:

"Tried, convicted, and hung as a spy. Any one cutting down this body, without orders, will take his place. By order of

MAJ.-GEN. JOHN BUFORD.

*Commanding Cavalry "*

Many of us recognized him as one who had plied his vocation as a huckster in our winter camp at Falmouth, where his face had become a familiar one. He had been convicted by a drum head court martial, and his execution immediately followed.

The next day—the 9th—at 6 o'clock, we again marched through Middletown to the Mountain House, over the scenes of the battlefield of South Mountain. Here we were encamped in the bowl formed by the surrounding mountains, and, with the 8th United States Infantry and 2d Pennsylvania Cavalry, were ordered to protect the mountain passes from raids and attacks in the rear, and furnished a heavy picket guard for that purpose, and, on the 12th, two other regiments and a battery were sent to join us and lighten our duties, the remainder of the army being pushed on towards the old field of Antietam.

All were alive with expectation, and impressed with the idea that Lee could not escape, as the river in his rear was swollen bank full by the copious rains, and all were eager for the fight that should compel the surrender of the Rebel Army. but, on the 14th, we woke to the disheartening fact that Lee had succeeded in recrossing the river, and was now beyond our reach. Somebody had blundered.\*

On the 15th we marched via Burkettsville and Petersville to Berlin—fourteen miles—and encamped on the same spot we occupied last September. Here we learned of the New York draft riots, and the 8th infantry started, with other regiments, to the scene, accompanied by our best wishes for their speedy success in putting down this rebellion in our rear. The next day Companies H and K were detailed to report to Pro. Marshal General Patrick, as provost guard, and the 50th New York engineers commenced laying a pontoon bridge across the river.

On the 18th we marched across the bridge and four miles out to Lovettsville, Va., the soldiers little relishing the prospects

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\*It was reported, but I cannot vouch for its truth, that, at a council of war, the members were equally divided upon the policy of attacking Lee at once, or waiting for reinforcements, and that Meade hesitated to give the casting vote in favor of attack when so many of his officers opposed it. At any rate, while we were waiting, Lee escaped and one of the grandest opportunities offered in the war was lost. Grant would have ordered an attack.

of another Virginia campaign after a sight of the green fields and a taste of the hospitality of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Sunday, the 19th, we marched six miles to a point a little beyond Wheatland. and, on the 20th. thirteen miles via Purcellville, making a halt at Welbourne Hall, the residence of Henry Delaney, a fine old provincial home, and, the day following, through Piedmont to Cold Spring Church, where we halted and revelled in a profusion of dewberries, which grew in profusion in this mountain pass. but we found rattlesnakes almost as profuse in number as the bushes. Being blind. and about to shed their skins, they were exceedingly venomous, but so blind that they struck at random when disturbed, and, so, were nearly harmless. Our march was along the Manasses Gap Railroad, which had its iron torn up for miles, leaving only the bed of the track to remind us that we were traveling by railroad. Soon our march was resumed, and we toiled, almost climbing, five miles further up the Gap, encamping for the night among the rocks high up the mountain side, at a place called Markham, where was said to be the family home of Chief Justice Marshall.

In the morning of the 24th dense clouds were between us and the valley below, and, when they were lifted by the morning's sun. a glorious view was that which lay before us. Eastern Virginia lay spread out like a map, whose only boundaries were the infirmities of vision. All forenoon we enjoyed the picture, and then came marching orders. and between 1 o'clock and 7 we clamored down the mountain side taking the Warrenton road and marched eleven miles to Salem.

That evening two of our men were shot while lying on the ground, probably by guerilla skulkers in the adjoining woods, but we failed to find a trace of the assassin. The bullet before striking them passed through the coat of a colored servant and knocked a candle out of his hands.

Bright and early in the morning of the 25th we were again on the march, and though the heat was intense and the road dusty, we made the fourteen miles between Salem and Warrenton before 10 o'clock, and here we remained, in beautiful surroundings

until the 1st of August. We found the ladies who exhibited such contempt for us last year in many ways, now disposed to seek our acquaintance and society, and many a pleasant hour was spent in their company, and in some cases the friendships thus engendered entered into the domain of love, courtship and marriage "in the sweet bye and bye."

On the 1st of August we marched to Germantown by a round-about route through Bealton, a march of twelve miles under a hot sun, and through a wilderness of stunted pines and oaks, without passing an inhabited house. A number of the regiment were overcome by the heat, and several fell from the effects of sunstroke. Here headquarters were established, and we were destined to remain until the middle of September. The various army corps were stretched from the Rappahannock to Warrenton, with a heavy picket line along its front and flanks.

Germantown consists of two houses, eight miles from Warrenton, and three from the Junction. It lacked society, and good water, much like another place of great historic fame.

The ordinary duties of camp life were enlivened by visits to other camps for social purposes, and occasional visits to the picket lines to have our blood stirred by the sight of the "Johnnies" on the other side.

Occasionally too, the susceptible ones, and they were many, would seek the society of the few secession damsels who resided in the vicinity. (The term *vicinity* as used here has no standard of measure. It means wherever the damsels could be found), and one charming girl, Miss Annie R——, a young lady of great vivacity, and of winning ways, had a host of admirers, whom she entertained handsomely. One evening Lieuts. H—— and B——, while visiting her and listening to her rendering of "The Bonnie Blue Flag," and "Dixie," were alarmed by the approach of several suspicious-looking horsemen. They mounted in haste, and put their horses to their speed, the other horsemen pursuing. On they dashed, until in going down a stony hill, the horse of Lieut. H. stumbled and fell, and that of B. followed suit, mixing horses and riders in much confusion.



H. escaped and came into camp with the startling story of the attack, and that B. was probably killed. The pursuers arriving where B. lay entangled with his horse, demanded a surrender, but luckily turned out to be Union officers, who had gone on a similar social errand. Mutual explanations ensued, and the escapade was agreed to be kept a secret, but the camp having been alarmed and a rescuing party sent out, it could not be kept, and our susceptible comrades were long in hearing the last of their ludicrous pursuit and overthrow. It might have had a serious ending, but as it did not, the merriment was great.

One of the great social events of the season, and one which brought together officers of every rank, and every portion of the army, was the occasion of a presentation of a magnificent blooded horse, with handsome equipments, and an elegant sword, to gallant and lovable Gen. John Sedgwick, commanding the 6th corps, at his headquarters in Warrenton, on the 26th of August. His tents were pitched under the trees in the spacious lawn in front of ex-Gov. Smith's ("Extra Billy Smith") residence, where tables were spread laden with delicacies, substantial and spiritual, and after the formalities of speech-making were ended, full justice was done to the substantial repast. Here was invented, and conspicuously displayed in a barrel, a nectar which was hereafter to be immortalized in the memory of the day, as "Sedgwick punch," whose seductive and insinuating qualities were soon experienced, not soon shaken off, and long remembered, by those who yielded to its seductions. Those who ordered carriages for their return, were kindly furnished with ambulances instead.

A few days later I was sent to Washington in charge of some thirty-one prisoners of war, among whom were Capt. T. C. S. Hunter, 30th Virginia infantry, Capt. John Tayloe and Lieut. John Tayloe of the 9th Virginia cavalry. Arriving at Alexandria in the early evening, we found that in some way their arrival was expected, and a number of ladies of rebel proclivities were at the station, their baskets laden with eatables and flowers for the prisoners.

I was accorded a disdainful reception at first, and remained a hungry spectator, but upon the ladies being assured by the prisoners, that they had been treated by me like gentlemen, I came in for a share of the viands which proved very acceptable. Army red tape here caused us much annoyance. First as the regular train had gone over the bridge, we had to wait for a special car and engine before going over to Washington.

There we first reported to the central guard house, (the old police station of Washington) thence were sent up to the provost marshal's office at the corner of 19th and I streets, where after a long wait for the red tape to be untied we were ordered to deliver our charges to the old capitol prison beyond the capitol. Lieut. Tayloe begged to be allowed to make a call under guard to his uncle and aunt, whose residence was next to Secretary Seward's, opposite Lafayette park, and finally I consented to go with him, instructing the sergeant of the guard to march slowly with the prisoners and await us on Capitol Hill. Late as was the hour (near midnight) when we rang the bell at the mansion, the inmates gladly admitted us when the cause of their disturbance was announced, and one could not but be touched at the warm reception accorded to the relative whom they saw after long absence under such circumstances. My greeting was also warm, and after an elegant midnight lunch, we made haste to join our companions, and the doors of the old capitol soon shut from my view, the new-made friend, and his companions, of whom I never afterwards heard.

Returning a day or two later, more Washington red tape was stretched across our path. Though I had a pass for myself and guard from Warrenton Junction to Washington and return, issued by Maj.-Gen. Patrick, provost marshal general of the army, I could not take car until Col. Devereaux, superintendent of railways, had examined my papers and given another order for transportation.

Saturday, the 12th of September, an intensely hot day, witnessed the movement of large bodies of troops marching in clouds of dust. Buford's and Gregg's cavalry crossed the Rap-

pahanock and the 2d Corps passed us, marching towards Culpepper. Rumors of a contemplated general advance were rapidly being confirmed and the following day we learned that the 2d Corps had occupied Culpepper, capturing several guns and a number of Lee's rear guard, and that Lee's main army was occupying the heights south of the Rapidan.

On Wednesday the 16th, we marched via Bealton Station, crossing the river at Rappahannock Station, thence through Brandy Station to Culpepper, a distance of twenty-one miles, and encamped close to that ancient and musty village.

The route over which we passed was that over which Pope's running fight had been made last year, the evidences of which were everywhere visible in the numerous graves, and also of the cavalry fight of Sunday last. Our camp was on the grounds of Wallack, editor of the Washington Star, whose residence was occupied by Gen. Meade.

Heavy rains made the river fords impassable and checked the movement of troops, but on the 22d and 23d our cavalry succeeded in pushing to Madison, south of the Rapidan and occupied a threatening position on Lee's left flank. A ride to the picket lines at Racoon ford, by way of Pony Mountain, gave us a fine view of the enemy's troops, engaged in drills and guard mountings in full sight on the opposite side of the river.

On the 25th of September the 11th and 12th Army Corps were ordered to Alexandria for shipment, and we soon learned that they were to go to the relief of the western army at Chattanooga. As the 20th Army Corps, they won a deserved fame in the southwest, and we saw no more of them until the final review.

The movement of troops and artillery from point to point was frequent, and we were kept constantly in expectation of a forward movement, but each time an advance was contemplated, additional rains fell, rendering rivers and roads impassable, and keeping us in uncertainty for many days. An instance of a sudden flooding of the streams, which rendered strategy useless, was brought home to us. A small stream euphoniously

named Hungry Run, whose course was between our camp and Culpepper, and which was ordinarily a foot in depth and easily forded, became suddenly so swollen that a five mule team was carried away and drowned in attempting its passage, and we were cut off from town until the next day.

There were again unwelcome rumors of a flank movement on our right and rear, and weight was given to them when we saw cavalry in heavy force, followed by a large body of infantry, marching towards Brandy Station, and on the 26th we heard that a bridge near Bull Run had been burned by a raiding force of the enemy.

During our stay here an episode occurred which excited much comment and shows the ease with which politics and war sometimes become mixed. It ended in the stopping by suspicious politicians of what was innocently intended by the army as a testimonial of regard for a former commander.

A subscription for a testimonial to McClellan had been for some time in circulation in the army, and the *Washington Chronicle*, in its issue of September 25, attacked its authors and signers unmercifully, attributing it to an effort to push McClellan's candidacy for the presidential chair.

Among other things it said "the document is anonymous, is circulated in the army in defiance of military authority, and without the avowed sanction of the commander of the army thus appealed to, and condemns the President for removing him. It is the boldest stroke of his political friends, who are known to be of the most perfect copperhead order. Its impudence is unparalleled. The projectors of it could scarcely be aware how widely it is known with whom the general exclusively associates, or they would not have dared thus to insult the Army of the Potomac," and further characterised it as "a clandestine affair of disloyal men."

The fact was that it originated at a meeting of general and staff officers at Meade's headquarters. Meade was the first to sign it, and generally the signers regretted that the subscription was limited to a small amount for each.

I heard Gen. Patrick say it met with Meade's entire approbation as well as his own. It was not therefore "circulated in defiance of military authority," nor "the clandestine work of disloyal men." As to its being "anonymous" all subscriptions are so until signed. Why it should be considered "impudent" for an army to present a testimonial to a loved commander, we could not understand, and it is certain that very many who were glad to subscribe would have opposed vigorously any attempt to put him in the presidential chair.

To put it mildly, Editor Forney would not have been a welcome visitor in camp for some time after this, for all bitterly resented his "impudence" in classing us with "copperheads," and "disloyal men," and a new impetus was given to the subscription.

On the 6th of October, however, in general orders said to have been issued by direction of the President. it was declared that such testimonials would be considered in violation of regulations, and noticed accordingly, which of course put an end to the movement.

There was much dissatisfaction quietly expressed. and not a few thought it unwise for the President to interfere. It was an act so foreign to his usual philosophical policy of non-interference with supposed aspirations of his rivals, that it is doubtful whether he would have interfered but for the pressure brought, and demands made by scheming but powerful politicians. So loyal was the army to its country's cause that none thought for a moment of disobedience, great as was the disappointment, and all soon settled down to the duties of the hour, giving little thought to political schemes, with an enemy in our front to fight. We prayed, however, that the fool-killer might soon visit the capitol, and that he might make no mistakes. While here, too, we enjoyed the privilege of calling upon that patriotic Virginia statesman, John Minor Botts, who, with his three charming daughters. always gave us a hearty welcome. and to hear Union sentiments so warmly expressed in the heart of Secessia gave an additional zest to their hospitable welcome. One day the old

man was feeling aggrieved because Secretary Stanton had refused to give a permit for some goods he had ordered to pass the lines; and I made notes of his talk, and wrote it down when I returned to camp. He said: "I will appeal to the President to learn if I have not a right to the protection of the government I have suffered so much for. What right has Stanton to say I cannot have articles I send for merely because I live in Virginia, when I have given such undoubted proof of my loyalty and devotion to the Union, and have suffered so much on account of my principles? It costs Stanton nothing to be loyal, while I have been imprisoned eight weeks and a day in a Richmond dungeon for *my* loyalty, besides sustaining much pecuniary loss. My position entitles me to some consideration. I am the only public man in the State of Virginia who has stood firm in principle during this convulsion. You know I am a Henry Clay whig, and, by the way, there is the most perfect likeness of Clay I have seen (showing us a small marble bust). He gave it to me himself a few days before he died."

On being asked if he did not consider the confederacy entitled to some consideration after sustaining itself so long, he replied with some warmth: "I know the so-called confederacy to the core. It is not a government, but only an attempt to establish one, and now, after more than two years of extraordinary effort, they have not only failed to establish it, but have lost two-thirds of the territory they occupied at the commencement. Look at Tennessee! They revolutionized Tennessee by its state authorities passing the ordinance of secession. Now we see a revolution within a revolution, and the people have brought Tennessee back into the Union. The confederacy will not last. The war was gotten up to sustain the democratic power, and slavery was only the pretext for rushing the people blindly into it. Such attempts will always fail as long as the sun shines and the moon rolls. It only wants time and a little more profitable exertion of the powers of the government to finish the war; or you may wait longer, and the Rebels will work out their own damnation." On my saying, as I rose to leave, that I admired



his stand, and felt much pleased to have met and talked with a man whose name and acts were now so much a part of our history, he shook my hand warmly and said: "I am glad to have seen you. Although I am growing old, I am glad to meet young men, and give them the benefit of my experience, and if you admire my conduct, recollect it is only because I done my duty as far as I could."

I was so impressed with his remarks that I jotted down his exact language as far as it was possible to do so. In speaking of Clay, he said: "He was a lovable man."

Thus we remained, almost daily drenched with heavy rains, until the October days set in. On the 9th a party of us rode to the summit of Pony Mountain where the chief signal station was situated. It was a high sugar loaf raised above the surrounding plains, from which a splendid view of the situation was afforded. Some marching troops were visible, and as their course was northward, the indications were discouraging, and we learned that some force of the enemy was crossing the Rapidan far up the river from here, rendering it almost a certainty that Lee had determined on again turning our right, and forcing us back on Washington. That evening we had orders to prepare eight days rations.

The following day the headquarters train was sent back, and we had orders to be ready at a moment's notice, and spent the night without shelter, knowing little but that our advance was to be backwards. Sunday, Oct. 11 at 6 A. M. we began our retrograde movement, and after a march of thirteen miles found ourselves within a short distance of Rappahannock station, where large bodies of our troops were centering and crossing, and we learned that Stuart's cavalry had raided Warrenton.

The next morning we were reforming for the march, but information came of an enemy in our rear and we formed line of battle facing southward. Other troops were hastily brought back to the south side of the river and joined us, and the line moved forward to meet our pursuers. It was a grand sight to see our line of blue with glittering bayonets as it moved over

the level ground, towards the enemy, eager for a fight with faces turned towards the south.

They were disappointed, for after throwing a few shells, the enemy retreated.

At 4 in the morning of the 13th we were roused, and after a hasty breakfast crossed the Rappahannock, marching eleven miles through Warrenton Junction, to a point above Catletts station, having lunched on our old camping ground at German-town. The army was marching in parallel lines with the trains between, and the march was a difficult one. That night we bivonacked in the midst of the army, which was huddled into a small space with the enemy apparently on all sides of us.

There was a dash of rebel cavalry between us and the second corps just about dark, creating much alarm and confusion. An orderly going from Meade's headquarters to the 2d corps at Auburn two miles away, fell in with them, but escaping, aroused the camp, and a squadron of the escort was at once mounted and sent out. Encountering the rebel force three were wounded in the short fight that ensued, but the enemy escaped in the darkness. It was a sleepless night for most of us, for a strong picket guard was established encircling the camp, and the headquarters guard was doubled. The few off duty slept on their arms, and the teams were kept harnessed and ready to move at a moment's warning.

At 6 in the morning Meade's personal baggage with that of some of his staff, was sent under guard of 100 men of our regiment towards Centerville, while the remainder of the train was sent by another route. We were informed that we might expect to meet guerillas and cavalry raiders, and ordered to keep close with the trains and ready for all emergencies.

We marched via Catletts and Brentsville, crossing the Occoquan at Wolf Run Shoals, and marching on to Fairfax station, a distance of thirty-one miles. There was heavy firing close to Catletts as we passed, and we learned that a small force of rebel cavalry had been cut off by our marching in parallel columns, and had remained concealed in the woods close to our

camp all night. We had seen their horses, picketed, but supposed them to be our own forces.

On the 15th we marched four miles to near Fairfax court house, and all day lay within the sound of cannonading in the direction of Centerville, to which point we expected hourly to be called, but remained inactive for the next three days, during which the trains remained parked, with teams harnessed, and once the approach of raiders caused us to form line of battle for their protection. Our guard faced in all directions, as none seemed to know whence the expected attack might come. Even the teamsters were armed and assigned to companies for duty.

At 2 in the morning of the 19th, we received orders to march at daylight, and willingly obeyed. On the march we passed through Centerville, crossed Cub Run and historic Bull Run, and along a route marked by bleaching bones of former battle-fields to Groveton, a distance of thirteen miles. The route was over the scene of two great battles, and near Groveton where we went into camp, close to the famous "Stone House;" the surface was covered by sunken graves, or spots where the only burial had been by heaping a little earth over the corpse where it had fallen, and this slight covering had washed away, leaving many a grinning skull, and heaps of bones, bleaching on the surface.

The following morning (20th) we prepared for marching, but no orders came, and we visited many portions of the field, but Capt. Johnson, straying a little farther than the rest, encountered a "greyback," who ordered him to halt and surrender. His reply was a revolver shot and a hasty return to us and to camp, where we remained till 4 p. m., when we marched to Gainesville, six miles, and slept soundly under the sky.

On the 21st our march was resumed, passing through Buckland and New Baltimore back to old familiar Warrenton, and there learned that Lee's army had all recrossed the Rappahannock, the object of his movement being completely foiled. Here we remained until the 27th, and then marched six miles to Auburn, a one house and one store village on "Goose Creek,"

which place we left on the 30th, marching to "Three Mile Station" on the Warrenton Branch Railroad, encamping close to the residence of Col. Murray, who was in the confederate service. On the 1st of November two correspondents of the New York Herald, Messrs. Hendricks and Hart, were captured a short distance from our lines while riding for curiosity and to gather news.

While here we had orders to keep eleven days' rations constantly on hand and all the indications pointed to a contemplated advance. Artillery was massing, and troops changing position from place to place in every direction. On the 6th we were surrounded by forest and field fires which seemed to threaten us with much danger as the wind was blowing a gale, but in the midst of our fight with this element, we received marching orders for the following day, and on the 7th we marched via Warrenton Junction to Bealton, a distance of ten miles, four companies being detached, and marching four miles farther to Carter's on the road to Kelley's Ford, while the remainder stopped to guard the subsistence trains. After dark we were ordered forward a short distance, parking the trains and camping just within the cavalry outposts. There was heavy fighting at Rappahannock Station all the afternoon, ending in the carrying of all before it by the 6th corps, and the preservation of the bridge which had been fired by the enemy. The 5th Corps also crossed the Rappahannock at Kelly's Ford. The day's march was a hot one and the dust of the road, combined with the smoke of the fires which were devastating the surrounding country, made the march almost intolerable.

The next day, Sunday, we marched to Carter's, and after a long halt, marched to Rappahannock Station, thus being compelled to march ten miles to find ourselves only two miles from our starting point.

We found that the 6th Corps had taken several pieces of artillery and over a thousand prisoners in the redoubt at the bridge, and had crossed the river and had been engaged in a skirmish most of the day while taking position. We crossed in

the morning and marched to Brandy Station, a distance of seven miles, made in the midst of a chilling and blustering wind which came fresh from the Blue Ridge Mountains, which were becoming clothed with snow.

Here we were destined to remain for some time, and after two locations of the headquarters camp, it was finally pitched on the 11th in a pine grove, at some distance from the station, and we proceeded to make ourselves as comfortable as possible. Here we remained while various efforts were made to force a passage at the various fords of the Rapidan, but they were all found strongly defended. Many a campaign was entered upon and carried to an effective conclusion—in our minds—while we were waiting for developments, most of the time under marching orders.

On the 22d it was freely given out by headquarters officers that the army was to force a passage over the Rapidan, one column at Ely's Ford, one at Raccoon, and one at Germania. The next day our orders were to send all books, desks and extra baggage to the rear, and with ten days' cooked rations to be ready to march in the morning. Heavy storms of cold rain and sleet delayed the movement until the 26th, when we broke camp at 7 in the morning, and marched via Stevensburgh to Germania Ford, where we sought rest for the night in a dense pine forest on the north bank of the river after a trudge of fourteen miles.

It was Thanksgiving day, but our dinner was taken on the march, and no turkey was on the bill of fare; nothing but the invigorating coffee and muscle stimulating "hard-tack." We gave vent to our thankfulness, however, in rousing cheers, for a dispatch announced the capture of Chattanooga.

We started again early in the morning of the 27th, but the roads and pontoons were so blocked by a continuous stream of crossing troops that we did not cross till noon, marching down the plank road, without finding the planks, some five miles, then turning to the right on the Orange Court House road, making some three miles further, and bivouacking at 9 in the evening about a mile from Robertson's Tavern. On our route

we passed an abandoned quartz mill and the once rich gold mine, Vanchuse. We are in a part of the region known as the Wilderness. The next day the whole line was pushed forward, fighting its way to Mine Run. Headquarters remaining at the Tavern. A cold drizzling rain added much to the difficulties and discomforts of the movement.

On the third day still further advance was made and better positions gained, although each step was stubbornly contested. Towards evening it became suddenly bitterly cold, and we were compelled to make a march of some two miles further towards the front, over the rough and stony pike, in stiffening mud. The cold grew intense, and caused much suffering. To add to our discomfort, we were short of rations, and without any shelter, the baggage trains not being unpacked. To keep ourselves from freezing we built long piles of rails, and kindled fires, lying closely with our feet toward the fires. It was a night long to be remembered. Men froze to death upon the picket lines, and when we attempted to rise in the early morning of the 30th we found ourselves pinned to the ground, our blankets and overcoats being frozen in the mud. As we had slept in our overcoats, we had to slip out of them to rise, and thaw the frozen ground to regain them. We moved back about a mile, and lay all day within the sound of artillery and some musketry volleys, awaiting expected orders, but, none coming, we prepared ourselves for another bitterly cold night, this time making our bed upon the cold and hard frozen surface of mother earth instead the soft and yielding mud we had begun our sleep in the night preceding.

The morning of December 1st opened bleak and cold, and the benumbed soldiers were not sorry to fall in for a march, the quickstep of which was to warm the blood, and free the aching, stiffened limbs from their pains. It was now apparent that our movement was to be abandoned, and our march a backward one.

The road was blocked by artillery and trains passing to the rear, so that our fourteen-mile march of that day was one of considerable misery and weariness, but we managed to reach the



river at Culpepper Mine Ford and cross it, bivouacking again on the frozen ground. This ford takes its name from the Melville gold mine, which is said to have been producing \$200 per day at the outbreak of the war. It is now abandoned, and a fine quartz mill is rapidly going to ruin.

Again at sunrise we were under marching orders, but as the whole army was crossing the river, and every road and pathway filled with marching troops, wagons and artillery, we did not get the road until 3 in the afternoon, making a weary march of eleven miles before we were allowed, at midnight, to drop to rest at the side of the road, and sleep until daylight of the 3d, when we resumed the way, and, after a march of five miles, found ourselves at our old camp near Brandy Station, rejoicing that the Mine Run campaign of seven days was over, and wondering what would come next.

For two days the camps were alive with rumors that the enemy was advancing upon us, and heavy firing in the direction of the river, gave color to the flying rumors. Besides, on the 5th there was unusual stir in the camp, men being everywhere under marching orders, and the horses being kept harnessed to the guns and the trains, but this excitement subsided, and on the 7th orders to prepare winter quarters were sent to the various army corps, and we began to arrange for a winter of comparative comfort and idleness. At once the work of re-enlisting as veterans commenced, and a very large proportion of the army responded to the invitation, a patriotic response that was cheering to the heart of the nation, for it gave the assurance that the veteran army would not be replaced by raw levies, as many had predicted, and more had feared.

For some time I had chafed under the idea that the regiment, having taken the field to do its share in fighting the enemy, should so long have been kept from active participation in the battles of its comrades, and, although sharing all the marches of the army, frequently in great danger, and occupying a position of great honor and trust, that of guarding the headquarters of the general commanding, a position which was longed for by

many a regiment. it was not winning the laurels of war, and I longed for more active campaigning. So when Col. Nelson A. Miles, commanding a brigade in the fighting 2d army corps invited me to take the position of aide upon his staff, the invitation was gladly accepted and his application for the detail having passed favorably through the military channels, and the detail having been made by Gen. Meade in special orders dated Dec. 23, on the following day I bade farewell to my regiment, and reported for duty, as aide-de-camp on the staff of the commanding officer of the 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 2d Army Corps, in camp near Stevensburg, with which my army fortune was hereafter to be cast. For a time there was excitement enough in learning the position of the troops, the picket line, and the duties of the new position. Our brigade headquarters was pleasantly situated under the shelter of a steep hill, not far either from division or corps headquarters, and the new companions were all that could be desired; men who, in the marches and battles that followed, proved worthy of a comrade's love and faith.

There was Miles, colonel of the 61st New York, long a commander of the brigade, but kept from richly-merited promotion by want of the political influence that crowded others into undeserved positions.

Young, enthusiastic, handsome, and every inch the soldier, he was, on duty, the commander : off duty, hail fellow well met with all of us, a constant friend, as much the boy as any of us. There also was Lieut. John B. Hallenbeck, my brother aid, a handsome boy in appearance, but the veteran of many battle-fields. His bright face was always ready with a smile which won the hearts of all who met him. He was a favorite with the command, a lovable character, too soon to leave us to mourn for him. There was also Capt. George H. Caldwell, assistant adjutant general, brother to the General then commanding division, whose frank hearty ways were captivating, and Capt. Hamilton A. Mattison, inspector general, big-hearted, jovial and true, who succeeded gallant Capt. Willard Keech. The

inner man was in charge of dashing Capt. R. W. Thompson, A. C. S. Dick was all we ever called him. Not yet 21, he had already acquired the reputation of being one of the best commissaries in the army, a reputation well earned and fairly deserved. The outward man was cared for by Capt. David H. Pattison of the 26th Michigan Volunteers acting A. Q. M., and, taken together, it was a military family that one could always be proud to have been a member of. In the reorganization of the Army of the Potomac, which was made that winter, Caldwell was relieved from the command of the Division, and Gen. Francis C. Barlow, who had stopped eleven bullets at Gettysburg, and been left on the field as dead, was placed in command, and Gen. Winfield S. Hancock, also severely wounded at Gettysburg, was assigned to the command of the corps.

Our brigade was composed of the 61st New York, commanded by Lieut.-Col. K. O. Broady, rugged and brave; the 81st Pennsylvania, commanded by Col. H. Boyd McKean, brave as a knight, courtly as a Bayard, and aimable as a woman; the 140th Pennsylvania, commanded by Col. John Fraser, a true gentleman, a fine scholar, who had won fame as an astronomer; and the 26th Michigan, commanded by Lieut.-Col. Judson S. Farrar, a worthy leader of one of the best regiments in the service. Later was added the 183d Pennsylvania, commanded by Col. McLean, one of the regiments raised and equipped by the Loyal League of Philadelphia, and new to the service, its officers and men being raw recruits, who had yet everything to learn as soldiers, and who were to have a costly lesson before it was learned.

During the winter, a complete reorganization of the army was made. A portion of the 3d corps was assigned to, and consolidated with, the 2d, and the 93d New York was relieved from duty at headquarters and assigned to the 1st brigade of that organization, which now became the 2d Division of the 2d Corps. It was destined to suffer greater loss in the campaign which followed than many a regiment that had always been in a fighting command, and to win an imperishable renown, but at a ter-

rible cost. The most important change for us was the advent of Grant, who assumed the direction of the Army of the Potomac, leaving Meade in immediate command under him. Without regard to the qualities of Grant as a commander, it was a wise step to create the office of lieutenant general, for it put an end to the scheming of envious minds among those of equal grade as major generals, and the presence of an officer of superior rank rendered it impossible for malicious, and sometimes false, reports to succeed in undoing the commander. He was introduced to us at a series of grand reviews, and at once took a strong hold upon the army, which was ready and qualified to criticise its officers, and generally did so freely and without reserve. From the first, this criticism was favorable to Grant, and left no prejudice to overcome.

#### FROM THE WILDERNESS TO SPOTTSYLVANIA.

1864.

So, at the beginning of the Wilderness campaign, it was my fortune to be serving as aide-de-camp to a gallant and successful brigade commander, who, in the bloody days which followed, won the stars of a major-general, has since become famed for his brilliant Indian campaigns, and is now a major-general in the Regular Army—General Nelson A. Miles.

The brigade was the first of the 1st division (Barlow's) of the grand old 2d Army Corps, commanded by Hancock—"the superb."

The proud, historic boast of our division was that it had never lost a gun or a color, although its colors had gleamed and flashed, and its guns had thundered in the very front, on every battlefield of the Army of the Potomac. No other division of the Armies of the Union could boast of such distinction.

Our badge was the far-famed red trefoil, the boys called it "the ace of clubs," and in all our campaigns clubs were trumps.

The New Year opened with an intense, cold spell, and will long be known throughout the country as "the cold New Year's,"

but we made the best of it and improvising sleds, enjoyed sleigh rides as long as the snow lasted.

A winter in tents, engaged in daily drills, guard mountings, parades, and working parties is liable to become monotonous, and even such intellectual amusements as card-playing and horse-racing become stale and uninteresting.

Visits to other camps, long rides along the picket line, leaping fences and ditches to try the mettle of our horses; or down to the river fords to have a chat with the Johnnie Rebs on their outposts failed to be exciting long before the winter passed.

Games of ball, football and "shinny" were played until all interest was lost in them. Beans were lost and won on all sorts of games of chance, until beans palled on the sight, as they had long before on the soldiers' taste.

When Washington's birthday came, it was celebrated by a grand ball, in a large hall built for the purpose, roofed with canvas, and decorated with flags and evergreens, stacks of muskets and a couple of brass Napoleon's, making a really beautiful interior.

Many of the officers' wives and daughters were spending the winter in camp, and hundreds more came expressly for the occasion. The vice president and a number of senators with their wives were there, and Gov. Curtin and wife acted as convoy for a bevy of ladies from Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. Generals Meade, Hancock, Warren, Pleasanton, Kilpatrick and others were there, and so was One-Legged Dahlgren, whose sad fate it was a few days later, to be killed in his raid on Richmond.

It was a scene of beauty, gallantry and chivalry, and the dawn paled the thousand tapers which lighted the hall, before the dance was ended. It was the vision of a night, and seemed altogether unreal—as if it were some fairy palace, risen in a night, and whose revelling occupants, after tripping gaily in the fairy dance, fled with the ushering in of day.

Then we of the 1st Division resolved to organize a lecture bureau, and erected a hall of ample dimensions at our head-

quarters. It was inaugurated early in March by a grand concert for the benefit of the Division band—admission, one dollar.

My printed program recalls the fact that few concerts of today can show a more brilliant repertoire, and few performers have been more heartily applauded.

We found difficulty in procuring lecturers, to educate the mind, so we filled up the time with frequent hops to educate the feet, and at these, the male persuasion so far outnumbered the female, that the ladies got their fill of dancing, and many a sham fight was engaged in to determine who should secure the fair partners for a quadrille.

At last, "Grace Greenwood" consented to visit us for a course of two lectures. The first<sup>t</sup> was, "The Silver Lining to the War Cloud;" the second, "Washington, London and Rome," both delivered with the charming grace, and tender pathos for which she was famous.

She says of it, in her "Records of Five Years," "An audience so illustrious, I had surely never confronted before. Groups of young officers sparkled around their generals like planets around their central orbs; in front was a starry sprinkling of ladies; and here and there, through the hall, were scattered civilians looking remote, dim and nebulous."

She learned in the hop that followed that her heroes could "wheel in the waltz, change base in the quadrille, deploy in the lancers, charge in the polka, and execute flank movements in the Virginia reel."

The next day was "St. Patrick's day in the morning," and the gallant Irish brigade under Meagher, (our second brigade) had made great preparations for a proper observance of the day. First there was a hurdle race where hurdles three and four feet high, and ditches four and six feet wide, must be cleared by the bold riders, and several horses and riders rolled together in the ditches, as a penalty for testing their leaping capacity too far.

Then climbing the well-soaped pole, or chasing the greased and shaven pig which must be caught and held by a four-inch



tail; racing in sacks, racing in wheelbarrows, and kindred sports, enlivened and closed the amusement of the day. It was a scene to remind one of the jousts and tournaments of the days of chivalry; and now, as then, fair hands crowned the victor, not disdaining to deliver the trophies of valor to the winner, whether he be the bold hurdle rider, or the captor of the pig.

Think not, however, that all was given up to wild unthinking revelry. Such moments as these were the moments of relaxation from severe and unrelenting discipline. There was reveille at daybreak and roll call. Then breakfast, after which came guard mounting, and squad and company drills until noon. Then brigade and division drills occupied the afternoon, and dress parade at sundown finished the day. Intersperse this with details for picket duty, policing the camp, and building miles of corduroy roads, and you have the ordinary routine of our winter camp.

All this was preparing us for the work of the coming campaign, rumors and premonitions of which were in the air and which all believed would prove a bloody and terrific one.

We were seeing the silver lining, but were soon to see the reverse of the war cloud, when rollicking pleasure must give place for visions of desolation and blood, and our winter carnival be supplimented by the wild carnival of death.

At last the rumors of a contemplated advance took definite form in the enforced disappearance from camp of all visitors, including those gentlemen in silk hats and patent leathers who visited us from time to time to find out why the Army of the Potomac did not move. There are three classes of soldiers in every army :

First, the brave, willing soldier—ready for any duty or danger to which he may be assigned, often volunteering out of his turn, never repining, and often leaving a sick cot rather than be suspected of shirking his duty.

Second in rank stand the soldier who does his duty when ordered, but grudgingly. Perhaps he is brave in action, but he is always growling. He growls that it is not his turn to stand

guard, that his rations are not good or well cooked. He growls about his officers, growls about not being promoted, growls because the willing soldier is promoted, growls if the sun shines, growls if it rains, growls around the camp kettles, on the march, and everywhere. He can give reasons by the hour why he is not promoted, generally because his superior officers are jealous of his ability. He cannot understand why such merit as his goes unrecognized and unrewarded, and he convinced himself then, as he does now, that his valorous deeds entitled him to a reward in the shape of a fat office.

Third in order came the habitual skulkers, the fellows who were always first for rations, first for pay, and first to run when danger came.

They were always excessively brave in camp, and would march up to the sound of the commissary's and surgeon's call with perfect recklessness and abandon, but when the first shot of battle sounded they disappeared as if the earth had swallowed them, reappearing after the battle as if by magic to relate their feats of prowess.

The devices they resorted to in order to obtain an excuse from duty frequently indicated genius of a high order. I knew of one whose sore leg baffled the skill of surgeons for many months, and he was about to obtain a discharge when it was discovered that he deliberately scratched the leg and bound copper pennies on the wound to poison it, and repeated the operation after every dressing.

Another had a mild form of lunacy which manifested itself by his fishing with a short pole and line in puddles, creeks, and even in the boiling camp kettles. He was constantly fishing, even when detailed for duty, but never caught anything. Finally he was discharged and I took him to Washington to secure his transportation and start him safely homeward. As we passed over the old bridge where the Tiber then crossed Pennsylvania Avenue at Second Street, I said: "John, here is a good place to fish, where is your pole?"

The assumed cloudiness of intellect vanished from his face, as he replied with a laugh: "Fishing be d—d. I've fished

myself out of the service and I'll never go fishing again as long as I live."

This last class were soon to vanish from our midst, and the others were to enter upon a career of glory whose record was written in blood to last forever on history's page. Marching orders were received on the morning of May 3. We were to be ready to march at 11 P. M. with five days' cooked rations in haversacks and sixty rounds of ammunition on the person, baggage and tents to be sent to the rear. It was many a weary day before we saw either again. My duty for the day was to detail and mount a brigade picket guard of 500 men ready for marching, and with them to relieve the old guard on the outposts extending five miles from Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock to the Rapidan, so that these could prepare for the march. Returning with them to camp in the evening how changed we found the scene we had learned to look upon as home. Where thousands of tents had covered the hills and plains in the morning sun, now all was bare and desolate, except for the rapidly shifting lines of blue, and the glistening and flashing of the bright muskets as the army formed for its march. A brief time for preparation and supper, and promptly at 11 our part of the great coil began to unwind and we were on our march to Ely's Ford on the Rapidan, beyond which lay the confederate hosts ready to welcome us "hospitable hands to bloody graves." We had tried their temper on many a well-fought field and knew them to be a brave, skillful and determined foe.

The night was mild and the men in good spirits, and soon the woods through which we marched resounded with the melody of ten thousand voices, singing:

" John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave,  
His soul is marching on."

The wild, weird music of that night seems still resounding in my ears, and a feeling of sadness comes over me when I think of the many voices which rang out on the balmy air of that night, but which never sang again unless in the angel choir of the Great Unknown.

Arriving at the river shortly after midnight we found that our picket guard which was to meet us there had not arrived. We could not leave them to uncertainty, with a probable enemy in the rear, so it fell to me to find and bring them in. Back to the camp we had left was five miles, thence across country by the usual route to Kelly's Ford was seven miles more; the road back was blocked with troops, artillery and wagons, so the only way open for speed was across an unknown country with only the stars for a guide.

It was 4 in the morning before that lonely ride through the pine woods and over bare fields was ended, and my weary horse stopped at the camp-fire of the reserve guard. The order had miscarried, and we had to relieve the picket as we marched, starting in the gray streak of dawn.

It was noon when we reached the river. The men crossed on pontoon bridges, while the mounted officers took the ford to water the horses. Mine was tired and found the temptation to bathe too strong too resist, and laid down to roll in the water. Of course I got off in haste, and in water up to my neck, to be heartily quizzed by those who saw it, some asking if I always took a bath on horseback. Slowly we toiled on, taking the fields in order to pass the slowly moving column to our proper place, and at 4 p. m. were rejoiced to find our corps in bivouac on the old battlefield of Chancellorsville, where we dropped to the ground for needed rest. I had been in the saddle for nearly thirty hours and had eaten only as we marched.

To those who have never witnessed the march of an army, the route over which we passed would have presented a curious scene. The soldier started with a tightly packed knapsack, a blanket and overcoat closely rolled above, and a square of duck, known as a half shelter tent under the flap. Hanging somewhere about these you would see an iron sauce-pan, a coffee-pot, and other culinary utensils. All this we call *unnecessary* baggage. Then there is the musket, weighing eleven pounds, forty rounds of ammunition means about six pounds of lead, (and we had sixty rounds). Then there is the haversack, swell-

ing with five days' rations, the bayonet, a tin cup and canteen. This is the *necessary* baggage of the soldier, and in all, it is something one would prefer to have checked rather than carry. As the warm Virginia sun rose at the first halt, knapsacks were unslung, and whatever could be best spared was thrown away. Then, all along the hot and dusty road something else would from time to time be thrown away, until at last the knapsack goes too, and the soldier is in light marching order, ready for his march to Richmond or the grave, and the road is carpeted with abandoned clothing, blankets and knapsacks thus thrown away.

The Wilderness is what its name indicates; a densely wooded region of great extent lying between the Rapidan and Orange Court House. But it is not only on account of its dreary woods and dismal morasses that it is remarkable. The country is a mineral one, gold and iron ores having been mined there for more than a century. The heavy timber has largely been cut away for smelting ore, and a dense undergrowth of scraggy pines, dwarfed oaks, laurel and chineopin bushes have sprung up over the clearings, while in the low points are sluggish streams and dank marshes choked with alders, twined closely with the luxuriant tangled and prickly vines of the sunny south, making many places almost inaccessible to the footsteps of man. Yet, wild as it was, it was indescribably beautiful with the myriads of lovely hued flowers which blossomed at one's feet and overhead, decorating both carpet and ceiling with nature's most elegant floral designs.

Wild beasts and deadly serpents had their homes here, but none more fierce and deadly in their venom than the men in God's image who were rapidly moving into those dark defiles from both sides of the Wilderness.

At daybreak the reveille sounds, and as far as the bounds of the open plain one can see men rising from amidst the stacks of arms. No dressing is required. A little water from the canteen poured on the hands and transferred to the face completes the most fastidious toilet, and all are ready for the breakfast

hastily prepared by each in his own way. Then "fall in" is the order, and we are soon on our march southwestwardly by way of the Furnace and Todd's Tavern, towards Shady Grove Church. The other corps crossed at Germania Ford and are marching on separate roads far to our right, their lines of march leading towards Orange Court House. We know by the order of march that we are expected to meet the enemy, but none know when or where.

Part of our corps has passed Todd's, and our division has reached there, when a staff officer dashes up and delivers an order which changes our line of march. At Todd's Tavern the Brock road crosses the road on which we are marching. On this road we turn to the north and with rapid strides move towards its junction with the Orange Plank. Orders to hasten come quick and fast, and soon we know why, for the far away sound of battle is borne to our ears through every opening. Onward we press as fast as weary legs can carry us, the sounds of battle ever growing louder and nearer. Our comrades of the 5th Corps have met Lee's advance and are already engaged in a deadly struggle for the possession of the junction of the roads, the van of Warren's corps having met the van of Ewell's column there. If they be driven back before we reach them our army is cut in two, and unknown disasters await us. We press on till we are close at hand. A cloud of dust appears moving towards our flank down a narrow road to our left. It is far away yet and may be caused by either friend or foe. Quickly a squad is told off, and down the road we go at double quick, halting and forming line at the first crest. A cavalry guidon with the stars and stripes greet us and we open our lines to let our friends pass through. Quickly we close again, for pressing closely behind is another squadron riding under the stars and bars. A volley, and they disappear. We find ourselves upon a ridge running parallel to the road on which we had marched. In front of the ridge looking northwestwardly is a small stream and a railroad embankment unfinished. Beyond it and to our right is dense woods.



we being on a small cleared farm (Stevens') in the midst of woods, the farm road running along the ridge on which we are, to the Brock road. A terrible din and rattle of musketry comes from the woods on our right and blue sulphurous smoke curls up from where the sound is loudest. It is about 4 p. m. Soon we see our own 2d Corps moving out of the woods, extending its line along the ridge we occupy, and, as the line extends, rails and fallen trees are hastily thrown up for breastworks. We join our brigade and stand in line with loaded arms, awaiting. we know not whether an attack upon ourselves, or orders to attack the enemy. All we know is that in the woods in our front is a brave and relentless enemy, while our comrades a few rods to our right are already in the midst of carnage.

Soon suspense is ended. We are ordered to the right until we reach the plank road, now so famous in history. We form line rapidly and push forward in battle array into the darkness and gloom of the thicket, our right flank resting on the plank road, our left a little retired. Evening shades fell fast in the gloomy recesses of those dark woods, and the darkness and undergrowth prevented any true alignment.

And now we are in the midst of the din and storm of lead and fire. Only by the flash of the volleys of the forming lines can we know where is posted the enemy with which we are engaged. The woods light up with the flashes of musketry, as if with lightning, while the incessant roar of the volleys sound like the crashing of thunderbolts.

Brave men are falling like autumn leaves, and death holds high carnival in our ranks.

Then the flashes extending along and beyond our left warn us that we must extend our line in that direction or be struck in flank, so we push out our left to parry the extended line of our enemy. This leaves a gap in our right which must be filled, and I am sent back for a regiment to occupy it. The 57th New York forms to go into the gap, when occurred an incident worthy of notice.

During our winter encampment, Col. Chapman of this regiment became impressed with a presentiment that he would be

killed in the first battle of the campaign. No reasoning nor joking could remove it. He was told that he ought to resign but refused, saying he was willing to die for his country. He was a lion-hearted warrior in battle, and a gentleman without reproach in camp. This day he was detailed away from his regiment as field officer of the day, and was thus temporarily on Hancock's staff.

As we moved his regiment down into that place of slaughter and gloom, a cry broke from some of the men and the line was broken, a group gathering about some object in the way. The regiment shivered with grief, for there, still in death was the upturned ghastly face of their loved commander, with the life blood still oozing from the ghastly wound. His presentiment was fulfilled. He had died for his country, and his brave soul was now far from the bloody scenes of furious war.

There was no time for mourning. A small squad reverently bore him to a place of rest, while his regiment plunged at once into the thickest of the fight, and many of its members that night camped with their commander in the "Bivouac of the Dead."

Night soon wrapped those gloomy woods in total darkness, except where lighted by the flames which belched from the muzzles of the thousands of muskets; the great sheets of fire, like flashes of summer lightning, lighting up the pall of sulphurous smoke which added to the dark gloom of the surroundings, and still the fight raged on.

We could see no enemy, but we were so close that the flashes from their muskets and ours seemed to mingle, and we fired only at their line of fire, and they at ours. Now the rattle and roar would die away, and then like a new cloudburst, it would commence again. Death flitted from bush to bush, and every thicket sheltered a corpse, while the agonizing groans and cries of the wounded, were constantly ringing in our ears.

By 10 o'clock all was still, except for an occasional irregular volley starting from a single shot, but extending along the line.

Orders were whispered to us to move to the rear without noise, which we accomplished safely, and after being supplied

with ammunition, were soon asleep upon our arms in a field near the crossroads, dreaming of home and the fireside, forgetting the frightful scene through which we had just passed. Not long were we left to our dreams, for at half past three of May 6 we were waked and moved rapidly to the position we first occupied yesterday on the open ridge, the line extending a little further to the left.

News had been obtained from prisoners that Longstreet was making a rapid march to turn and strike our left on the Brock road.

At 5 A. M. the battle re-opens on the right and once the surging columns drifted up to our right front. We quickly charge and drive it back, and then resume our place, to strengthen our left with earthworks. If there is ever a time when men labor willingly it is when they expect an attack, and are allowed to throw up a defence. Beavers could not work more industriously, for life is the stake.

Now there is an attack upon our skirmish line at the railroad embankment, but it is quickly repelled.

In some way the woods are fired in our front, and the flames swept with relentless fury upon our lines, burning the dead, and perhaps the wounded in our front. We have now a double enemy to fight, for the confederates, quick to take advantage of our confusion, make a sudden dash upon our lines. Brief, but bloody is the conflict, and we succeed in repulsing this last attack of the day, but it is far towards "the wee sma' hours" before we are permitted to sleep in the trenches upon our arms.

At daybreak of the 7th we are again under arms, and during the day several skirmishes sufficiently broke the monotony of the expectant hours, but Longstreet's expected attack miscarried by reason of his wound, and no general engagement took place, and at night, rumors of a retreat of the enemy were confirmed by orders to be ready to march, following the 5th Corps.

Thus ended the strangest and most indescribable battle in history. A battle which no man saw, and in which artillery was useless, and hardly used at all. A battle fought in dense woods,

and tangled brake, where maneuvering was impossible, where the lines of battle were invisible to their commanders, and whose position could only be determined by the rattle and roll and flash of musketry; and where the enemy was also invisible.

Yet in that gloomy region of death, 200,000 men had met and grappled in one of the deadliest struggles of the war. From out of its dark recesses had come the rattle and roar of musketry, and baleful brimstone fires that would remind one of the infernal regions; and 12,000 to 15,000 lives lost there proved it indeed the very "Valley of the Shadow of Death."

We questioned with each other that night whether our march would be back across the Rapidan, or onward. The morning answered the question. We had a new line of tactics. Its order was—Advance !

We had a new commander, and that commander, was Grant !

Amidst our grief over fallen comrades, we rejoiced—we knew not what we had to be glad over, but we were going out of the Wilderness.

Warren's 5th Corps was to march at 8 P. M. by the Brock road to Spottsylvania. Our order was—"Maj.-Gen. Hancock commanding 2d Corps will move to Todd's Tavern by the Brock road, following the 5th Corps closely."

It fell to my lot to stay awake that night to watch the march of the 5th Corps, and wake our own to "follow closely."

While so watching, frequent trips were made to the Brock road, or to the intersection of it with the farm road we were on, and which forked from the Brock at an acute angle. Returning to the headquarter flag where a small fire was burning, from one of these trips, I was surprised to hear, and then see indistinctly a cavalcade of horsemen advancing along the road close to, and across which, our troops were lying.

Running quickly to the head of the column, I called a halt, and at the same time recognized Gen. Meade at the head of his staff and escort. He rather brusquely asked: "Who halts me. Do you know who I am?" I replied, "Yes, you are Gen. Meade," gave my name and rank, and added: "I halted you

because a few steps more will bring your horses among our sleeping men, and if you go further you will be outside of our lines, and riding towards the enemy." He asked: "How can that be, is not this the Brock road?" When informed that he had left that road a short distance back, he conferred for a moment with Gen. Seth. Williams who rode at his side, and asked if I could put them on the right road. In wheeling, the staff and escort were obliged to exercise great care not to trample upon the rear ranks of sleeping men, but I soon placed them upon the Brock road and was warmly thanked for the service. I gave little thought to the event, and it was not till Grant's Memoirs were published that I learned that the great commander was also a part of the halted column. He describes the event, but attributed his escape to the "instinct of the engineer" possessed by Col. Comstock of his staff, who reported to him the mistake. It was not the "instinct of the engineer," but the plain common fact that I was detailed to stay awake and watch the passing of the 5th Corps which saved Grant and Meade with their staffs and escorts, from riding into the enemy's line.\*

It was daylight of May 8 when the 5th Corps had passed and we got the road. By a rapid march we reached Todd's Tavern at 9 and were aligned across the Catharpen road to prevent an expected attempt by Lee to cut our marching column in two.

Later our Brigade was pushed out through hot pine woods to the valley of Corby's Creek. Here on the brow of the upland we halted for a time—long enough to remind us that it was a beautiful Sabbath day, but not a day of rest. On a road passing along the high ground across the valley, in full view, were Lee's marching legions, rapidly moving southward. Our presence is quickly discovered by the alert enemy who tear down a fence and run out two guns on the brow of the hill in front of us.

The first shell screaming through the air sends us to shelter behind a little ridge. Then we receive an order to look out for our right, as the cavalry was being withdrawn. A picket line



is posted to guard approaches in that direction. Hardly has it been posted in a road which runs down into the valley, separated from us by a stream bordered with a dense growth of bushes and tangled vines, before it is thought necessary to extend the line further to our right, to cover another byway there, and that duty falls to me. The work was done, and I was riding down the road to an opening in the bushes where the stream could be crossed, when I found a confederate line of battle moving towards me, and towards our position. There was no escape except through the gap they were rapidly approaching, and no time was to be lost, for if they reached the opening before me, my march would end in Richmond as a prisoner of war. They evidently believed I was coming to surrender, for they invited me to join them in terms, the politest of which was, "Come on, you d—d Yank, we'll take good care of you." But the opening is reached. I show them my horse's tail, and his speed, as we gallop up the hill. Scattering volleys are fired, but they are too excited to aim well, and shoot wildly. At the top of the hill is a rail fence. The horse seems to know the danger and leaps it finely, but the saddle girth has become loose for want of food, the saddle slips and turns, and I take a fall. To mount again is but the work of a moment, for dread of a rebel prison, gives one wings almost.

The volleys meant for me have roused the brigade, which greets me with hearty cheers as I ride into the line with my saddle under my horse instead of under me.

The attacking column appears, but halts to make a proper disposition of their lines for the attack, and we are ordered to a better position a little to the rear.

While forming our lines and waiting, a strange accident occurs. Rations had been brought up for the first time since we crossed the Rapidan, and one of the wagons was unloaded to return for more, when some rattling musketry was heard.

The frightened driver cut his traces and fled, leaving the wagon surrounded by a pile of unloaded "hard tack."

Some beef cattle, hamstrung to prevent them from running away before they can be slaughtered, become mad with fright



and charge on the forming troops, dashing the men to the right and left as they make a hobbling charge on three legs down the line. Just then, another rebel brigade is discovered moving on our right flank, and we must prepare for an attack on our right and the one on our front at the same time. Cool heads and hard work are needed at such a time. Miles is equal to the emergency. Reinforcements are sent for and we prepare to defend ourselves as best we can until they arrive. Now the brigade in front moves steadily up the slope, their muskets at ready. Gallant Col. McKeen of the 81st Pennsylvania, has charge of that part of the line with his own regiment and the 26th Michigan. He sits on his horse like the brave soldier he is, calmly speaking words of encouragement to his men, many of whom are new recruits, never under fire.

The Ki-yi-yi of the confederates is not answered until their line reaches the cracker boxes. Then a volley answers their triumphant yells, sending many to their long home, but they close the ranks and march steadily on. McKeen meets them with another volley, which drives them down the hill.

Now commences hot work on the right. Here are the 61st New York and the 140th and 183d Pennsylvania, under Miles in person. The confederates charge and nearly drive in our center, the 183d Pennsylvania, which breaks and drifts to the rear. Here is work for the staff. We drive and coax the frightened men, and one staff officer seizes the colors from the frightened guard and rides with it in the face of the enemy to its former place. This cures the panic and re-inspires the men. The regiment rallies on its colors, and the line is saved. The enemy hesitates under our galling fire, and then falls back into the woods whence they came.

We were now ordered to withdraw to the main line, in hope that the enemy would follow and attack us in the intrenchment.

This movement we executed in as good order as if coming from parade. Our little brigade was proud, for we had whipped two brigades of Malone's Division, before any reinforcements had reached us, and we were greeted, as we filed into the trenches

with rousing cheers. We had lost nearly 200 men, and were obliged to leave our dead upon the field.

A strange incident occurred as we marched to the rear. The confederate shells were flying over our heads, and one struck in a ploughed field in front of us as Lieut. Judson, a Vermonter, and staff officer of the 2d Brigade, 3d Division, was riding to meet us. The shell struck short of him and he fell dead without apparent cause. The ball had ricocheted, and struck him so slightly as to leave no mark, but sufficiently hard to cause instant death.

The night was far advanced before we gave up the expectation of another attack, and had fully distributed the rations and fed our hungry heroes, but now we got a few hours of much-needed sleep until the daylight reveille of the 9th of May.

At 8 A. M. we marched towards Spottsylvania Court House, to which point the other corps had preceded us. The 6th Corps was then actively engaged in its fight which lost it its brave and good commander, the gallant, noble-hearted Sedgwick. We formed line on the right of the 6th Corps with an open field sloping away from our front. Here we threw up a light breast-work of rails--and waited.

At nearly 5 P. M. our division was hastily moved by the flank across the Po. On reaching the high ground on the other side, we formed in line, and with a heavy skirmish line deployed in front, swept rapidly across the fields until we struck the road leading into Spottsylvania from the west, then wheeled to the left and moved down the road to a covered bridge and attempted its passage.

It was too heavily defended, however, and as it was growing too dark to do more, we intrenched as best we could on the high ground above the river, while our skirmish line, with bayonets and cups dug rifle pits and held the river bank.

A curious topographical fact may be noticed here.

Four considerable streams rise in and flow through this region, the Mat, the Ta, the Po, and the Ny. The names like the streams unite, and the river formed by their junction, is the Mattapony.

Our movements during the next ten days have made the Po, and the Ny, historic streams.

If the movement of our division should succeed in forcing a passage of the river, we would be again on the same side of the Po with the rest of the army, but separated from it by a great horseshoe bend, and would have to fight our way to a junction, but this would take the confederates in flank.

Early in the morning of the 10th we were roused by confederate shells. Their shrieks are less musical than the notes of fife and drum, but more certain to wake one, quickly and thoroughly. Their battery was soon silenced, however, but the hot and incessant musketry fire from the *tete de pont* warned us that crossing there was impracticable, and endangered our every movement.

Another way must be found to cross, and I am sent with the 61st New York under Col. Broady to feel for a point where we might cross and flank the bridge. At Taylor's farm, some distance up the river, twenty men cross on a fallen tree, but are immediately fired on, and have to fight their way. Five are wounded, and we withdraw them and abandon the hope of crossing there. Then we learn from the unwilling lips of Taylor that there is a dam on Glady Run a mile further up. We cross there, but a startling discovery awaits us. A great cloud of dust rising over a belt of woods informs us that a large column is marching towards our rear, and is likely to do for us what we are trying to do for them—flank and destroy us in the bend of the river. After verifying this fact by crawling out through the woods until we can see the marching columns, we hastily withdraw to Taylor's and align the regiment, only a handful, behind a fence, while I report the situation at headquarters. Two guns of Arnold's battery are sent out to Taylor's and posted in an open field commanding the road.

But no troops can be spared from the new line being rapidly taken and strengthened to ward off the impending blow. Soon the head of the grey column appears emerging from the woods. Arnold's guns are splendidly served, but the enemy soon dis-

cover by our light musketry fire, that the guns have no sufficient support, and forming a charging column, dash fiercely on to take them. The guns are hurriedly limbered to the rear, flying before the exulting, cheering mass behind. The driver of one sways too far to one side, the wheel locks with the gatepost of Taylor's roadway. No time is to be lost, for the surging lines of gray are close at hand. The traces are cut by the gunners, and the gun spiked and left to the enemy. That was the first gun belonging to Hancock's Corps ever captured by the enemy, and gallant Capt. Arnold wept at the loss of his gun, as you might for the loss of a dear friend.

Now for a race to our new formed line in the road leading to the bridge. We made it in safety and found the 3d Division being rapidly sent across to our assistance, for we were in great danger. The 26th Michigan and 81st Pennsylvania were hotly engaged, holding the covered bridge to protect our flank. It was afternoon when the ball opened by a heavy artillery fire from across the Potomac and an infantry attack on our right and on the forming 3d Division. We were largely outnumbered, but able to hold the enemy in check for a while. But it was necessary to withdraw across the river, a dangerous feat to attempt in the face of a superior army. Three regiments of our brigade are withdrawn to the high bank above our pontoon bridge, while regiment after regiment is cautiously withdrawn from the front, and under cover of the bank defiles across the river. Now the two regiments at the covered bridge are brought up to cross. But fortune seems to be against us, and it looks as if our little force must be overwhelmed, for a long line of battle emerges from the road we first formed on, and with steady strides advances across the open field in our front. It is a splendid line, with colors flying and an alignment as if on parade. If they are bold and do not hesitate we are lost. It was with mingled feelings of admiration and dread that our little band gazed on that long line of flashing bayonets as it steadily approached. Miles directs that not a gun be fired until the order is given. Soon the line changes step to a double

quick bringing their bayonets to a charge. All is still for a moment, then the order to fire rings out on the air, and our muskets answer with a volley which seem fired from one great gun. The line wavers, is broken, and lies down to escape the rapid fire at will, which now assails it. The enemy's hesitation has insured our safety, for while they hesitate we are rapidly withdrawing across the river. McKeen and myself cross last, the bridge being cut away from the bank we had just left, and swinging across to the other shore with the current as we crossed. We were saved and our enemy was disappointed. While we had been thus engaged we could see from our last position a charging column of the 6th Corps gallantly carry the point of its attack, and the sight infused courage into the hearts of the weary and worried brigade, and they gave expression to their joy and admiration for their comrades valor in repeated and ringing cheers.

Our division was now reformed on nearly the position we first occupied before crossing the Po, and formed the extreme right of the army. So far was our right refused that it faced nearly to the west, the general line of our army being faced towards the east. At dark another assaulting column moved upon us, but did us little harm and soon retired. Such was the battle of the Po. Our attempt to flank the enemy had failed, as had also his attempt to flank and destroy us. All that night was spent in working on the intrenchments, one half sleeping while the other worked.

The first light of the 11th found us under arms awaiting an attack. All our fighting thus far had been without breastworks, protected only at times by natural ridges and slight piles of rails, so the idea of being attacked in earthwork intrenchments was rather pleasant, by way of contrast, and we really felt discontented as the morning wore away without the expected assault. This indicated an abandonment by the enemy of attempts on this part of the line, and our brigade was divided into two reconnoitering parties. Three regiments were pushed across the Po by wading, and the other two were sent back on



the road to Todd's Tavern. Accompanying the first, we found a small force occupying our last position of the preceding day, but drove them on the run down to and across the covered bridge, where they re-formed and prevented our passage. Their firing told the story that no other force was there, and that that part of the enemy's lines was abandoned, and we returned.

Then I was sent to find our regiments which had gone to Todd's with instructions to push them out and feel the way as far as Corbyn's bridge; to return if we found no enemy in force. We moved out from Todd's to our Sunday's battlefield, and learned that no enemy had been there since Sunday, so we buried our dead, who had been slightly covered with earth where they fell, and marked their graves with pieces of the cracker boxes we had abandoned while forming for the fight, on which were penciled the names and regiments of our fallen heroes, whom we were leaving to their peaceful slumbers while we returned to our post in the lines drawn about Spottsylvania.

It was on this day that Grant sent to Washington that historic dispatch, ending: "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer."

It was the first news the country had heard from the Army of the Potomac since it crossed the Rapidan, and many yet living may remember how the heart of the nation was thrilled and encouraged by the glad tidings and splendid promise.

It was dark when we arrived at our post, looking forward to a good night's rest, and all who could, supped quickly and went to sleep. Miles had been called to a council of war, and we of his staff had arranged a shelter from the rain which had commenced falling, by laying the ends of some rails upon the breast-works and stretching some blankets across them, and were preparing for sleep, when at 9 o'clock he returned, and dispelled our hopes of rest and pleasant dreams by directing us to see that the brigade was in readiness to move at 11 o'clock promptly.

Our prospects for the night seemed dismal enough. Our orders were to march in silence, keeping well closed up to pre-



vent separation, and the cups were ordered to be carried where they could not rattle against the bayonets.

This was all we knew of the dangers of our night march, but it was enough to excite the liveliest apprehensions. All that dreary night we wearily plodded on, sometimes in narrow wood roads, sometimes picking our way through fallen timber, or bushy woods, drenched to the skin, until at last we passed through a gap made in the intrenchments of the 6th Corps, where cautions were again given and complete silence enjoined. This was strictly obeyed, for we knew we were now passing the near front of a watchful and adroit enemy.

Just before dawn of May 12 we were halted in an open field in the valley in front of Brown's house, and without any time for rest were rapidly formed into an assaulting column.

The 3d Division (Birney's) was on our right in two lines. The 4th Division (Mott's) supported his right, while the 2d (Gibbons') was held in reserve. We thus formed a huge sledge hammer, of which our division was the head, Birney's the handle. When the blow should be struck it would either shatter us, or give us a dearly bought success. The very formation was an assurance of bloody, terrible work.

Brown's house was Grant's and Meade's headquarters, and there, they were surrounded by all the corps commanders, who with their respective staffs and escorts formed a numerous and brilliant retinue. The artillery was also being rapidly massed and posted on the elevation below which we were forming. From Brown's a line had been taken the day before, to McCool's house, known to be within the salient, and our charge was directed by the compass upon that line.

In front of us was a long, open slope up a hill nearly clear, but in places covered with a thicket of young pines. On the summit, 1,200 yards from our front was the supposed-to-be confederate intrenchments we were to assault, a strong line of earthworks backed by logs, and with a log parapet, protected in front by a strong abattis, or slashing of felled trees; but all invisible as yet in the gray darkness of approaching dawn. All of us were dismounted, and our horses left behind.

At half past 4 we started up the slope with silent but rapid tread. We reach the crest to find a mistake has been made and there is another valley and another slope to climb, and our premature cheers have awakened the foe. We sweep in their picket line, capturing nearly every man. We are fired on by the reserve picket, but drive it in. Enthusiasm can no longer be controlled. The arms had been carried at a "right shoulder shift." Now, they are brought to a "charge," and the charging column, with cheers which might almost wake the dead, and were omens of victory, breaks into a double quick.

We see the frowning earthworks in our front lined with the now thoroughly aroused enemy whose every eye was taking deadly aim over the long line of glittering muskets resting beneath the log which crowned the rampart. We tear away or crawl through the abattis. The first line seems to melt before the terrific volley which salutes us.

Gallant Col. Seviars of the 26th is among the first to fall shot through the breast, but still living. A dear friend crosses over to my side, and begins to speak, but his sentence is finished in eternity, for he falls with the words half uttered, shot through the head. They fall too fast to notice who is gone, but the places of the stricken ones are filled at once, and the mad mass surges on, over the intrenchments, in a resistless, terrible wave which sweeps all before it. Here a savage hand-to-hand conflict ensues, between men maddened with the battle fury, so that they fight with muskets clubbed, with bayonets, and with swords. Our onset is too strong for resistance, and we sweep in Gen. Ed. Johnson with four thousand men and thirty stands of colors. As we press on, a park of artillery is encountered. The brave artillerists sullenly stand by their guns, fighting to save them, with rammers used as clubs, and every weapon in their reach; and many of the gallant fellows are slain at their guns, disdaining to surrender. Onward sweeps the resistless mass, with cheers and yells of exultation, sending twenty-five cannon to the rear, as further trophies of its valor. We reach an open space where the houses of Spottsylvania can be seen,

and louder grow the exulting cheers. But, there is a lion in our path; Lee is massing all his army in a second line of works, and as we strike that, the hammer rebounds. A deadly, continuous blaze of musketry and a raking fire of artillery check our further advance. Still, if fresh troops, full of ardor, could now take the place of our broken and disorganized mass, it may yet accomplish the work. None come, however, and we labor to reorganize our broken and shattered column in line to hold the position we have reached. We have no regimental or company organizations left, but a disorganized and shattered line devoid of organization.

The confederates pour out over their intrenchments, and drive us back. Again we advance, and again are compelled to retire, but do it fighting the way stubbornly inch by inch. At last we have fallen back in successively advancing and receding waves, until we form again on the outside of the breastworks we had so fairly and yet so dearly won.

Behind them, or rather, in front, we can breathe again, holding this line until fresh troops can be sent up. Column after column attempts to charge beyond the line, but none succeed in passing beyond us. There is a point in battle beyond which flesh and blood cannot pass, and we had found that point. The "horseshoe" was a-boiling, bubbling and hissing caldron of death. Lee's Army was hurled against us as we lay hugging the slope of the earthwork, loading and firing at will, in five successive waves, in his effort to retake this, the key to his position, but our fire was too hot, and the waves of gray were successively beaten back, with terrible loss. Once a few hundred with a stand of colors, in their furious charge, reached the inside of the works. To advance was impossible, to retreat was death, for in the great struggle that raged there, there were few merely wounded. The bullets sang like swarming bees, and their sting was death. As a charge would be made we would rise to our feet to meet the shock. Clubbed muskets, and bayonets were the modes of fighting for those who had used up their cartridges, and frenzy seemed to possess the yelling,

demoniac hordes on either side, as soft-voiced, tender-hearted men in camp, sought, like wild beasts, to destroy their fellow men.

The dead were piled in swaths and winrows, both outside and inside the line of works. Outside, the harvest was of blue—inside, of mingled blue and gray—peaceful enough as they lay there, unmindful of the pitiless storm which rages round them.

The living outside of the breastworks, and they inside, are not so quiet, for they try to prod each other with bayonets, and if a hand is raised, a hundred bullets assail it. Once the rebel colors floated out with the wind, until it could be grasped by one of our boys. The brave color bearer rose to his feet clinging to the staff. Our brave boy also rises clinging to the flag, and with disengaged hands they seek to grasp each others throats, in a deadly struggle for the flag. Thus they stand over the very rampart, both determined to win the flag. By common consent the firing ceases at that point, and both sides eagerly watch and encourage the fray. Finally the flag is torn from its staff, and its proud captor, with a shattered arm, is hailed with shouts of applause. I wish I knew his name, that I might hand it down to the future, to be honored in history.

All that forenoon the battle raged thus fiercely over that small space, where the musketry fire was so hot and fierce, that the ground was bared of bushes, as with a scythe, and a white oak tree, twenty-two inches in diameter, was cut down wholly by bullets. Its stump was exhibited at the Centennial, and is now in the Ordnance Museum at Washington.

The ground drank its fill of blood, and grew slippery to the foot. Fresh troops from the other corps were continually being pushed up to the salient, in vain endeavors to make a new assault upon the enemy's line within. But the heaps of dead—the pools of blood, and the terrific volleys of musketry, were too much for man's endurance. To advance was impossible—to hold our position—was *grand*.

I have heard that blood-drenched, bullet-swept angle, called "Hell's Half Acre." It is now "God's Acre," forever conse-

crated as holy ground, where lie in the calm sleep which follows the delirium of war, the thousands of known and unknown heroes who fell there, the Northman and the Southron alike unmindful of the storm of passion which divided them in life, but united them in death. There they lie.

" Under the sod and the dew,  
Waiting the judgment day ;  
Under the roses the Blue,  
Under the lilies the Gray."

About noon the shattered remnants of our division were moved into the pine woods at our left to reorganize, for the line holding the horseshoe was composed of men from nearly every regiment in the army, demoralized and without organization. It was a sad endeavor, for our division line, when reformed, was no larger than a small regimental line. None knew the fate of the absent, whether dead or wounded, or only separated from us by chance ; only we knew that many a loved comrade was there among the heaps of dead, and many more among the wounded. We were weary, hungry and wet, for heavy thunder showers of the morning had settled down into a steady, drenching rain, but there was no time to murmur, for we were needed in the trenches, and soon we are back in that angle of death, but with a new supply of ammunition. Added to the terrific rolls of musketry firing, and the thunder of Heaven's artillery, was the deep voiced thunder of those dogs of war, the reserve artillery. The shells shrieked and screamed over our heads, and each shell seemed to shriek, "its you, its you," as it flew on its errand of death. We were reminded of Schiller's battle poem :

" See the smoke, how the lightning is cleaving asunder !  
Hark ! the guns, peal on peal, how they boom in their thunder !  
The war is waging, slaughter raging,  
And heavy through the reeking pall,  
The iron death dice fall.

To the right, to the left, and around and around,  
Death whirls in its dance on the bloody ground.  
God's sunlight is quenched in the fiery fight—

Over the host falls a brooding night.  
 The dead men are bathed in the weltering blood,  
 And the living are blent in the slippery flood,  
 And the feet as they reeling and sliding go,  
 Stumble still on the corpse that sleeps below.  
 Closed is the brunt of the glorious fight,  
 And the day, like a conqueror, bursts on the sight.  
 Farewell, fallen brothers, though this life be o'er,  
 There's another, in which we shall meet you once more."

Oh ! how often we wished that night would come as we spent that terrible day in making and repulsing attacks, and how long the day not only seemed, but actually was. At last night came, but still the battle raged, though less fiercely. The assaults along the line are over, and some can hold the line while others rest. Rations are brought up and we hasten to refresh the inner man, for now we have time to remember that we have fasted since last night's supper. Fires are lighted to boil the cups of coffee, but as soon as our forms are outlined by the flames, showers of bullets come to warn us that our enemy is still vengefully seeking our lives. We could lie down and let the coffee boil, but orders came to put out the fires so as not to draw the enemy's fire. Our mess consisted of five officers, half savage from hunger, and more than half savage from having been targets all that livelong day, and we hesitated about obeying the order until our coffee should boil, when, as if to punish us for disobedience, ping ! went a bullet through the cup, spilling the coffee and putting out the fire. To say the five were mad, hardly does justice to the facts : words such as are said to have been used in Flanders fell from the lips of the disheartened hungry mess. I trust the recording angel shut his ears and failed to record them. It seemed a disappointment almost too great to endure. We rallied soon, however, when one of our orderlies, thoughtful for our comfort, came up the hill bearing two steaming cups of coffee for our use. This was about 11 P. M., and in our hungry and weary condition, the coffee seemed a nectar fit for the gods ; and the hard tack, better and sweeter—after we shook the worms and bugs out of it—than any dish with a French name I have since eaten.



A strange scene it would have seemed to a novice as those five messmates reclined upon the ground that night discussing coffee and "hard tack" and the events of the day, the group only partially lit up by the few remaining embers of our little fire, blown to life again. Blood-stained and begrimed with powder and dirt were they all. Some had lost their hats and wore handkerchiefs æsthetically turbaned round their heads. One had his arm in a sling.<sup>1</sup> Another his knee tightly bandaged with a handkerchief reddened with his blood, a bullet having flattened on his knee.<sup>2</sup> Another could show where a bullet had struck his belt plate and left a black and blue spot under it, and nearly all had bullet holes in hats or clothing. Some grim jokes were passed, but no stories were told nor songs sung that night, for we were thinking of lost comrades and of the morrow.

We had lost one of our messmates in the Wilderness, and our little group was soon to be more rudely broken. Two weeks later one was shot through the body at Totopotomoy.<sup>2</sup> Five days later brave McKeen dies gloriously on the bloody field of Cold Harbor; and soon, gallant, boyish Hallenbeck succumbs exhausted, and in a few days dies in the delirium of fever brought on by overwork, exposure and want of sleep. Thus in thirty days but two were left of the six messmates who crossed the Rapidan so gaily on that fateful night march.

If we slept at all that night it was to be often waked by the volleys of musketry rolling too close to us, and we would sullenly rise to our feet and sleepily sink to the ground again as the danger passed away. Our misery was increased by a chilly, soaking rain, and while we counted the slowly passing hours of that dismal, dreary night upon that dismal field, the din of the battle was ever in our ears, and in the early dawn we were thoroughly wakened by the sudden roar of a hundred pieces of artillery.

Under their fire a squad from our brigade volunteered to bring off two guns left in the salient, and succeeded, only to find them

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1. Capt. H. A. Mattison.

2. Robertson.

unfit for service, the wheels being destroyed by numberless bullets. The skirmish over these guns was the only fighting in our front that day.

The great battle of Spottsylvania was over. Our loss was about 26,000,\* the confederate loss about one-third as great. From the Wilderness to Spottsylvania, seven days in time, 84,598 men on both sides had fallen, and our work was not yet done.

The next two days and nights we were moved from point to point in tentative or defensive efforts, always within hearing and reach of whizzing bullets or screeching shells, until we had changed from the extreme right to the extreme left of the lines, and were facing the opposite direction.

By another weary night march we found ourselves at day break of the 18th back to our battlefield of the 12th, and formed in two lines of battle for another assault. The new confederate line was intrenched across the "horseshoe" and was protected by a strong abattis, and, as we moved steadily forward we were met by such a volley from the front and such raking with grape and shrapnel from the flank that advance was impossible, and retreat too dangerous, so we were compelled to lie down among the heaps of unburied dead which made the air fetid and sickening, and listen to the shrieking of shells as they flew back and forth over our heads for hours. About noon a lull in the firing enabled us to withdraw to the trenches.

At 10 that evening we marched back to our position on the left, deafened by all day's thunder of artillery and weary and sore from the march and struggle of the day. On the march we witnessed a sight worth a day's battle and a midnight march to see. It was raining, and shortly after midnight the moon shone through a rift in the clouds, clearly outlining on the opposite clouds a beautiful rainbow. The wearied and drooping soldiers looked upon it as a bow of promise and greeted it with cheers that made the gloomy forest ring.

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(\*Phisterer's Statistical Record.)

During these days of battle Gen. Barlow had been annoyed and angered by the constant skulking of some of the men in his command, and determined to use heroic treatment to cure the disease, and to punish some, as an example to others.

So, while we lay under the fire of the enemy's guns on the 18th, he decided upon a court martial, and sent orders to the commanding officers of all companies to at once formulate and prefer charges against all members of their commands who had been guilty of cowardly conduct.

The court martial was organized on the spot, with myself judge advocate, and our court was immediately opened for trials. Just imagine, if you can, a court sitting for the trial of men for their lives, when the life of each member of the court was not worth a moment's purchase! In all our intervals of rest from active fighting and marching, that court was kept in session, inflicting a number of minor sentences, until the 21st of May, when the court fulfilled the stern ideas of justice entertained by our commanding general, by the following judgment upon an unlucky wight who had deserted in the face of the enemy: "And the court do hereby sentence him, the said Albert Bohler, private Company K., 39th New York Volunteers, to be shot to death by musketry at such time and place as the commanding general may direct, two-thirds of the court concurring therein."

I believe, however, that poor Bohler escaped being shot, for at that time death sentence had to be approved by the President, and, it is said, he never approved such sentences but commuted them to some other form of punishment. Perhaps our hero still lives to enjoy the honors the people accord so freely to the soldier, and a pension of the highest grade.

On the 19th Ewell made his famous attempt to cut us off from the Fredericksburg pike, which brought him almost into the headquarters of Grant, swallowing the field hospitals, paroling as prisoners of war our wounded and the attending surgeons.

Some new heavy artillery regiments were in his way, and we were ordered up to their aid at double quick, Grant directing the movement in person, and Ewell's triumphant advance was

checked and his plans abandoned when he felt the stinging volleys of our thoroughly roused and determined army. With these movements ended the attempt to break the enemy's lines at Spottsylvania, and our next order was to be again "by the left flank—March!" Fourteen weary days and fourteen weary nights of bloody fighting and sleepless marching had exhausted the army. It was stunned and dazed by the blows it had given and received, and it fairly trembled and staggered with weakness from its fatigue and losses.

#### FROM SPOTTSYLVANIA ONWARD.

The tactical movements which kept the Army of the Potomac briskly marching, countermarching and fighting about the entrenchments of Spottsylvania for nearly a week after the great battle of May 12th, 1864, had apparently demonstrated the futility of further attempts to break the well-defended lines of our vigilant enemy. The cost would be too great, and a new movement by the left flank was under contemplation.

As usual, the actual movement was foreshadowed by many rumors, by which, diversified as they were, the 2d corps came to understand that it was selected for a dangerous enterprise, the nature of which was unknown, but the rumors gave rise to much curiosity and some apprehension. About dark of May 20th, 1864, orders were received to march at 11, only the 2d corps being included in the marching orders. Promptly at the hour specified we took the road. It was a beautiful moonlit night, and the tedium of a night march when sleep was much needed was somewhat relieved as we reflected that during the day the heat and dust would have been almost intolerable.

It was a rapid march until 2 P. M. of the following day, through a country not before disturbed by marching troops, and great was the astonishment and dismay pictured on the faces of the people as we marched, with flags flying, and to the music of fife and drum, through Guinness Station and Bowling Green, and as great was the astonishment of the fowls, which, in the piping times of peace, had not learned the necessity of roosting high in stirring times of war.

Reaching Milford, where the Fredericksburg & Richmond railroad crosses the Mattaponi, we found the enemy's pickets on the other bank. The advance was pushed over the river by wading in the water to their arm-pits, holding ammunition, haversacks and muskets over their heads. The rebels, (they were but few) stood not upon the order of their going, but went at once, and the corps was rapidly thrown across the partly dismantled bridge, and formed upon the high banks, where we were at once set to work intrenching. Towards evening a small cavalry force reconnoitered our position and attacked our picket line, but was quickly repulsed. We now had time to discover that our corps was isolated from the remainder of the army some twenty miles in rear of Lee's position at Spottsylvania, and that there was every reason to expect that Lee would hurl against us his whole force as soon as our isolated position became known.

The following day, though Sunday, brought us no rest, for the work of intrenching was continued until formidable earthworks frowned upon the horizon in every direction, giving courage to the men, who momentarily expected to be attacked. But our labors were to prove futile, for, as we rested from our work, and, in the evening twilight, discussed our varied and palatable bill of fare, we learned that Lee had retreated, by another route, towards Hanover Junction, and that the rest of the army was in rapid pursuit. Our own instructions were, to be ready to move whenever ordered, so that night we slept upon our arms in marching order, but, happily for the weary men, it was morning of the 23d before we started on a rapid march, through heat and dust, with no more than absolutely necessary halts, towards the North Anna, which we reached at 3 P. M., to find that Lee's rear had just crossed, leaving a small force in a *tete du pont*, covering the turnpike bridge.

The head of our column formed at once and kept up a rapid exchange of volleys with this force until the corps had closed up, about 6 P. M., when the 2d Brigade of Birney's Division was formed for an assault, and after a sharp fight, carried the position. one regiment, the 93d New York Volunteers, following the

flying rebels nearly to the other side of the river before the order for recall could reach it. An act of individual heroism occurring here is deserving of mention. In returning to the north bank the color-bearer of the 93d fell wounded, and with the colors was left unnoticed in the centre of the bridge. When the loss was discovered Lieut. Wm. Ball, of Company "K," braved the musketry fire which was centered on the bridge and coolly brought off the colors, but paid for his devotion to the flag by receiving a ball which shattered his ankle. The color-bearer was not rescued until later.

Volleys were exchanged across the river until late, and a heavy picket fire was kept up far into the night, but that failed to disturb the slumbers of those who had endured the burden of the matching and fighting of the day.

On the morning of the 24th the sun rose like a disc of molten brass, presaging a day of terrible heat, and making us long for shelter from its rays. But it was not long before we were to wish for shelter from something hotter yet, for our brigade (the 1st) was pushed across Jericho bridge to the south bank of the river, on the right of the Richmond Railroad, to seize and hold a position which should enable a pontoon bridge to be laid to facilitate the crossing of a greater force, which was soon accomplished. Three of our regiments were deployed as skirmishers on the right of the telegraph road, and advanced skirmishing till we found the enemy strongly intrenched behind earth works. Nothing but the inequalities of the surface furnished us any protection from the heavy fire we drew, and we were compelled to lie prone and hug the ground under a hot sun and a hot musketry fire until about 3 P. M., when we were withdrawn a little to the rear, and to the left of the railroad, where we enjoyed more protection from the enemy's volleys. Gibbons' division had been pushed to the front and was heavily engaged, and just before dark a heavy line of infantry moved from the works upon him. We were advanced to his support and were almost immediately thrown into the front, dealing and receiving heavy blows. In the thickest of the fight a heavy thunder storm arose, the



heavens seemed to open and sheets of water poured down, not only putting an end to the fight, but completely veiling the contending forces from each other, although but a few rods apart on an open field. Before the flood ceased falling, the enemy's line had disappeared, and the darkness of night had come upon us. Our drenched and wearied soldiers sought the driest spots the ground afforded and were soon at rest. We lost some fifty in killed and wounded from our little and rapidly waning brigade.

The day following we were busily engaged in destroying the railroad bridge and the track on both sides of the river. The rails and ties were torn up, heaps made of the ties, upon which were laid the rails, and the heaps fired. The rails when heated red were seized by the men and twisted around trees like neck-ties, rendering them more ornamental than useful.

Little of interest occurred until the afternoon of the 26th, when we were attacked by a strong line issuing from the rebel earthworks, and had an hour's brisk engagement before the enemy was repulsed. Later they made a similar attempt on Gibbons' line to our right, which was only ended by the darkness of night.

Soon we were ordered to detail two regiments to throw up intrenchments on the north side of the river, to which we were to withdraw some time during the night, the remainder of our brigade being left to hold the advanced line south of the river until all the rest had crossed. At midnight our line was abandoned and we crossed, taking up the pontoons and forming in the new line, our retreat being closely followed by a heavy picket line of the enemy, which made things lively for us with their whizzing, spattering bullets, both before and after our crossing.

During the morning of the 27th we destroyed nearly thirteen miles of the railroad, and at 11 A. M. started on another flank movement, via Concord Church to a point some miles north of Nelson's Ford on the Pamunkey River, which we reached for bivouac a little after midnight, after a weary march under a hot sun and in sultry showers.

On the 28th we made an early start, crossing the Pamunkey at noon without opposition, and taking a position near Hanover-town. Late in the afternoon, our brigade received orders to move as rapidly as possible to the support of Sheridan's Cavalry reported to be engaged with Ewell's Infantry, a mile in front.

Riding in advance to report our approach, I found numerous evidences of fighting having occurred at various points, and at last found Sheridan's flag in a fence corner, where a group of officers, most of them in their shirt sleeves, were discussing some boiled chicken served in a large tin pail. Asking for Gen. Sheridan, a little man holding a chicken leg, responded, "I am your man, what is wanted?" Reporting that Miles' Infantry Brigade was on its way to support him, he jovially replied, "Glad to see you, with that news, get down and have some chicken." Such an invitation at such a time, could not be refused. That impromptu dinner, gave me the first glimpse of the real character of one who was already famous, and whose name is now enrolled as one of the nation's greatest and most lamented heroes.

The cavalry had been fighting inch by inch dismounted, had driven the enemy some miles, and was now lying behind the scant shelter afforded by a demolished rail fence on the other side of the field. When our brigade came up, we relieved them and at once commenced the work of intrenching against the heavy force known to be in our front, which consisted of Ewell's Division at least. We were making ourselves as comfortable as possible for the night, when we received orders to march back to our position on the Pamunkey.

The next day, (29th) being Sunday, one of our chaplains proposed the novelty of holding divine service, and the brigade was assembled for that purpose. Hardly had the first prayers ended, when marching orders came, and the beat of the drum took the place of a hymn of praise as we quickly formed. Instead of a march by the flank, the whole brigade, with the exception of the color companies of each regiment was deployed in a skirmish line nearly a mile in length, with its center on the road leading

to Atlee's station which is only a few miles from Richmond. The color companies formed a short line of battle in the rear, also preserving its center on the road, and thus we pressed forward. At a fork in the road some mounted videttes were seen, but they seemed not to desire our acquaintance and disappeared. On reaching the Shelton house, a fine southern mansion situated on and overlooking Totopotomy creek, our skirmish line came under fire from the enemy's skirmish line posted on the opposite bank, and was halted. Several of us dismounted, and passed through the spacious hall to the rear of the house, to discover if possible, the position and strength of the enemy. We found a long line of infantry resting with arms stacked in front of the woods and in full view. Our approach put an end to the resting spell, and the line was quickly formed and retired into the woods, leaving a picket line in rifle pits along the bank in their front.

While we were taking in the situation our attention was attracted by the wails of women and children, to the family, whose house we had invaded, consisting of the matronly Mrs. Shelton, her three daughters, one of whom was married, and some children and servants, all of whom had fled for refuge to the basement, and were now grouped terror-stricken, in the area way below the porch we occupied.

It was a scene which compelled sympathy, and awakened all the humanity in our natures. The young mother with eyes filled with tears held out a bright and smiling babe saying, "You will not harm my little darling will you?" I took the baby, kissed and fondled it for a moment, and handed it carefully to the somewhat reassured, but still doubting mother, and, with the assurance that we made no war on women and children, urged them to go back out of danger, as occasional shots were spattering against the side of the house.

From them we learned that Breckenridge's Division was in our front, that Mr. Shelton who knew the general, had gone to ask protection for his family, shortly before our arrival on the scene, and of course, he was unable to return and rejoin his

wife, daughters and grandchild, who were now filled with the utmost apprehensions, but refused peremptorily to accept our offer to escort them to some place of safety, in our rear. We carried beds and other necessities for their comfort into the basement, and barricaded the windows with logs, completing a fair extempore fortification for the beleaguered family, which now began to look upon us as friends and defenders, instead of enemies. Soon batteries were unmasked in the edge of the woods, and a few shells were thrown, but without much damage to us, and a continuous firing was kept up between the picket lines and intrenching parties till darkness put an end to it. Some darkies, not realizing the danger, attempted to drive up the cows from the bottom lands at milking time, and their bewilderment as they listened to the music of the minnies, and their abject fright when the fact dawned upon them that they were being fired at, would have been comical had it not been so pathetic. On going to the basement to look after the welfare of our new found friends, Mrs. Shelton, with true southern hospitality offered to prepare supper for our staff if we were content to accept what she had, and expressed regret for the absence of tea, coffee and sugar. Sincere was her pleasure when we accepted the invitation and produced from our haversacks, a supply of these luxuries. The garden had not suffered much as yet, and we gathered strawberries, the cows having come up from the bottoms were milked, and we enjoyed heartily a dinner *en famille*, prepared by fair hands and graced by the presence of cultivated ladies, the table covered with snowy linen and other garnishments to which we had long been unaccustomed. It was a bright bit of green in the desert of war, and memory will long linger over, and often revert to an occasion, in which real pleasure and real apprehensions were so equally proportioned. The dinner and after visit being over, we saw the family placed as comfortably as possible and withdrew to the shelter of the trees for the night.

We were out and in line at daylight of the 30th, and discovered a line of intrenchments, which had been thrown up in the night,

in the margin of the woods in front of us, not 500 yards away. We could almost look into the mouths of several field pieces in position, and protected by lunettes.

Having but a thin skirmish line on our side, we had thrown up but light intrenchments, but this looked as if serious work was before us, and we now commenced intrenching in earnest. The remainder of the corps was brought up and formed in two lines a short distance in our rear, and several Cohorn Mortars quickly placed in position some distance to the left of the house, with Arnold's battery, which was brought up on the run. A rapid fire was kept up from the enemy's picket line, annoying and endangering the entrenching parties, and soon we were further annoyed by shots from the batteries, but our little Cohorns did effective work in temporarily silencing the guns, and the work was rapidly proceeded with. Gens. Hancock and Barlow, with several members of their respective staffs, came up to inspect the position, and, with us, proceeded to the spot where the Cohorns were being operated, and, standing a little in rear of them, presented a tempting target to the enemy's artillery men, who suddenly opened fire. One of the shells struck the top of the embankment and exploded, the fragments and contents whizzing amidst the group, covering all with dirt, but, fortunately and strangely, injuring no one, though it put an end to our curiosity in that direction.

Now several guns of the other side were turned upon the house, and shells and solid shot went tearing through it, but fortunately for the family, the range was above this floor and none struck as low as the basement, where they were sheltered. One shell exploded in the "best room," shattering everything breakable, and tearing into shreds the silk curtains of an old-fashioned canopied bed, but without setting it on fire. The women and children down stairs were completely unnerved by fright, and were alternately shrieking and praying. Their position was indeed a trying one, entitling them to the warmest sympathy and protection, as far as it could be given. We made occasional visits to the basement windows and attempted to

reassure them, while we ourselves were filled with the keenest apprehensions for their safety, and vainly urged them to remove, under escort, to a place of safety in the rear, for a slight depression of the enemy's guns might cause an explosion in their midst, as had happened in the room overhead.

Towards evening, Ames' battery came dashing up, was quickly unlimbered and thrown into position some distance to the left of Arnold's, and a brisk cannonade from both soon drew the fire from the house, and relieved the situation a little of its horrors, and a brisk artillery duel was kept up until most of the enemy's guns were silenced.

In this engagement, Lient. Hunt, of Ames' battery, had his heel torn off by a fragment of shell. Being carried to the porch of the Shelton house, he narrowly escaped being crushed by the falling of a pillar knocked out of place by one of the enemy's shots. Little mattered it to him, brave, dying soldier, for tetanus set in, and he was soon among the gallant dead.

We had wondered at the time of the battle why the fire of the enemy's guns was so savagely centered upon the house. Mr. Shelton informed me that when we occupied the bank of the creek he wished to return to his family, but was not permitted to do so, and was detained at Gen. Breckinridge's headquarters. That when the shelling commenced he begged that the guns might not be turned upon the house, but Breckinridge assured him that the family must have gone to the rear, that we were using the house for an observation tower, and also for a shelter behind which to mass troops, and that we must be shelled out of that position. Thus he was compelled to witness the bombardment his family endured from the guns of his friends, while he was helpless to stay it.

Our intrenched line ran along the edge of the bank of the ravine, and a row of slave cabins stood in the rear of it and to the left of the house. Some of the artillery caissons were by the cabins to be convenient to the guns and yet concealed from the enemy by the cabins, from which it was thought all

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NOTE—The writer visited the Shelton family in the autumn of 1865, and was received most kindly and hospitably.



the negroes had fled. In the very midst of the cannonading an old black granny came out of a cabin and innocently emptied a pan of hot ashes into a dismounted limber chest, and an explosion followed, demoralizing caisson and cabin, and killing and wounding several of the artillerists and infantry men near it. Will some one ask what became of the old woman? We never learned. She disappeared with the cabin.\*

All day long we had to endure the danger of exploding shells, and the short range fire of the skirmish line, and just before dark were ordered to move forward to attack the enemy, and were forming for the charge, when Hancock, who had come to the front in person, countermanded the order.

That evening the 2d New York Heavy Artillery, lately from the defences at Washington, commanded by Col. J. N. G. Whistler, was assigned to our brigade and placed in position on its left. Its line was longer than that of the five regiments we already had, and it was divided into three battalions to make it more nearly correspond with them in our future maneuvers. To myself fell the duty of seeing that it properly intrenched itself, which, with other duties, occupied most of the night and gave little opportunity for rest, something we much desired, not only because we were nearly worn out, but because we felt that hot work awaited us in the morning.

When the first streaks of dawn appeared we were put to work still further to strengthen our defenses by an abattis of felled trees, and many a shot whizzed uncomfortably near us as we went from place to place along the line superintending the work. A heavy mail, the first we had received since leaving the lines at Spottsylvania, made glad the hearts of many. To some it brought messages of love from anxious hearts at home, to some promotion; to Miles his brigadier's commission, and we read and discussed the letters and papers amidst a continuous fire of the sharpshooters. A large group of officers was gathered at the Shelton house awaiting the baskets containing our breakfast, and wondering what the day would bring forth. The

\*Gen. Walker in his history of the 2d Corps, p. 50, says "an escaped negro, and aide," in the army it always was the free, doing the mischief who got off safe."

breakfast arrived and was uncovered, but at an unfortunate moment, for the rebel batteries again opened with a furious cannonade, and shot and shell again came tearing through the house, one shell with seeming malice coming out through the wall and casing of a window, almost burying our breakfast in lime, bricks and shattered glass. A few minutes later Capt. McCullough, commanding the 81st Pennsylvania, was mortally wounded by a sharpshooter. The mail had just brought him his commission as major, and we had hardly ceased our congratulations when his call came. At the same time it was reported that the enemy had left his works, and we had orders to fall in for an assault. To me fell the lot of directing the movements of our new regiment, the heavy artillery. This regiment, with the 183d Pennsylvania, was to charge its direct front, while the rest of the brigade was to charge obliquely to the right, making thus two lines of assault, diverging from each other.

The 2d moved finely down the slope to the creek bottom, but there found itself floundering in a bushy marsh of some width while on the sharp bluff on the other side was plainly visible a well-manned breastwork. The marsh and the stream were between us and the enemy's position, and while the men sinking to their middles in the oozy mud were doing their best to push through it, a galling and plunging fire was directed upon them from the rebel line. It was more than new troops could stand, probably more than older troops could be expected to stand. Their colonel ordered them to lie down and conceal themselves as best they could under shelter of the bushes, and begged me to report to Miles that it was utterly impossible to continue the charge in such a morass, under such a murderous fire. Remounting, I rode safely up the hill, and found Miles and Barlow together closely watching the movement. Delivering Col. Whistler's message, Barlow quickly responded: "Go back and tell Col. Whistler there must be no impossibilities; that his regiment must charge the works in his front. Tell him to do it with a yell."

I tried to state my own opinion of the situation, but Barlow refused to listen, and cut me off with: "You are losing valuable time; they must push forward at once." I turned and rode rapidly down that bullet-swept slope. Whiz—zip, sung the minnies in my ears, but there was one that sung not, but meant business. It plunked itself into me.\*

Reeling in the saddle, I had consciousness long enough to kick the stirrups free, and went flying through the air. That message was not delivered; that charge was not made.

It is a strange sensation one has when he finds himself flying, and knows not whither. Towards earth, of course, but maybe into worlds beyond. When consciousness began to return, it seemed as if the most delicious music filled the air, but its symphonies gradually dissolved into the rattle of musketry, the crashing booms of cannon, and the yells of contending men, mingled with the groans of the wounded and dying. My faithful horse stood over me mournfully whinnying and licking my face. Men singly and in groups were rushing by me up the slope hoping to gain a place of safety, numbers of them falling, until the slope was dotted with their writhing or silent forms. Several stopped and tried to rescue me, but every such attempt brought a vengeful volley, and several times I was left to myself, in full sight, and within short range of the enemy's line. At last one of our guns was turned upon that part of the line, and in the lull of their musketry fire, Adj. (later Col.) Church of the 26th Michigan, brought a party to my rescue. Rolling me in a blanket, they dragged and carried me to the breastworks, where a stretcher was waiting to bear me to the ambulance which should in turn carry me to the field hospital.

That ride, the operating table under the trees, the surgeon's probe, and the hours that followed were more like a dreamy rest than anything else until the reaction came with its torturing pangs.

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\*A minnie ball struck me in the front of the right hip, passing through the right ilium and the abdomen, resting under the skin over the left hip, whence it was extracted.

The next day a long procession of ambulances and wagons filled with wounded started for Whitehouse Landing to enable the army to march unimpeded by such impediments, towards its new lines at Cold Harbor.

It is difficult to describe the torture of two days in an ambulance jolting over corn fields and rough corduroy roads under a hot Virginia sun, with suffering on every side, and racking pains inside, with death a constant companion, and often looked at as a welcome relief. It must be experienced to be realized.

Our destination was Whitehouse Landing, not far away as the crow flies, but the enemy held that line, and we were compelled to take a long detour of some forty miles. We had no medical attendance, no assistance of any kind, but what the driver could give us. He would prepare coffee morning and evening, and keep our canteens supplied with water for our wounds, the only dressing they had. At last we reach the Pamunkey, and, while waiting for the railroad bridge to be planked for our crossing, a host of nurses and emissaries of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions surrounded us and vied with each other in giving restoratives, and with tender hands washing the wounds, and with soft voices bringing hope and consolation to the despondent.

Soon we were rocking on the river in the steamers carrying us towards home. The senses that were strained almost to the numbness of death by long and acute suffering, began again to realize and enjoy the sweetness of life, and, lulled to peaceful slumbers, one would revel in dreams, and wake again to enjoy perfect rest and infinite peace, which bring hope and content to the heart of the worn out, wounded soldier, whose face is now set towards the haven of the fireside and the tender care of the loving hearts and hands which await his coming.

Can any one who has partaken of this sacrament of the bloody days of the war neglect to pay a heartfelt tribute to those angels of the battlefield and the hospital, that noble band of heroines, who without hope of rank or fame, hovered close upon the edge of battle to staunch the wounds of the living, and whisper con-

solation to the dying? The army nurse! Heaven's choicest blessings rest upon her everywhere and evermore.

But the end was not yet for the Army of the Potomac, whose subsequent battles have made so grand a page in history. Still the undaunted courage, the determined valor which had sustained it thus far, was not only alive but burning with patriotic fire, and when the announcement was made that its march was still "on to Richmond," that grand old patriot army was ready to say, "lead on." Not the loss of 64,000 brave men, not days and nights of sleepless toil and danger, could shake its faith in final success, for it fought with "bayonets which thought." The army had become a machine, but it was a machine endowed with intellect, and it knew that only by blood and privations could the final glorious victory be attained. It knew that it took more men to storm intrenchments than to hold them when stormed. It knew that the army on the defensive was harder to shatter than the one striking the blow. It knew that its bloody battles of the past had never been fought to full fruition, while now they were. It knew its own temper, and it knew now that its proper leader was found. It knew that under that leadership no more lives were being lost in battles which were leading to success than were lost by disease in the peninsula marshes, or in the fruitless campaigns of Antietam and Gettysburg.\* It knew that our country was worth saving, even at the cost of all this sacrifice, and many there were who were ready—nay, willing, to ride or march gaily on to victory or to death, if Grant were there to point the way.

It had grown to love the grand old flag of our country as only a soldier can love it, and with a love which those who have not experienced, can hardly imagine the strength or volume of.

Torn, riddled or bloody as the old rag may be, to the soldier it is all the more beautiful in its tatters, for it is the emblem of all he loves, with a love that impels him to die, if need be, for the object of his love. I have seen men rush into almost certain death to save the colors from falling into an enemy's hands.

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\*Fruitless, because defensive, not aggressive.



I have seen a shell tear off the arms of a color-bearer, and seen him clasp the bleeding stumps about the flag as he fell, bathing it in his dying blood, leaving the blood-stained relic sacred in his comrades' eyes forever more. I have seen color-bearers shot down and others struggle for the dangerous post of carrying the flag like a sunburst of glory into the jaws of death.

I have a bit of blood-stained silk which is sacred to me, as a part of my own regimental flag, which has been unfurled and proudly floated on twenty battlefields of the rebellion, and under whose folds twenty-two heroic color-bearers were killed and wounded in that single campaign. It is a priceless relic which money cannot buy.

It was of such material that the Army of the Potomac was composed, after it had been thoroughly winnowed by the winds of disease, the hot blasts of battle, and the toil of three years of almost fruitless but bloody campaigns ; and, as an humble participant in all its great campaigns, from the Peninsula until near its last, I trust I may be pardoned for the expression of a belief, that its great privations, weary marches, and bloody battles, entitles it to be ranked along with, if not at the head of the greatest and best armies the world has ever produced, and, that it is entitled to the love and reverence of the nation, to save which it marched and fought through toils, sufferings, privations and blood, on the path of glory towards the grave.

To the survivors of that grand army my heart goes out in brotherhood and love, and to its noble, heroic dead, in deepest reverence and sorrowful remembrance.

" May we meet and greet in closing ranks,  
 In time's declining sun.  
 When the bugles of God shall sound recall,  
 And the battle of life be won."

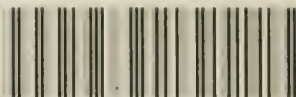








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