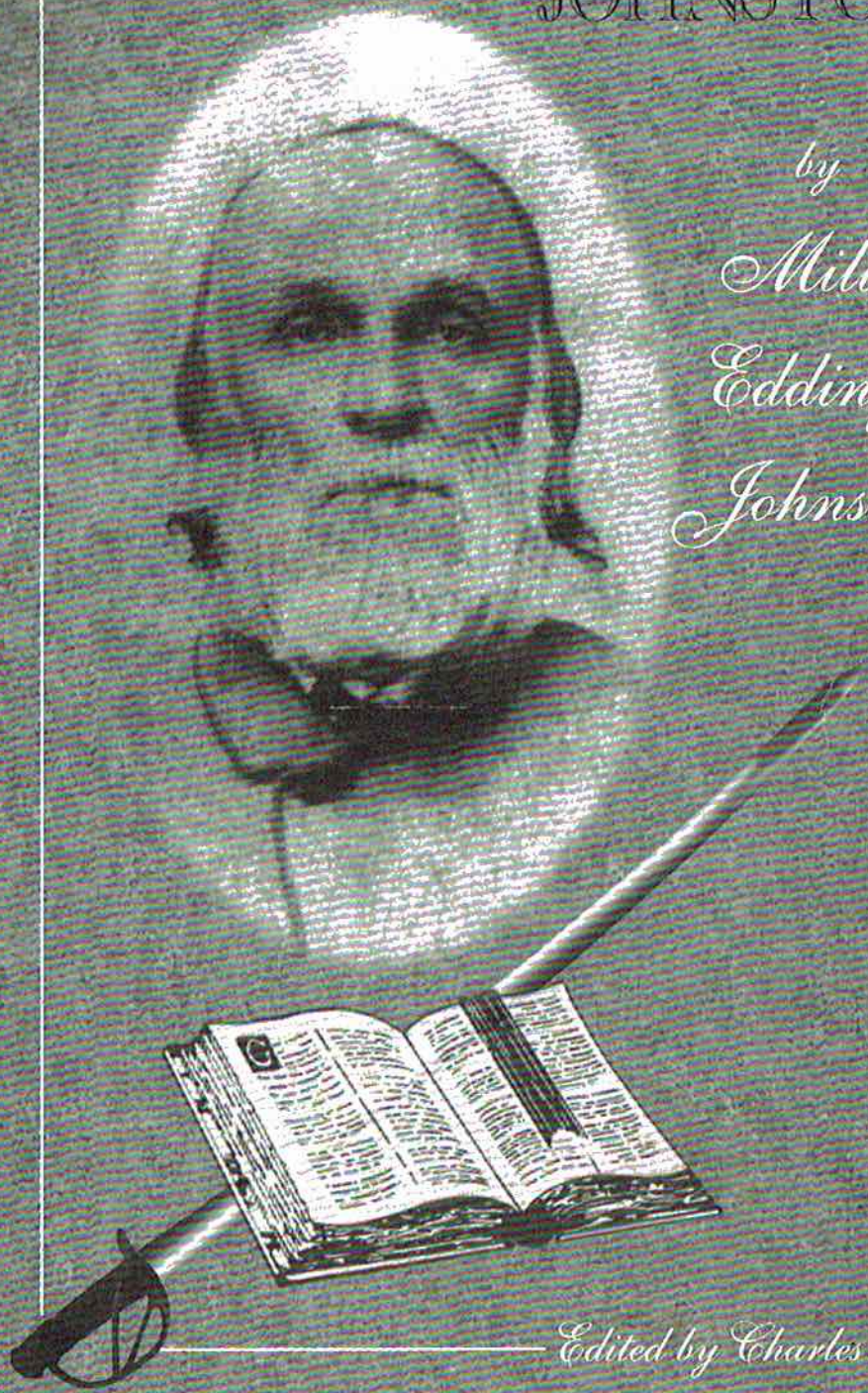
The Sword of BUSHWHACKER JOHNSTON



by

Milus Eddings Johnston

Edited by Charles Rice

The Sword of "Bushwhacker" Johnston

By

Rev. Milus E. Johnston,
late Lt. Col., C.S.A.

Edited and annotated by Charles S. Rice

Including a complete roster of Mead's Battalion, Confederate Cavalry

Flint River Press
Huntsville, Alabama
1998

First Printing 1992
Revised Edition 1998

Library of Congress Number: 92-073577

CONTENTS

Preface to the revised edition

The first printing of *The Sword of 'Bushwhacker' Johnston* in 1992 has become a highly sought after volume. Only 1,000 copies were printed, which in retrospect was not sufficient. Since the demand clearly still exists, the publishers have decided to issue this revised edition of Milus E. Johnston's military memoirs.

This new edition contains the entire text and annotations of the first printing. However, additional notes have been added to several chapters and several corrections were made to reflect information that was not available to the editor in 1992. Additional names have also been added to the muster rolls of Mead's Battalion, making the roster as complete as is presently possible.

Thanks in part to Mr. David Frost of Los Angeles, California, this revised edition is illustrated. The photograph of the Huntsville Hotel and the cartes de visite of Colonel Lemuel G. Mead and Melville Burr Johnston are courtesy of the Heritage Room of the Huntsville Public Library. The portrait of Milus Johnston on the cover and the photograph of Mrs. Mary Hamer were generously provided by Mr. Frost, whose grandfather, James W. Bragg, Sr. of Huntsville, had obtained them from Johnston's family in 1958. They are used courtesy of the James W. Bragg Collection, which is in the possession of Mr. Frost.

The first edition of *The Sword of 'Bushwhacker' Johnston* has already doubled in price on the book collector's market. This revised edition is also limited to 1,000 copies. It has been issued this time in soft cover, due to the numerous requests for such a copy. If you are reading about Johnston's adventures for the first time, we know you will enjoy them. If you are already acquainted with Huntsville's notorious "bushwhacker," we hope you will be pleased with the photographs. Whichever the case may be, enjoy your trip back into America's past. Happy reading!

Flint River Press, 1998

INTRODUCTION

The War Between the States in the northern counties of Alabama is a subject largely ignored by historians. Yet North Alabama was actually an area of considerable importance to both sides during our nation's tragic fraternal war. For the South, the strategic Memphis and Charleston Railroad — the only line linking the eastern Confederacy with the Mississippi — simply had to be held. Conversely, for the North, seizing the railroad and occupying Alabama above the Tennessee river was essential if Chattanooga were to be taken and used as a base for the drive on Atlanta.

The actual fighting in North Alabama would be on a relatively small scale. Nevertheless, the destruction brought about by the conflict is almost unbelievable. By the spring of 1865, virtually every town and village in the counties of Madison and Jackson would have been put to the torch by the invading Union army. Woodville, Larkinsville, Guntersville, Scottsboro, Bellefonte, New Hope, Whitesburg, Paint Rock, Decatur — these and many more Alabama communities learned the meaning of total war. The city of Huntsville — described as one of the loveliest in the South — was spared, but only because it housed the Union army of occupation.

Surprisingly, a rare first-person account of the war in this overlooked theater appeared in print at the beginning of the twentieth century. Lieutenant Colonel Milus Eddings Johnston, a leading figure on the Southern side, published his memoirs in weekly installments in the *Guntersville Democrat* between April and December, 1902. Then Johnston's story was simply forgotten.

Milus Johnston's role in the Civil War is almost a mirror image of the conflict in this region. Like most of the citizens of North Alabama, Johnston opposed secession from the Union. Once war became a reality, however, the residents were caught up in a situation not of their own making. The war finally came to these reluctant Rebels on Friday morning, April 11, 1862, when Union troops led by Brigadier General Ormsby MacKnight Mitchel seized Huntsville and

severed the strategic Memphis & Charleston Railroad. Mitchel quickly sent his men east and west to seize the railroad bridges at both Bridgeport and Decatur. All Alabama north of the Tennessee river was soon under his control.

Mitchel's military occupation lasted less than five months. Nevertheless, it established the policy which the Union army would follow for the remainder of the war. On April 28, 1862, Huntsville's Mrs. Mary Chadick wrote in her diary:

> General Mitchell [sic] has been in a rage all the week on account of the cutting of the telegraph poles and lines, the tearing up of the railroad tracks, firing into trains, and holds the citizens responsible for the same, having had 12 of the most prominent arrested. It is probable that the work of our cavalry has annoyed him excessively, as they are constantly picking off his men.[1]

Four days later, the irate Union general issued a proclamation:

> All these acts will be punished with death, [it said,] if the perpetrators can be found. And if they cannot, I will destroy the property of all who sympathize with the southern rebellion in the neighborhood where these acts are committed.[2]

The attacks Mitchel complained of had been conducted by Frank B. Gurley of Forrest's Cavalry. Gurley, cut off from his unit by the Union advance, had responded by recruiting his own company in the Huntsville area. Nevertheless, innocent civilians would henceforth suffer for the actions of the Confederate army.

Reverend Milus Eddings Johnston, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was just one of the many peaceful citizens who would be driven to fight by the short-sighted retaliatory policy of the Union commanders. Johnston was in charge of the Methodist Church's Fayetteville Circuit, just across the border in Tennessee, when Mitchel's men took the town on their way to Huntsville. Nearly forty years old and the sole support of a large family, Johnston had no desire to take part in the armed struggle. However, when Mitchel arrived in Fayetteville on April 10, 1862, proclaiming martial law, the inoffensive preacher was promptly placed under arrest.

Though he was soon released from custody, Johnston realized he would no longer be allowed to preach as he wished. He decided to sit out the war farming with his father-in-law, Rev. John Hicks Hamer, who lived in southeastern Madison County, Alabama. Four months later, the Union army withdrew. The following year, however, the invaders returned. The brutal policy of retaliation resumed almost at once.

The Union occupiers of 1863 faced greater resistance than had Mitchel's men the year before. Although they soon captured their old nemesis, Captain Frank Gurley, another young officer was proving even more troublesome to the men in blue.

Lemuel G. Mead was a lawyer from the town Paint Rock, in Jackson county, Alabama. Early in the war, Mead had raised an infantry company, the Paint Rock Rifles, which he led into combat at the bloody Battle of Shiloh. Tiring of the boredom of camp life, he had resigned his infantry commission and been authorized to recruit partisan ranger companies inside the Union lines north of the Tennessee river. Mead's rangers were properly mustered into the Confederate army. Nevertheless, their Union opponents refused to recognize them as soldiers and branded them "bushwhackers." Each attack on the Union army by Mead's "bushwhackers" was met by a Union reprisal against helpless Southern civilians.

The Union army had no sooner returned to North Alabama than Johnston's troubles began again. In late 1863 — probably in October or November — Union troops burned his father-in-law's home following an attack by Mead. The two preachers moved their families into several small outbuildings, all that had been saved from the flames. Some weeks later, the horse soldiers returned and destroyed even these poor shelters. The Johnston and Hamer families were made homeless in the midst of the cold months of winter. When the soldiers returned a third time intending to arrest Johnston, their quarry fled. They pursued him, Johnston tells us, for three days and nights. His only offense was

severed the strategic Memphis & Charleston Railroad. Mitchel quickly sent his men east and west to seize the railroad bridges at both Bridgeport and Decatur. All Alabama north of the Tennessee river was soon under his control.

Mitchel's military occupation lasted less than five months. Nevertheless, it established the policy which the Union army would follow for the remainder of the war. On April 28, 1862, Huntsville's Mrs. Mary Chadick wrote in her diary:

> General Mitchell [sic] has been in a rage all the week on account of the cutting of the telegraph poles and lines, the tearing up of the railroad tracks, firing into trains, and holds the citizens responsible for the same, having had 12 of the most prominent arrested. It is probable that the work of our cavalry has annoyed him excessively, as they are constantly picking off his men.[1]

Four days later, the irate Union general issued a proclamation:

> All these acts will be punished with death, [it said,] if the perpetrators can be found. And if they cannot, I will destroy the property of all who sympathize with the southern rebellion in the neighborhood where these acts are committed.[2]

The attacks Mitchel complained of had been conducted by Frank B. Gurley of Forrest's Cavalry. Gurley, cut off from his unit by the Union advance, had responded by recruiting his own company in the Huntsville area. Nevertheless, innocent civilians would henceforth suffer for the actions of the Confederate army.

Reverend Milus Eddings Johnston, Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was just one of the many peaceful citizens who would be driven to fight by the short-sighted retaliatory policy of the Union commanders. Johnston was in charge of the Methodist Church's Fayetteville Circuit, just across the border in Tennessee, when Mitchel's men took the town on their way to Huntsville. Nearly forty years old and the sole support of a large family, Johnston had no desire to take part in the armed struggle. However, when Mitchel arrived in Fayetteville on April 10, 1862, proclaiming martial law, the inoffensive preacher was promptly placed under arrest.

Though he was soon released from custody, Johnston realized he would no longer be allowed to preach as he wished. He decided to sit out the war farming with his father-in-law, Rev. John Hicks Hamer, who lived in southeastern Madison County, Alabama. Four months later, the Union army withdrew. The following year, however, the invaders returned. The brutal policy of retaliation resumed almost at once.

The Union occupiers of 1863 faced greater resistance than had Mitchel's men the year before. Although they soon captured their old nemesis, Captain Frank Gurley, another young officer was proving even more troublesome to the men in blue.

Lemuel G. Mead was a lawyer from the town Paint Rock, in Jackson county, Alabama. Early in the war, Mead had raised an infantry company, the Paint Rock Rifles, which he led into combat at the bloody Battle of Shiloh. Tiring of the boredom of camp life, he had resigned his infantry commission and been authorized to recruit partisan ranger companies inside the Union lines north of the Tennessee river. Mead's rangers were properly mustered into the Confederate army. Nevertheless, their Union opponents refused to recognize them as soldiers and branded them "bushwhackers." Each attack on the Union army by Mead's "bushwhackers" was met by a Union reprisal against helpless Southern civilians.

The Union army had no sooner returned to North Alabama than Johnston's troubles began again. In late 1863 — probably in October or November — Union troops burned his father-in-law's home following an attack by Mead. The two preachers moved their families into several small outbuildings, all that had been saved from the flames. Some weeks later, the horse soldiers returned and destroyed even these poor shelters. The Johnston and Hamer families were made homeless in the midst of the cold months of winter. When the soldiers returned a third time intending to arrest Johnston, their quarry fled. They pursued him, Johnston tells us, for three days and nights. His only offense was

having in-laws serving in the army of the South.

The patient parson had finally had enough. Johnston crossed the Tennessee river into Confederate-held territory and volunteered. Commissioned a captain, he was ordered to report to Lemuel Mead back across the river. Johnston's company was sworn into the Confederate service near New Hope, Madison County, Alabama, on January 25, 1864. It became Company E of Mead's Cavalry Battalion.

From this time on, Milus Johnston played a leading role in the partisan struggle in North Alabama. He was soon acting as major of Mead's battalion, commanding a squadron of several companies. In the closing weeks of the war, when Mead was authorized by Richmond to reorganize his men into a regiment of three battalions, Johnston was named to head the 25th Alabama Cavalry. He was promoted to lieutenant colonel on March 27, 1865, but evidently never received his commission. He surrendered his command near Huntsville on May 11, 1865, giving his rank as major. Johnston's surrender brought the war to a close in North Alabama. Lee's men had laid down their arms more than a month earlier at Appomattox Court House.

"Bushwhacker" Johnston returned to the pulpit after the war. He continued preaching for another thirty years until at last forced to retire because of partial deafness. Johnston was nearly eighty years old before he finally put his recollections on paper. He did so, he said, "because the thought occurred to him, that if he did not write the account himself very soon, some unreliable person might undertake the task after the writer's death, with much detriment to the truth and justice of all concerned." It is fortunate that he did so, since Johnston's memoirs provide us almost the only account of the later stages of the war in North Alabama by a major participant on either side.

Milus Johnston wrote his recollections in a readable, almost conversational style. At times he is unmistakably the preacher; at other times he is the old warrior again. Occasionally the anger still burned, for Johnston's was a very different war from that fought by the main armies of the North and South. His was a bitter guerilla struggle against an enemy that sometimes even struck at women and children. Nor were his enemies always strangers from the North. Johnston often directs his anger at the "home-made Yankees" — Southern men who served as scouts and guides for the blue-coated army of occupation. Some of these he had known before the war. Now they were among the most ruthless of his opponents.

Yet Johnston's story is also one of forgiveness. At the war's end, he was fortunate enough to surrender to an officer who treated him with dignity and fairness. Some weeks later, Johnston reciprocated. He was conducting a memorial service for a young victim of the war when curious Union soldiers appeared at the church door. The old "bushwhacker" invited them in. "When I was in the army I fought you with all my might," he told former foes, "but now I am in the pulpit and will preach to you with all my ability."

The amiable old soldier lived to the advanced age of 92, finally departing this life on October 8, 1915. He was buried in Hearn Hill Cemetery at Watertown, in his native Tennessee.[3]

Charles S. Rice
Huntsville, Alabama

NOTES

[1]Huntsville Times, *Huntsville Sesquicentennial issue, September 11-17, 1953, no page numbers.*

[2]*Proclamation of May 2, 1862, issued at Camp Taylor, Huntsville, Alabama. A rare original exists in the Heritage Room of the Huntsville Public Library.*

[3]*Thomas McAdory Owen,* History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography *(Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921), vol. 3, p. 919.*

The Sword of

"Bushwhacker" Johnston

An Autobiography. By MILUS E. JOHNSTON.

Yours truly
M. E. Johnston

DEDICATION

To My Baby Daughter, Fannie,

Who has clung to me after all others have gone, and whose watchful care and kind treatment have met my every want, this volume is affectionately dedicated.

THE AUTHOR

PROLOGUE

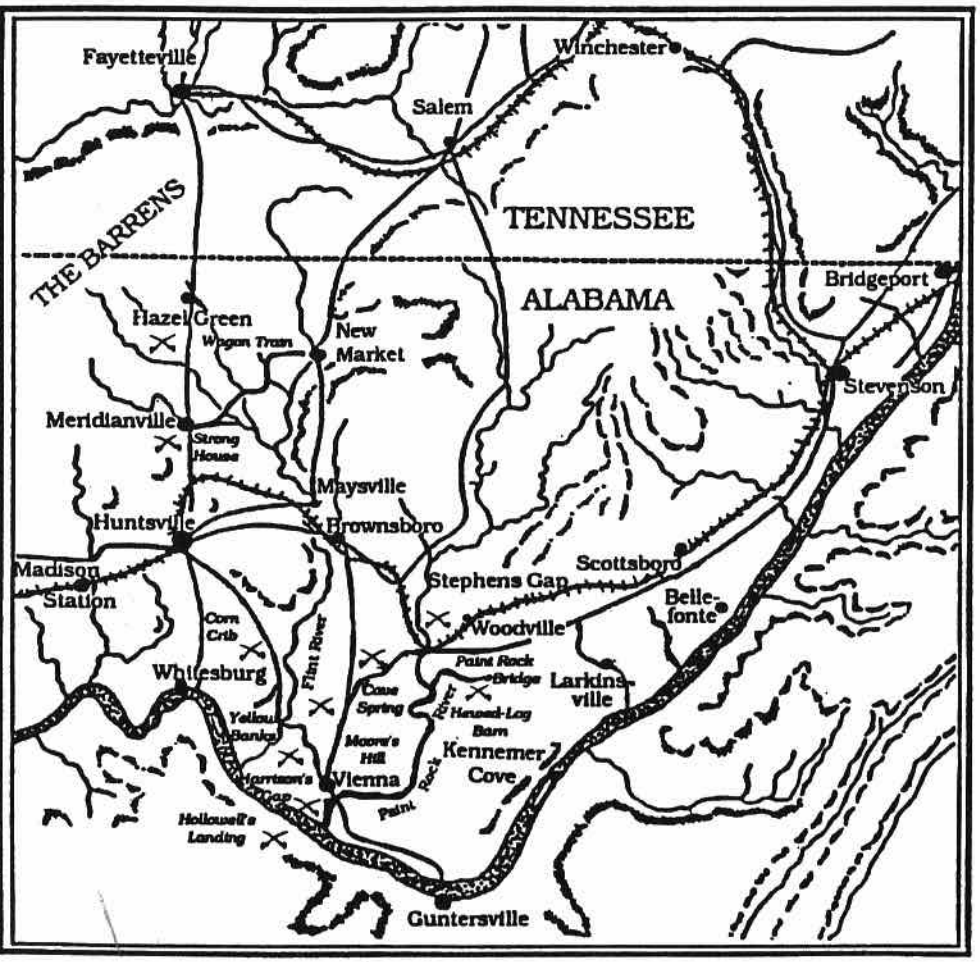
The writer of this autobiographical sketch has often been requested, by various persons, of both high and low degree, to give an account of his "ups and downs" as a Confederate soldier in the Tennessee valley during the late Civil War; but, for reasons satisfactory to himself, he has, until recently, persistently refused to do so.

But when, two years ago, he received a communication, containing numerous blanks, from a gentleman, with the request that he fill them out with matter relating to his connection with the war, the thought occurred to him that, if he did not write the account himself, very soon, some unreliable person might undertake the task after the writer's death, with much detriment to the truth and injustice to all concerned. Suffice it to say, therefore, that the latter request was not complied with; but it brought the writer at once to the decision to perform the task himself, the result of which is modestly presented to the public.

Before entering upon the main subject, the reader will please bear with the writer while he devotes a few chapters to his early life, and especially to the cause that forced him into the Confederate army. For the belligerent spirit of a soldier may appear, to some, to be inconsistent with the calling of a minister of the Gospel. But the writer trusts that, when he has given his reasons for taking such a course, his critics will change there condemnation into approbation. Moreover, is not the writer in the good company of the psalmist David, who said: "Blessed be the Lord, my strength, which teacheth my hand to war, and my fingers to fight"?

The writer asks, furthermore, that the reader make due allowance for the fragmentary nature of this sketch, as it has been so long since the incidents narrated occurred, it is impossible to give them in a complete and connected statement.

THE AUTHOR



MAP OF JOHNSTON'S "NEW CONFEDERACY"

SKIRMISHES

Harrison's Gap	April 21, 1864
Hollowell's Landing	May 12, 1864
Corn Crib	June 27, 1864
Yellow Bank Creek	July 8, 1864
Moore's Hill	August 11, 1864
Cave Spring	ca. October 1864
Meridianville	November 26, 1864
Hewed-Log Barn	ca. December 1864
Paint Rock Bridge	December 31, 1864
Hazel Green	January 18, 1865

Chapter 1

From Tennessee to Alabama

The writer was born in Wilson county, Middle Tennessee.[1] His ancestors on his father's side were full-blooded Irish, while those of his mother were perhaps English. It is said that one of his ancestors, Samuel Johnston, commanded militia at the battle of Guilford Court House, N. C., during the Revolution.[2] His mother's people, whose name was Hall, left the eastern shore in Maryland over a hundred years ago, and removed to Baltimore, from whence they emigrated west and settled in Tennessee. Having lost his parents at an early age, he was reared an orphan, and had a hard struggle to make his way through life. And having but a few educational advantages, he was compelled to graduate from Brush Creek Law School.

In his sixteenth year he was converted from the use of ardent spirits forever. At an old fashioned corn-shucking — where the fortunate lad who found the first red ear had the right to kiss the girl of his choice — one night, while the bottle was being passed around perhaps every thirty minutes until all were about "three sheets to the wind," he stopped, looked and listened, and at once came to the conclusion that, of all the fools in God's creation, a drunken fool surpasses them all. He then and there, in his boyish heart, joined the teetotalers. Which pledge has been sacredly kept in sickness and in health, in war and in peace, until this day.

In the latter part of the same year, he was "born again," or changed from nature to grace, and immediately joined the Methodist Episcopal church a short time before the division in 1844.[3] Feeling the impression that he ought to warn sinners to "flee from the wrath to come," he began at once to work in the class meeting, prayer meeting and the Sunday school. Soon after he was licensed to exhort, and in due time was licensed to preach. Eventually, he was recommended by

the Quarterly Conference for admission on trial into the Tennessee Conference, then of the M. E. Church, South. All these privileges were bestowed without his asking, as he felt incompetent and unworthy of any conspicuous place in the church.

The Tennessee Conference met that year in the town of Lebanon, Tennessee, with Bishop Robert Paine in the chair. Seventeen young men, including the writer, were admitted on trial into that conference. The writer's first appointment was Smith's Fork Circuit, where he remained for two years. In the latter part of the second year, the wife of his youth was buried near the beautiful village of Alexandria, at which time he came very near dying himself.[4]

From the Smith's Fork Circuit, he was sent to the Carthage Circuit. At the close of the two years on that circuit — he having never regained his health — the Presiding Elder told the Bishop that he "must either rest or die;" hence a supernumerary relation was granted him. Having now reached the point where he had no regular work and but little means, and being in very poor health, he was discouraged no little. But having, instead of these, a restless spirit and a will like twisted steel, he determined to pitch full length into the fight and never die "just for the want of breath."

But let us explain. Two widows were once talking of the death of their respective husbands.

"Well," says one to the other, "how did your husband die?"

"Well," said the other to the one, "he died just for the want of breath."

"Dear me!" rejoined the first. "Whoever heard of anybody dying just for the want of breath?"

"Well, please tell me," inquired the first, "how did your husband die?" "My husband," she answered, "had breath to the very last."

If you will look straight at it, you will see a vast difference between the two deaths.

The young preacher we have been writing about determined then and there to fight all enemies to the knife, and knife to the hilt, whether those enemies should come in the form of affliction, or sin, or the devil. Thinking that the change of air and water might be beneficial to health, he placed himself in his buggy, behind his faithful horse, and

rolled down the pike from Dixon Springs, southward bound. Passing through Gallatin, he reached Nashville, the "City of Rocks," and spent the night with Dr. John B. McFerrin. The next morning he went to the Methodist Publishing House, and made arrangements to be supplied with books, papers and tracts, as he had determined to become a colporteur[5] as well as a seeker after health. Placing a box in the buggy, with as much literature as was thought necessary, he again cracked his whip and rolled off for the Sunny South.

Passing through Williamson, Maury and Giles counties, Tennessee, he entered Madison county, Alabama, and rolled into Huntsville, where a halt was made. Huntsville is the capital of Madison county, an inland town about twelve miles north of the Tennessee river, and is one of the neatest and most beautiful little cities to be found in any country. This city was made our headquarters during the year, and from which we visited every neighborhood, nook and corner of the county, preaching and selling books, probably doing as much preaching on the old Madison Circuit as the pastor, if not more.

At the close of this year, the Tennessee Conference met in Huntsville; and the writer believing it unnecessary to continue in the supernumerary relation, resolved to reenter the regular itinerant field, determined not to seek rest again until he should find repose in the grave. And thus we continued for nearly thirty years, spending most of the time within the bounds of the Huntsville district. Some of the charges to which we were assigned during this time are as follows: Vienna,[6] Larkinsville, Madison, Fayetteville, Richland, Bell and Flint Factories, New Market, Limestone, Triana, etc. On almost all of these charges we remained as long as the law of the church would allow. At the close of our work on the Larkinsville circuit, we were married — the second time — to Mrs. Mary E. Findley, whose maiden name was Hamer.[7]

Notes

[1]Milus E. Johnston was born near Lebanon, Tennessee, on July 26, 1823. His parents were Oliver Campbell Johnston and Hannah Hall Buckley Johnston. Thomas McAdory Owen, History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1921), vol. 3, p. 919.

[2]Fought on March 15, 1781, the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, North Carolina, was technically a victory for the British. However, Lord Cornwallis had suffered such heavy casualties that he was forced to retreat.

[3]The division in the Methodist Episcopal Church was a result of the growing opposition to slavery. Specifically, a resolution was introduced by a group of Northern ministers at the 1844 Conference calling for the resignation of Bishop James O. Andrew of Georgia because his wife owned slaves. The Southern ministers opposed involving the church in what they saw as a civil matter. When no agreement could be reached, the representatives compromised by establishing two separate conferences within the church, one for the North and one for the South. See Marion E. Lazenby, History of Methodism in Alabama and West Florida (n.p.: North Alabama Conference and Alabama-West Florida Conference of the Methodist Church, 1960), chapter 33, pp. 260-276.

[4]Johnston's first wife was Susan Anna Ray, whom he married in 1843. They were the parents of three sons and two daughters. Susan Johnston died in 1853. Owen, vol. 3, p. 919.

[5]A colporteur in contemporary usage means a person who sells bibles and religious tracts. Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary (New York: The Publishers Guild, 1957), p. 359.

[6]Now known as New Hope.

[7]Mary Elizabeth Hamer was born June 21, 1833. She married Dr. James P. Findley on March 7, 1848. Findley died less than two years later. After remaining a widow for 11 years, Mrs.

Findley married Johnston on October 21, 1859. John Erwin Hamer, Rev. John Hicks Hamer, 1792-1865, His Antecedents, Descendants, & Collateral Families, 1744-1978. (Privately printed, c. 1979), p. 36.

Chapter 2

Larkinsville Circuit

Just at this point we wish to give the reader our experience upon the Larkinsville Circuit, which lay in Jackson county, Alabama, because it proved under the circumstances, the hardest field we ever cultivated in our itinerancy. Not that we wish to trumpet the heroism of the writer before the world, but to encourage our young men in the ministry to bear hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

The Tennessee Conference met, at this time, in McMinnville, Warren county, Tennessee. And when the writer arrived at the seat of the conference he found himself, as it were, on the brink of the grave, brought there by a protracted spell of chronic diarrhea. On reaching the conference we went to the Rev. Thomas Randle, then our presiding elder, and said: "Brother Randle, in arranging the appointments, please give me freestone water; it makes no difference whether the country is rich or poor. I ask this for the sake of my life."

And this is the only request we ever made of presiding elder or bishop, and we consider this a very modest one. It was near midnight when the appointments were announced, and our name was read in connection with the Larkinsville Circuit. We knew this circuit well. We knew the freestone water was not there; we knew that chills and fevers squatted behind almost every stump and clod; and we knew that the preachers appointed there had been running off for some years past. Besides, we considered ourself near the grave, for we expected to die.

Our companion having gone to heaven and left us with several motherless children[1] to take care of; the great amount of work to be done on the Larkinsville Circuit; the unwholesomeness of the country; our personal condition; and at the same time knowing that our disposition was to carry

every weight laid upon us, or break every trace in the harness, no man could show us anything but death! We have been surrounded by many different difficulties; we have been in war and in peace, in storm and in calm, but the darkest cloud that ever rose upon our horizon threatened us at that moment!

The Conference had to remain in town until the next day, in order to get a train, but we never slept a wink that night. Early the next morning we went to see our presiding elder to protest against our appointment, and although we were as humble as a child, at the same time we were as spunky as a mink. As we began to state our case, he began to console us as best he could. At length we led out upon this line: "Brother Randle, if the Tennessee Conference had no other use for us but to send us to the Larkinsville Circuit to die, you might have let us know it and we would have stepped aside and have given you an open field."

He replied, "You are mistaken, my brother; the conference has a use for you. You know the Larkinsville Circuit is dead and buried, but I think by the grace of God, you can resurrect it."

We rejoined, "To resurrect a circuit is a great and glorious work, but to take a man's life in order to do it, we may think is very hard. If my children had a mother's bosom to lean upon, it would not be so bad. But to knock the last prop from under them is not required by the Great Ruler of the universe."

This sealed Randle's lips. During the interview the Rev. Dr. Joseph Erwin was present, who, in his sweet-spirited way, began to tell of the new railroad,[2] the rich soil, the clever people and the flourishing town. We waited until the sentence was closed, and then came the answer. "If Larkinsville Circuit were a city whose walls were of jasper, whose gates were of pearl, why, sir, a thousand dollars on top of Larkinsville would not be one item in the bill. Dr. Erwin, there is but one ray of light that penetrates any vision this morning, and that is heavenward."

There Erwin ceased, and Randle said: "Brother Johnston, go and see your children; stay as long as you want to, and then come back to your work."

We obeyed the command, but we did not remain long; for the cloud grew darker, and we became satisfied that, if we could not preach ourself from under it, our time must be close

at hand. Having found a home for the rest of our children, we placed our oldest — which was a daughter — on the train and rolled down to Huntsville. On her we had been concentrating our means for the last three years, hoping that she would be a benefit to the rest after we had crossed over the river. We placed her in the Huntsville Female College;[3] and the next morning, as we were leaving, we took Randle by the hand and said: "If you hear of me falling sick, come to me as soon as you can get there, for if your Brother Johnston can't preach this load off of him, he is a dead man. Good-bye!"

We struck the circuit at Harris Chapel. After preaching it got into our head to give the people a plain talk, Johnstonian style, and it was on this line:

"In the providence of God, I have been sent to you as your pastor for the ensuing year, if you and I should live. And I assure you I am here in a perfectly good humor, having no other object but to get good and to do good. I have learned that your preachers have been running away from you for the last three or four years; the whys and wherefores I do not know, neither do I wish to know. I have not told you yet I am going to stay with you. But I will say this, I'm going to stay until I see a Booger — a great, big horned booger — and then I will stay long enough to try to knock every horn off of him. Now, you local preachers, exhorters, stewards, leaders, old and young, great and small, fall into line, shoulder to shoulder, and let the watchword roll all along the ranks, forward march!"

As the preacher went on around the circuit the people wanted to take hold of him, while he tried to take hold of God, and never let him go. He went, preaching day and night, and he didn't care an iota whether he met death before breakfast, dinner or supper; for he went with no other expectation than to die. He moved so fast that if a chill had gotten within ten feet of him, he never found it out. God had over three hundred conversions that year on the circuit, though they did not all join the Methodist church. The circuit paid the pastor his full disciplinary allowance, with at least a hundred dollars' worth of presents, and sent a petition to the conference for his return next year.

This preacher never spent a happier year in his itinerant life than this one on the Larkinsville Circuit. Therefore he would give the Methodist church this advice: First, guard the itinerancy as though you believed it was the

very life of Methodism, for it is actually her palpitating heart. Second, be men of one work, and do not undertake to supplement. For if you do, the people will make you furnish your own meat and bread. If the regular work of the ministry does not support you, quit and go into some other occupation. Third, never undertake to choose your own work, but leave that with God and the appointing power. Observe these rules, and in my honest judgment you will be a better and happier man.

Notes

[1]*Johnston had five children by his first wife: Caroline H., Fountain B., Melville B., John A., and Louisa P. Johnston. Owen, vol. 3, p. 919. Melville Burr Johnston served in his father's company during the war. Fountain Bascom Johnston served in Co. E, 28th Tennessee Infantry Regiment.*

[2]*The Memphis & Charleston Railroad.*

[3]*This was Caroline Hollis Johnston. Johnston's hopes for his daughter were never fulfilled. She died in Huntsville at the Female College on March 7, 1862. "Poor girl," wrote fellow student Sarah Lowe in her diary. "Her sprightliness and kindheartedness endeared her to us all." MS. diary of Miss Sarah Lowe, Huntsville Heritage Room, Huntsville Public Library.*

Chapter 3

Personal Affliction — A Remedy

Having referred, in a previous chapter, to our personal affliction, I will here give to the reader a simple remedy by which we were cured. Our trouble was a chronic diarrhea, under which we suffered six long years, and how much we suffered during that time no mind can comprehend, save he who endured it. Our honest opinion is that out of one thousand similar cases, nine hundred and ninety-nine would have died. Hence, we wish to publish the remedy to the world, in a few plain words, and how, under God, we were restored, years ago, to sound and vigorous health. We trust it may be the means of saving many human lives. And when we are done the reader, if afflicted, may either try it or let it alone, as he pleases. Doctors did not cure the disease, for it baffled every one to whom we applied. Nor did medicine cure it, for it was beyond the reach of all that tried.

We are apprised of the fact that there is an old book which says, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth defileth a man." But this had reference to our moral nature and not to our stomachs; for our stomachs are deranged by what is put upon them more than by any other one thing. In our case, strict dieting was absolutely essential to life. Not only for a day, week, month or year, but on until that organ was capable of performing its proper functions.

And just here we need to say that no one need go to a doctor in order to ascertain what will agree with his stomach; that organ, if properly watched, will reveal the facts in the case. In our case, when food went into the stomach, common sense was put in one end of the scales and the affection of the stomach in the other; and whenever the stomach said that such an article of food disagreed, that article was prohibited,

whatever it might be. On the other hand, that which the stomach said agreed, it was used; but merely enough to sustain life. This must be done or you die.

Another thing we resorted to, which in our case was almost, if not equal, to the first. This was an internal compress of cold water, which was kept as regularly as circumstances would allow. It was applied by day, when possible, while it pressed our body night after night, until a cure was effected. The compress should be prepared and applied as follows: Fold a cloth from four to six double, and large enough to cover the entire abdomen; soak it in fresh water until it is thoroughly saturated; wring it until it will not drip; then smooth it out and spread it upon the naked skin. After which spread over it flannel or linsey so as to entirely cover the wet cloth. When this is done, the clothing may be fastened over the flannel, if so desired. The compress should be applied as often as necessary; especially in acute attacks.

Years ago the writer was also subject to severe attacks of cholera morbus,[1] which at times threw him off his feet in a few hours. But when those attacks came, he threw himself upon his back and applied the above cold compress, which never failed to set him perpendicular within from three to nine hours. In our case it proved to be an absolutely sure remedy. In our judgment, cold water applied to any internal fever will beat any blister ever applied to the human body, whether that fever be in the brain, lungs or bowels.

In testing the virtue of this compress at times we refrained from its use, but every such time we felt within that the machinery was all out of order; but never so when we used the compress. As far as we can discover, the organs of which we have been speaking have since been sound and healthy; and in connection with God's goodness, this compress has saved us from being dust years ago.

Notes

[1] *Cholera morbus, according to* Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary, *is "a noninfectious, rarely fatal cholera, with diarrhea and cramps; it is usually caused by contaminated foods: also called sporadic cholera, bilious cholera." (New York: The Publishers Guild, 1957), p. 318.*

Chapter 4

A Contrast of Times and Nations

Not wishing to burden the reader with any more personalities than are necessary to a proper understanding of the points at issue, we now proceed to the more direct object of writing the sketch. And we shall begin by drawing a brief contrast of times and nations, as we were able, during the years 1860-61, to discern the signs of the times.

Let us pause for a moment and take full survey. We look north, south, east and west; we look at church and state; at the masses and at the individual; and what do we behold? The sun, in his chariot of fire, rolling along the ethereal track of the skies, pouring his light down upon the darkened zones of his attendant planets, including this world of ours, never shone upon a happier people than the inhabitants of North America!

Under the counsel of Washington, Jefferson and Jackson, and others of like patriotism, no nation under heaven ever prospered like free and independent America! But hark! Look and listen, and we observe that things are changing. Spots are seen on the sun, blood on the moon, and clouds blot out the stars. There are strange sounds in the air; there are shakings in the North, and eruptions in the South.

Is it true that the human family, when they have reached a certain point, are inclined to retrograde? Our mind runs back to the beginning, when the Great God spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast; and at His word star twinkled to star, sun flamed to sun, and world loomed over world. At every stroke of God's hammer a continent rolled from His anvil, until the vast work of creation was completed, and everything was as it should be. But how long until there was a change? There is an old book that tells of a rebellion in heaven, and a great battle fought upon its plains. But what heaven was that? We cannot think it was the third heaven,

nor the home of the finally faithful, as nothing unclean has ever yet entered there, nor come out from thither. And as we hear the leading rebel proclaim to his followers, "Let us ascend upon high and sit upon the sides of the North; and let us draw a third part of the stars away with us," it is possible this battle was fought in the second heaven, when "the angels lost their first estate."

Then look at Eden's garden, and behold man in the likeness and image of God! But how soon he violated law, and was banished from that blessed state, and even the whole earth cursed for his sake! Then time moved on, until man became so desperately wicked that God drowned the antediluvian world. Then look upon the Jews, God's favored people, exalted unto heaven, and throwing out light to all surrounding nations. But, after all, they sinned, turned away from God, and He turned away from them among other nations, their very name becoming a hiss and by-word.

Come down to a later age, when the church came forth from the teachings of Christ and His apostles, without spot or blemish. But how long did it take, under Roman Catholicism, for her to become tarnished and polluted? Then look down the ages and behold the church as she reaches the height of happy Christian America, in the nineteenth century. See the unparalleled prosperity of the different denominations, in this favored land, as they approached the middle of that era. But especially the prosperity of the leading Protestant denomination, the Methodist Episcopal Church. This church was born in England in 1739, John Wesley being, under God, its founder. The world never saw a more wonderful man than John Wesley, who died leaving one hundred and fifty thousand followers. This great and useful man made his will, saying: "I adjure my executors that I be carried to my grave by six poor men, and that I be buried in nothing but woolens. And let this be my epitaph: Here lieth the body of John Wesley, a brand plucked from the burning, who died of consumption, leaving, after his funeral expenses were paid, not ten pounds."

The enthusiasm of this man's followers leaped the Atlantic, and a century and a quarter ago began their work in the wilds of America, going about singing, praying and preaching. They swam streams, slept with uncovered heads, and preaching Christ under great sacrifices, they conquered

all opposition, until today they stand the strongest denomination in all Christendom. They are the flying artillery of God's militant host.

Look back to 1844, and see this great church torn asunder, in the midst of its prosperity. Why this was done we shall not stop to say, but leave that to the reader.[1] Then observe the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, one half of the original, as she spread over this sunny land, traversing the fertile valleys, climbing vine-clad hills, lengthening her chords and strengthening her stakes, as, perhaps, no other church has done since the days of the apostles. But how soon she was destined to meet with another moral earthquake, the shock of the Civil War.

If our spirit had been consulted beforehand, we should have requested the privilege of stepping into time, in North America about the middle of the nineteenth century, and particularly in that section called the Sunny South. Let us stop and linger about this period for a while. The people then had confidence in themselves, in their fellow men, and in their God. They were contented with their homes, were satisfied with their government, and had full faith in their lawmakers. Hence they were prosperous and happy, having a plenty and to spare.

But hark! They suddenly hear strange sounds and see ominous signals, as they roll out of the several political parties, North and South. Abraham Lincoln is nominated, which the South believes is detrimental to her interests; while the Democratic party meets in convention, quarrels until it bursts asunder, and then puts out two sets of candidates, thus dividing its strength, which permits the election of Lincoln, causing a state of unrest among the people such as had never been known in the history of the nation.[2] Conventions were called; the people ran together; speeches were made for and against secession; while the excitement rose higher and higher, until South Carolina rolled out of the Union.[3] Then the fat was in the fire, and the fire began to blaze, and burn, and flash!

In Alabama the bone of contention was straight out secession or cooperation. The writer voted for cooperation (all Southern States go out of the Union together or stay in together), and having been a life-long Democrat, he voted, also, for Stephen A. Douglas. When the old flag was cut down,

at Montgomery, and Alabama went out of the Union,[4] many a brave heart was moved, and many an eye was filled with tears.

But we have now come down to more active times. Do you hear that muttering from the direction of Charleston? It is Beauregard's war dogs growling,[5] and showing Uncle Sam their teeth. The war is now upon us sure enough.

Notes

[1]*See chapter 1, note 3.*

[2]*After a bitter platform fight, the Southern delegates walked out of the 1860 Democratic convention at Charleston. The convention dissolved in confusion. The Democrats tried again at Baltimore, where the Northern delegates nominated Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois. The Southern Democrats met separately and nominated Senator John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky. The split in the Democratic party ensured the election of Abraham Lincoln, a sectional candidate who did not even campaign in the South.*

[3]*South Carolina withdrew from the Union on December 20, 1860, the first state to secede.*

[4]*On Christmas day, 1860, Alabama voters chose delegates to their state's Secession Convention. On January 11, 1861, the convention voted 61 to 39 to leave the Union.*

[5]*General Pierre G. T. Beauregard commanded the Confederate forces that fired on Union-held Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor.*

Chapter 5

Why the Writer went to War

During the years 1860-61 the writer was on the Madison Circuit attending to his own business, and that business was preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As he went, he not only prayed for individual sinners, but also for the entire nation. And his honest conviction is, that he never preached more earnestly for the salvation of the human soul than he pleaded with God to preserve the Union of the States.

We conclude at the start that the writer being a minister of the gospel and professing to have been called to that work, the reader would like to know how he came to be connected with the Confederate army. You shall have it in as plain English as he can command.

A battle had been fought at Fishing Creek, Kentucky, on the 19th of January, 1862, where the Confederates were defeated.[1] Fort Henry,[2] on the Tennessee river, and Fort Donelson,[3] on the Cumberland river, having been captured by the Federals soon after, the Confederates fell back to Nashville, Tennessee.

At this time the writer was in Lincoln county, Tennessee, having in charge the Fayetteville Circuit, and also Fayetteville Station, as the pastor of the latter had left and joined the Confederate army. Soon after this General Albert Sidney Johnston, who commanded the Confederate forces in the West, fell back upon Corinth, Mississippi, near where was fought the great battle of Shiloh,[4] in which the Confederate commander was killed. It is believed by many that if General Johnston had not fallen, the main part of General Grant's army would have been captured. But as the latter was reinforced that night and the next morning, the Confederates were forced to fall back and give up all the advantage they had gained.

Fayetteville being on the direct road from Nashville to Huntsville, it was exposed to the invasion of the Federals at any time. So the writer, being in Fayetteville, one day after the Confederates had departed looked across Elk river in the direction of Huntsville and saw a considerable smoke rising. Presently, there came an old citizen of the neighborhood on a bareback horse, riding at full speed, and exclaiming at the top of his voice, "Get your guns! Get your guns! A Yankee has burnt a wagon load of meat!" And off he bolted for his gun.[5]

In a few minutes the town was full of Yankees. We suppose that General Mitchel,[6] who was in command, had ordered a move on Huntsville. Immediately a number of the citizens were placed under arrest, the writer being among them, and from that time on the Yankees arrested him whenever they got in seeing, hearing, or smelling distance of him. That is, when they could. He was kept in custody until he slipped the pickets.

The pickets were placed on a rise along the road running west. From their position they had full view down the little valley that made off toward the river. The writer not being pleased with his company, concluded that he would take leave of absence and go to see his wife, who was then boarding four miles below. No sooner said than done, off he put. Reaching the lower part of town, he found the open valley hard to be crossed without detection. How now? He picked up a rough stick, then humped himself up, and crept along, as if he had been down with the rheumatism for the last ten years. As soon as the valley was cleared the stick was thrown down, and you had better believe there was some double-quicking done, until we reached our home, which was outside the picket line. Then we hunted the nearest way to get somewhere else.

Mitchel soon moved on towards Huntsville, leaving behind a regiment and a provost marshal in Fayetteville. But before he reached Huntsville, the citizens there hearing the Yankees were coming, raised a company, armed themselves, and went forth to meet them. We suppose they thought they would give them a "bit of a scare." But when they met Mitchel's men a few miles out of town, the Huntsville boys were all taken in. The citizen soldiers told the Yankees that they were hunting a fellow who had stolen a horse and buggy the night

before. Mitchel's men answered that they were hunting for some fellows who had stolen a few States out of the Union not long since.[7]

The writer did not remain long at home, as he should have done, but was actually green enough to go up to the Yankees and ask them to renew his license to preach. Or in other words, he asked for a "permit" to attend to his appointments civilly without being molested by their pickets. Before reaching the pickets he put his horse in a stable belonging to a family with whom he was well acquainted. But upon reaching the picket he was not allowed to pass, remaining with them, talking freely and telling them the object of his mission, and that he was a Methodist preacher. While talking an officer was seen approaching with a squad of soldiers. The picket remarked, 'Yonder comes the Colonel now. When he comes up if you will speak to him, he will attend to your business for you."

As soon as the officer reached the proper point the visitor said, "Good morning, Colonel!"

The colonel replied, in a broad and flat manner, "Good morning, sir!"

Then the visitor said, "Colonel, I have come to see you this morning to get a permit, that I may attend my appointments civilly without being molested by your pickets".

"I will attend to your business when I come back, sir," replied the colonel as he rode off, placing his pickets beyond and hedging the visitor.

On returning the colonel reined up his horse, but still moving slowly, and said, "What business did you say you had with me, sir?"

The visitor repeated his request. Then the Colonel replied, "You can preach in town on Sunday, sir!"

"But my appointment is in the village of Mulberry next Sunday."

"I say you can preach in town on Sunday, sir!" and away went the colonel.

But in a few minutes a squadron of men returned and took the visitor into town, a prisoner. He was carried before the provost marshal, who proved to be the same whom he had met at the picket line before.[8] There, in a very abrupt manner, he was asked a multitude of questions, and treated as contemptuously as a cur puppy. For the sake of feelings, we

forbear giving the name of that provost. Suffice it to say that he fell in the battle of Perryville.[9] It is reasonable to suppose that the writer did not shed many tears when he heard the news, on account of the way he had been treated by that officer. One thing is certain, he rubbed a few drops of secession blood into our constitution.

The writer asked the colonel if he intended to confine him, or would he allow him some liberty.

"You are at liberty to walk about the town, sir," he replied. The prisoner then left the office in disgust. Moving out, he found the streets filled with Federal soldiers, and some of them disposed to talk freely about present surroundings. When one of them remarked that "Every dog has his day," the prisoner, having his Irish blood stirred, replied, "That may be so, in a general sense, but my opinion is that there are more dogs at the present time than there are days."

While thus hedged up in town, the writer's horse was taken out of the stable three times and appropriated to the Federal use. The man who took the horse was chaplain of the regiment then occupying the town, and belonged to the Methodist Episcopal church. So said the soldiers. Such acts as this they called "pressing," but Southern gentlemen call it stealing. We wouldn't give the name of the man, if we knew it, for we do not wish to wound the feelings of any one at this late date. Our friends finally succeeded in getting the horse back to the stable.

The time had now come for some of the troops to move southward. Hence the picket whose post was near the house was called in. We were then standing on the pavement when the pickets passed, and the officer in charge threw up his hand and said, "The way is now open to your horse." On learning that the horse could be reached, the prisoner again gave the enemy the slip and went home to his wife.

It was evident that there was no chance to preach in peace. Therefore, husband and wife seated themselves in a buggy and rolled out southward through Madison county, Alabama, avoiding Federal pickets along the journey, until they reached the home of the wife's father, in the southeast corner of said county.[10]

On arriving home, we found there was no chance to preach the gospel. And having no disposition to go into the army, and most of his brothers-in-law having enlisted, the

writer went to work like another darkey, intending to take care of his family to the best of his ability. But lo and behold, he was not allowed to make a living by honest labor. On came the Federal army, laying waste to everything in their path, driving off hogs, cattle, horses and mules, arresting citizens, and shooting innocent men who had never been connected with the Confederate army, and abusing women and burning houses.

Before they seemed to be satisfied, they burned our family out three times, taking everything we had indoors and out. Even the boots from the writer's feet were stolen. Not satisfied yet, they ran him three days and nights to take him individually and particularly, but failed to do so. He crossed Tennessee river at the mouth of Paint Rock river, being set over by some of Colonel [Philip D.] Roddey's men.[11]

The writer recollects distinctly to this day that upon reaching the south bank of the river he called a halt and about faced, and straightening himself up, he looked northward and said: "Boys, I have come to the conclusion that God never yet made a man to be slobbered on always by dogs; hence I'm going to give those fellows a turn — the best turn I can get into the hopper!" Immediately he went to the Confederate authorities and was commissioned an officer, and sent back inside Federal lines to raise troops.

We have not given anything like all the dots. Yet, in as concise a manner as we could, we have let the reader know the cause of our being connected with the Confederate army.

Notes

[1]The Battle of Fishing Creek, Kentucky, also known as the Battle of Logan's Crossroads, was a confused encounter in which the Confederate commander, Brigadier General Felix Zollicoffer, mistakenly rode into the Union lines and was killed. His army was then driven back in defeat.

[2]Fort Henry, on the Tennessee river just below the Kentucky border, fell to the gunboats supporting Ulysses S. Grant's army on February 6, 1862.

[3]Fort Donelson, guarding the Cumberland river and the approach to Nashville, fought off numerous assaults by Grant's army until finally surrendering on February 16, 1862. The loss of the two forts and the defeat at Fishing Creek forced the Southern army to abandon its defensive line in Kentucky and fall back to Corinth, Mississippi.

[4]The Battle of Shiloh was fought on April 6 and 7, 1862. General Johnston was mortally wounded on the first day.

[5]The Cincinnati Gazette's correspondent, who signed himself "Y.S." (possibly William S. Furney), reported that Corporal James Pike of Company A, 4th Ohio Cavalry, "was returning toward Shelbyville, on Tuesday morning when he met three wagons loaded with bacon." He burned them. This might have been the incident Johnston describes, although Fayetteville was not actually occupied until Thursday morning, April 10, 1862. Cincinnati Gazette, April 23, 1862.

[6]Brigadier General Ormsby MacKnight Mitchel (1809-1862) graduated from West Point in the same class as Robert E. Lee. However, Mitchel had quit the army after just three years. He attracted public attention shortly before the war by his work in astronomy. On August 9, 1861, Abraham Lincoln appointed Mitchel to command the Department of Ohio. However, this department was soon absorbed by Major General Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Cumberland. On April 11, 1862, one day after occupying Fayetteville, Mitchel captured Huntsville, Alabama, cutting the only railroad connection between the eastern Confederacy and the

Mississippi River. Mitchel was promptly promoted to major general. Five months later, however, after complaints over alleged misconduct by his men, Mitchel was relieved of command in Huntsville and transfered to the Xth Corps at Hilton Head, South Carolina. He died there of yellow fever on October 30, 1862. Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Blue (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), p. 327.

[7]The Huntsville Reveille, a paper printed by the occupying Union troops, asked sarcastically on June 10, 1862: "What has become of the Home Guards, who went out to oppose Mitchel's advance — Are they still hunting rabbits?"

[8]"Col. Harris, of the Second Ohio has been appointed Provost Marshal of Fayetteville, and has established his office in the Court House." Cincinnati Gazette, April 23, 1862.

[9]Johnston's information was incorrect. Colonel Leonard A. Harris resigned his commission on December 4, 1862. He returned to Cincinnati and was elected mayor. John Kell succeeded Harris as commander of the 2nd Ohio. It was Colonel Kell who was killed in battle — at Murfreesboro on December 31, 1862. Whitelaw Reid, Ohio in the War (Cincinnati: Moore, Wilstach & Baldwin, 1868), vol. 2, p. 21.

[10]Johnston's father-in-law was Rev. John Hicks Hamer, a Methodist minister who lived near Vienna (now New Hope), Alabama. Hamer, pp. 36-37.

[11]Philip Dale Roddey (c. 1823-1897), of Moulton, Alabama, organized the 4th Alabama Cavalry in December, 1862. He was promoted to brigadier general on August 3, 1863. Ezra J. Warner, Generals in Gray (Louisiana State University Press, 1959), p. 262. After withdrawing from Madison county in August, 1862, the Union forces returned in the fall of 1863. Johnston fled across the river several months later. His company was sworn into the Confederate army near Vienna by Captain Lemuel G. Mead on January 25, 1864. Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers, Microfilm copy 258, Roll 38, Mead's Confederate Cavalry.

Chapter 6

Acts of the Invaders

Before we proceed further perhaps the reader would like to know why we use such terms as the following: "the author," "the writer," "he," etc., as though we were speaking in the third person. The writer is an unassuming man, and in reading history, to see such expressions as these: "I did this," "I did that," and "I did the other," never struck this scribe on the right side. Hence our effort has been to avoid as many I's as possible.

Before we get to close quarters, lick for lick, hilt to hilt and bullet for bullet, let us give a slight description of our surroundings. We say slight description, for it is impossible for my pen to tell the whole truth, and when a faint picture is drawn there will be many doubting Thomases. Whether these things we are about to relate were done by men born and reared in the North, or men imported from other nations, or by "home-made" Yankees, as the boys called them, we know not. But that they were done is an honest truth.

The invading army did not stop at taking things out of doors, but entered private dwellings, taking bed spreads, quilts, plates, silver spoons, knives and forks, and especially jewelry. Some of the finest dresses ever worn by the ladies in the State of Alabama were carried off. Pianos and organs were taken into the yard, the tops mashed in, and then used as horse troughs.

To keep meat in a house was out of the question, unless the place you put it was sealed over as if it had never been opened. The hogs were killed at a pond out in the woods. Then, at night, the pork was cut up and placed within a box fixed between a big log and a boulder, at the foot of the rugged little mountain close by, the meat being salted in the box. The box was then covered with boards, with brush and rubbish of various kinds thrown over, until it was entirely concealed

from view. When the meat was ready to hang we packed it in sacks by night up that rugged mountain near the summit, where we had before selected a place to deposit it. The place was in a sink in the earth, something like a well, perhaps eight feet across, with perpendicular walls from fifteen to twenty feet deep, having firm earth in the bottom. Perhaps half way down we placed joists across from rock to rock, upon which we hung the meat, the shelter being so close to the meat that it was impossible to be seen, until you go near enough to look down upon it. In order to go up and down in our meat house, we cut saplings with as many limbs or forks on them as possible, and cut off the limbs a little distance from the trunk, to form purchases for our hands and feet. We then let the saplings down until their lower ends rested on the bottom of the cave, kindled a fire, and what smoking that meat would get! Then, by night, a piece at a time would go home, as necessity required.

In like manner the writer, the same winter, kept two fine horses near the summit of another little mountain in the opposite direction, having prepared a temporary stable between two great boulders lying at the base of the bluff. He carried to them every grain of forage and every drop of water they ate and drank, until in the spring he was betrayed by a Negro, and the Yankees got both horses.

The things mentioned above are trifling, compared to the greater matters of a sinister character. Citizens were arrested, and non-combatants, who were never in the army, were dragged from their homes, followed by their wives and children pleading for their lives. Yet they were shot down, some of them in the presence of their loved ones and others distant in the woods. Boys in their teens were tied to trees and shot into mincemeat. This was done here, there and yonder. And the writer could give the number and even the names of citizens shot in this section; but he forbears to do so. However, he will give one case of the kind as a sample, in order to give the reader an idea of the cruelty of such conduct.

About five miles above Guntersville, in the Tennessee river, is Buck Island, a very fertile spot of ground. And at the time of which we write there were on this island 2,000 bushels of corn cribbed up and forty or fifty horses kept nearby. These things were placed there to secure them for the benefit of the families in the neighborhood. On a Sunday morning five

citizens went over to the island merely to see after their property, and who were as clever men as the country afforded. But somehow the Federals learned that these men were there, and a squad of soldiers was sent over to look after them, commanded by Captain —; but we suppress the names to save feelings.[1]

The five citizens were arrested, the 2,000 bushels of corn were burned, and the horses gathered up and carried out. But how about the citizens? The captain said they must die. The citizens talked, begged and pleaded for their lives. But no, they must be shot. Being placed in line, the work of death began, shooting one man at a time, and when he fell, if he showed any signs of life, he was shot again and again until he ceased to move. Hence, one of the men was shot as many as four times. And thus it went on until four of them were dead. The fifth man, standing facing the murderers, received a ball in the right shoulder, between the point and the neck, and ranging downward to the center of the back, where it remains to this day. He fell, but had the judgment to be perfectly still, not even moving a muscle. They felt his pulse, but finding none, they swore that he was dead. Perhaps they made the mistake because they felt the pulse of the wounded arm. They then dragged the bodies to the river and threw them in. When the fifth man struck the water, being still alive, he got strangled. This showed the murderers their mistake, and they began to exclaim, "Shoot him! Shoot him!" As he floated further from shore, the captain bawled out, "Knock his brains out!" Failing to reach him with their clubs, and as he was getting farther from shore, the captain commanded again, "Shoot him! Shoot him!"

By this time the wounded man had reached a sapling, and getting hold of it with his left hand, he pulled himself behind it, placing the middle of his face as near to the center of the sapling as possible, and dived under the water, leaving his nose out in order to breathe. In that condition they fired at him twice more. At the first shot he sank entirely underwater, and his would-be murderers, thinking he was dead this time, left him. After they left he crawled out of the river, and is now living within 300 yards of this writing.

The four men killed on the island were named Roden.[2] Two miles distant Bent Henry was murdered in like manner.[3] Henry was of a noble family, and many of his honorable

relatives reside in the same community at this day. Just after the surrender the writer preached the funeral of these five men to an immense congregation. We might continue calling names of victims, but we forbear. We suppose that by this time the reader has come to the conclusion that citizens at home were in as much danger as soldiers in the army.

Notes

[1]"Captain" Benjamin R. Harris was the man Johnston chose not to name. Harris was born in Alabama about 1823 and was married to Caroline A. E. Vann on May 20, 1846, by Johnston's father-in-law, Rev. John H. Horner. Harris moved his family west in the 1850s, first to Arkansas and later to Louisiana. When the war began, he was working as overseer on a plantation in Natchitoches. In the fall of 1863, Harris showed up again in Madison county, leading a small band of Alabama scouts for the Union army. His men wore Federal uniforms, but his title was unofficial and he was simply hired by the day. Harris quickly became feared by his former friends and neighbors because of his murderous conduct. No other local "Tory" seems to have inspired as much hatred as Ben Harris, though John Dickey of Cottonville came close. U. S. Census, Madison County, Alabama, 1850; U. S. Census, Natichitoches County, Louisiana, 1860; Madison County Marriage Book 1, page 421.

[2]The Buck Island Massacre took place on December 21, 1863. The four victims were Benjamin Roden, James M. Roden, F. M. Roden, and Porter Roden, all civilians. The fifth man was Charles L. Hardcastle, a Confederate soldier on leave from Company C, 50th Alabama Infantry Regiment — Lemuel Mead's old command. When the notorious Captain Harris appeared in their neighborhood, the five men took shelter on Buck Island, realizing, said Hardcastle, that "if we were caught, we would in all probability share the fate of many others who had been killed by this murderer." Ben Roden had known Harris for years and pleaded for their lives. However, Harris was determined to leave no witnesses to his theft of the Roden's livestock. The Rodens were all murdered as Johnston describes it. Hardcastle survived the massacre and the war to tell the story. See "The Tragedy of Buck Island" by Dr. John A. Wyeth in the Confederate Veteran magazine, vol. VI, no. 11, Nov. 1898, p. 523. Dr. Wyeth also told the story in his autobiography, With Sabre and Scalpel (New York: Harpers & Brothers, 1914), pp. 314-315, and in Harper's Weekly, vol. 41, no. 2125, September 11, 1897, p. 898. Hardcastle's military record can be found on Microfilm Copy 311, 50th Alabama Infantry, Roll 442 (H-L).

[3]The 1860 U. S. Census for Marshall County, Alabama, lists Benjamin Roden, 65, a native of South Carolina (Henryville Post Office, residence #228). Only a few houses away lived Thomas B. Henry, 25 (residence #217). He was almost certainly the Bent Henry murdered by Ben Harris. In 1860, T. B. Henry lived with his wife Elizabeth, 19, and a two-month-old son, James. Boarding with them were Isaac Henry, 44, and W. M. D. Hill, 24.

Chapter 7

Scouting Across the River

The time has now come for the account of more active operations, and we shall begin by relating how we scouted to and fro across the river whenever we pleased to do so. But in giving this account we do not wish to make the impression that the commanding officer did anything extra, for he did but little, while his boys did wonders. In referring to the officer in command we shall say "the major" or "the captain."

Take notice, we had been chased across the Tennessee River, had applied to the Confederate authorities and received our commission, and were now on the south bank of the stream forming the line between two hostile armies. The river must be crossed, companies raised, armed and equipped as best we can, and be ready for the conflict.

These arms consisted, at the start, of double-barreled shotguns, chambering buck and ball.[1] Then they had all the side arms they could carry, consisting principally of army and navy pistols.[2]

The reader will remember that the enemy had a heavy picket of infantry who guarded the post at the mouth of Paint Rock river every night, falling back in the morning to camp, while the Yankee captain with his scouts, were patrolling up and down the river all day. Under such circumstances one would think it a great risk to cross the river and gather up troops within the enemy's lines. For the most part we crossed in canoes instead of skiffs and yawls. We did this because there was more danger of giving an alarm by using oars instead of paddles. Hence we got white oak boards at least five feet long, out of which we made some excellent paddles, the blades of which were from two to two and a half feet long, somewhat in the shape of the tail of a catfish, and the edge and point shaved down so sharp that it would cut the water like a butcher knife.

In the night we would get into a canoe, paddle up and down the river on our side, then cross over, as the case might be, flanking the enemy, and going where we pleased. Those daring young Rebels have been known to creep up on the enemy's rear, as near as they dared on foot. Then getting down on the ground, they would actually crawl, like so many lizards, near enough to their campfires to see their eyelashes and hear them talk.

Those boys actually got into a canoe one night, up at Paint Rock river, and ran out, passing the picket post at the mouth. The picket was standing on guard about midway between the water's edge and the top of the bank. They could not have been more than thirty or thirty-five paces from the picket. The river at its mouth is perhaps sixty paces wide, the timber growing thick on either bank and covered with foliage. The night being very dark, of course the shade from the foliage increased the darkness. We used the paddles described above, avoiding changing the paddles from one side to the other, but paddling altogether on one side. For instance, reaching as far forward as we could, and sinking the paddle deep in the water, we made a strong and steady pull; then turning them edgewise, pushing them back, we would turn them in proper position and make another stroke, never lifting them out of the water. Thus we avoided the danger of hitting the canoe with the paddles and attracting the attention of the enemy.

At this time we had gotten together about 30 men. The enemy's base was at Vienna,[3] six or seven miles north of the Tennessee river, from where the infantry came down every evening and went back every morning, while the cavalry took charge by day. Our arrangements having been made on the opposite side of the river, we got in our canoes and moved over by night, landing against the bluff, but not allowing our boats to touch the bank for fear of making a noise. Then we went around in the rear of the pickets until we came about midway between them and their base.

Placing a picket near the road, our little army was thrown back a short distance to await the approach of the enemy. Sure enough, early in the morning our game drew near, and talking and laughing in great glee. There were several women in the crowd, whom the boys called "renegades." Just as they arrived against our picket they fired a gun, merely (as they said afterward) to scare the women; but

we think it scared them equally as bad. Thinking that they had fired on our picket, orders were given our boys to go for them, and go they did. They went as if they meant to get there, crying at the top of their voices, "Halt, there, and surrender!" But they poured buck and ball into them like hailstones, and within less than ten minutes every Yankee was a prisoner of war, while the women fled.

We took more prisoners than we had soldiers in our command, and we were thus supplied with good guns and a supply of ammunition.

Having formed the prisoners in line, we placed a part of our men in front and the rest in the rear and started back to recross the river. Our orders were to keep quiet and march slowly. The orders were obeyed for a short time, but directly the boys became boisterous and began to double-quick.

The officer in command, believing that the Yankees were between us and the river, insisted that the column move slowly and quietly, that we might capture him. But when other Federals were met upon the road the boys in front began to cry out, "Halt, there, and surrender!" We were then in a few steps of a house in which was the game we were after. The captain had tied his mule to a limb, gone into the house, laid down his pistol, taken off his hat and overcoat, and thrown himself across a bed for a nap. But hearing the noise, he ran out, and seeing the gray-coats he bolted for the mountain. The Rebs seeing him about the same time, charged with a yell. They then had a high and thigh, the captain leaving, as it were, a blue streak behind him. The boys grazed him so close that a bullet cut off a lock of hair. But he cleared himself, leaving everything but his own individual bacon. Had the boys obeyed orders, it is probable that they would have settled matters with that captain.

When we reached the river the ferry boat was conveyed to us, and although we had to make several trips, we all passed over without a Reb being scratched. But things did not remain quiet for long. In a little while a volley of minie balls came thundering over the river at us. Then another volley followed. Thus it went until presently all was quiet, and looking over we saw they had hoisted a white flag. And they expressed a desire to talk. We sent one of the prisoners down to the bank of the river to communicate with them. They asked him how the fray commenced and how it terminated, all of which he

answered correctly. They asked also if the prisoners had been treated kindly. To which our spokesman replied, "Oh, yes, very kindly, but they have taken all our greenbacks." We do not know whether that was correct or not. The boys may have deprived them of their money while crossing the river. At their request we brought their surgeon over to our side that he might dress the wounds of the prisoners, and when he had gotten through he was returned safely to his own side. Thus ended our first skirmish with the enemy.[4]

Notes

[1]Buck and ball was a cartridge consisting of one large musket ball plus several smaller buckshot. It was intended to compensate for the inaccuracy of smooth-bore weapons and was deadly at close range.

[2]The standard army revolver of the 1860s fired a .44 caliber bullet or ball. The navy revolver was a smaller .36 caliber. Cavalrymen preferred the navy revolver because of its lighter weight.

[3]Now called New Hope. The Union camp was named Fort Osterhaus after Brig. Gen. Peter J. Osterhaus, a German-born officer.

[4]This action took place at Harrison's Gap on April 21, 1864. Johnston's memory appears to have magnified the number of prisoners. Major John Lubbers of the 26th Iowa Infantry gave his own account:

"I regret to report that this morning about 8.30 a.m. a detail of 1 sergeant, 1 corporal, and 6 men, who were returning from duty as patrols on [the] Tennessee, were captured by a force of the enemy at Harrison's Gap. The men were marching leisurely, and the enemy having concealed themselves fired into the leading 4, mortally wounding 1 and another seriously. They numbered about 30 men. This detail was the only one on the river at the time, the remaining ones having been ordered to camp in the day.

"I mounted men immediately and started in pursuit, but information did not reach me till too late, and I was only able to see the prisoners on the other side.

"Efforts were made to get the wounded back, but without avail. The enemy did not cross on my front, but evidently had the aid and counsel of citizens.

"I would respectfully suggest that, with the general's permission, I can cross the Tennessee and retaliate by capturing and destroying whatever there may be on the other side. All my officers and men are anxious to have a trial with the guerrillas."

Major Lubbers found the following note on the river bank where Johnston crossed with his prisoners:

"Madison County, Ala., April 22, 1864

"To the Officer Commanding Post at Vienna, Ala.:

"SIR: If any citizen or any house is injured or destroyed for what we have done over here, we will retaliate by putting these prisoners to death. We have 8, but will treat them as prisoners of war. We are not bushwhackers, and you must not hold citizens responsible for what we do.

[signed] Officer Commanding Squadron."

The handwriting of the note was recognized as "Parson" Johnston's. Johnston's threat was simply that. The captives were sent to prisoner of war camps. The roster of the 26th Iowa shows that two of them died of disease at Andersonville. Maj. John Lubbers to Capt. W. A. Gordon, Vienna, April 21, 1864. The War of the Rebellion. A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, (Washington: Government Printing Office), Series I, volume XXXII, part 1, pp. 677-678. The Official Records of the two armies (hereafter referred to as the OR) were published over the years from 1880 and 1901.

Chapter 8

Fight with the Gunboat

By this time the enemy had picket posts, a few miles apart, up and down the river for a considerable distance. Not only so, but scouts were passing from post to post every few hours, both by day and night. Besides, their gunboats were plowing up and down the river at regular intervals, thus making things look pretty squally.[1] The reader will bear in mind that we had been placed in command of a post at Hollowell's Landing, over against the mouth of Paint Rock river. At this point Sand Mountain juts down very close to the river on the south bank. But nature seemed to have cut off a large slice and pushed it out directly on the water's edge. The side of this slice next to the river was almost a perpendicular bluff several hundred feet high. On the side next to the mountain there was a gradual slope back, leaving a very narrow valley between the mountain and the detached slice, through which the public road passed, extending up and down the river. Mr. Hollowell,[2] whose name the landing bore, had a number of Negro cabins just at the mouth of this little valley, one of which, standing at the lower point of the bluff, was occupied as our headquarters.

One day[3] there came one of the enemy's gunboats, puffing and snorting at a great rate down the river. She looked dark and smutty and exceedingly ugly. Her appearance indicated that she had emerged from a darker world than we had been used to, and we were not sorry when she got out of sight and hearing. But she had not been long gone until it entered the mind of the writer that she meant mischief, and he said to the boys, "When that boat returns on tomorrow she is going to try to prowl us." He did not know whether that was a presentiment or not, but it settled upon his mind at any rate. And he set to work to meet whatever might follow.

The baggage and horses were sent back into the gorge of the mountain for safe keeping. The next morning our grand army, of twenty men, was divided into two parts, one division being placed on the point of the bluff above our headquarters, and the other on the side of the mountain across the valley and just above the road. But before the men were thus stationed a trusty scout was placed on the major's horse and given the gun that made the loudest noise of any in the command. He was then sent three miles down the river and ordered to place himself upon a high point, from which he would have a plain view for a long way down the stream. And that when the gunboat came into view he was to turn the muzzle of the gun up the river and fire and then make his way back to us as quickly as possible. In a short time he arrived and reported that the boat was coming. As quickly as possible we made ready for what might follow.

Sure enough, as we anticipated, the enemy landed a mile below us, and put off a force of infantry consisting of seventy-five men or more. The boat then ran up and placed herself broad side to the mouth of Paint Rock river, nearly opposite to us. She had a battery of six guns. Thus you see they had set a complete trap for us, while at the same time we had fixed a little trap of our own, and we were lucky enough to dodge their trap and toll them into ours. After preparing ourselves we did not have long to wait until the sharpshooters came marching up. As we let them pass by us on the side of the mountain, they put us in mind of hunters who had set a covey of birds and expecting them to flush every minute. Their arms were half presented, ready for action, while they peeped behind every log and stump, looked under every house and searched the corncrib. Thus we let them proceed until some of them had entered our headquarters.

At that moment the major's pistol fired as a signal for action. As quick as thought a volley was poured into them from both sides, followed by the command to charge. But Captain Grayson,[4] who was standing near when the order was given, suggested that it be countermanded, which was instantly done, for we did not wish our men to charge over the bluff and become exposed to the fire of the gunboat. The volley of bullets accompanied by the order to charge was more than the Yankees could stand, and they evacuated instanter. Down the river bank they went, helter skelter, head over

heels, if not heels over head. As they ran one dropped a sack with a little meal in it, another a pair of shoes, another some sewing thread, all of which they had taken from our headquarters. As soon as they got under the bank out of the reach of our bullets they double-quicked as if they wanted to get somewhere else as soon as possible. Then the gunboat steamed across and took them aboard in short order, and replacing herself at the mouth of Paint Rock, she turned loose her battery on us.

By this time there was a considerable smoke issuing from the chimney of our headquarters. The writer, going in to see what the matter was, found that the Federals had thrown some old saddle blankets into the fire, which he threw into the yard and then followed himself. While standing there a bomb passed so near him that the concussion of the air staggered him backwards. And when it had passed on towards the rear, it exploded and wounded one of our men slightly in the leg.

Just here we wish the reader to hear what Captain J. R. Johnson has to say of the above incident, as he was a pilot on the gunboat at the time.[5] The captain and the major were no kin, only according to Adam, though he would not be ashamed to claim kinship with him in any country, for he was a very clever man. The Federals had captured him, and as he had been an experienced steamboat man, they compelled him to pilot the gunboat.

Captain Johnson's statement:

"Maj. M. E. Johnston was stationed at Hollowell's Landing, on the Tennessee river, with a squad of twenty-five men. He was there to keep the enemy from crossing and to prevent the men from the gunboat from foraging on the south side of the river. This point is situated in Marshall county, at the mouth of Bean Rock Creek, just opposite the mouth of Paint Rock river, seventeen miles below Guntersville, Alabama.

"Coming upon the gunboat, the 'Gen. Thomas,' Captain W. A. Naylor of the Thirteenth Wisconsin[6] was commanding. The boat had on board one hundred sharpshooters and a battery of six guns. Capt. Naylor landed the boat one mile below Hollowell's Landing and put ashore seventy-five men and a lieutenant, to come up in the rear of Maj. Johnston's camp and capture it. But Johnston, seeing that he was

evidently hemmed in by the gunboat in front and the sharpshooters in the rear, outnumbering him three or four times, divided his men into two parts, placing one part among the rocks on the bluff and the other among the bushes next to the mountain. Thus they occupied both sides of the road leading down to the boat landing. There they remained quiet until the Federal troops came into the camp and began to destroy it.

"Johnston then ordered his men to open fire, which they did, killing one man and wounding several others. At this time there was a stampede of the Federal troops to the water's edge, where they were protected by the battery on the gunboat. Presently the gunboat landed and took aboard all the sharpshooters, and then proceeded up the river to Bridgeport, which was headquarters for the gunboat fleet, concluding to let that picket post remain in charge of Maj. Johnston and his squad.

"After arriving at headquarters, the officers of the gunboat reported to Gen. Steadman, who was in command, the details of the Hollowell's Landing fight. The lieutenant who went on shore with the men reported that he and his men were extremely anxious to get back on the gunboat out of sight of those hyenas. He also said that the bushwhackers had whipped the gunboat in a fair fight.

J. R. Johnson
"Eye-Witness, Pilot on Gunboat."

When the boat started up the river, we all double-quicked to the top of the hill and looked down upon that black monster with contempt. We poured a shower of minie balls into her and continued to shoot as long as she was in reach. We would add that shortly after this we captured Captain Johnson, and his recollection then was that three men were killed on the boat. Whether that be true or not, we do not know. This was the beginning and ending of gunboatism with us. And up to this date we have not gotten very hungry for another dish of this kind of fruit.

Notes

[1]The Union navy's gunboats were unable to proceed up the Tennessee river past Muscle Shoals. Therefore, the Union forces constructed four gunboats and six transports at Bridgeport, Alabama, to control the upper Tennessee and supply Chattanooga. These warships constituted the 11th Division of the Mississippi Squadron.

[2]Presumably William D. Hollowell (1800-1890), a wealthy merchant of Huntsville.

[3]This encounter took place on May 12, 1864. See note 6 below.

[4]Johnston is probably referring to Charles A. Grayson, who became a lieutenant of Company F when it was organized on September 1,1864. Compiled Service Records, Mead's Confederate Cavalry.

[5]James R. Johnson (1831-1895) of Marshall county, Alabama, was a prewar riverboat captain. From mid-1864 until late in the war, Johnson was employed by the Union fleet as chief pilot on the upper Tennessee River. The gunboat General Thomas was officially "Gunboat A" at the time of the encounter. Southern War Claim Number 1460, James R. Johnson. (Johnson's claim for repayment for supplies provided to the Union troops was denied.) The General Thomas was a lightly armored sidewheel steamer. Her armament in August, 1864, consisted of two 20-pounder Parrott rifles and four 24-pounder Parrott smoothbore howitzers. Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), Series II, vol. I, p. 93.

[6]Captain William A. Naylor was actually commanding officer of the 10th Indiana Battery. Naylor made his own somewhat confusing report two days after the skirmish on May 14, 1864. It reads in part:

"[We] ran up and landed a detachment of sharpshooters about a mile below Hollowell's wood-yard, or Jackson's Ferry, and set ashore another detachment, and

reconnoitered half a mile back of the landing, and waited for the detachment landed below to arrive. At this time the Rebels, number unknown, concealed among the rocks and bushes, opened a cross fire on our party, wounding 3 men, 1 of whom died soon after being brought on board the boat. As the fire was from three directions, it was impossible to see or know the force of the enemy. The riflemen fell back to the boat; backing out into the stream, we shelled the landing." Capt. W. A. Naylor to Col. Wladimir Krzyanowskt, Bridgeport, May 14, 1864. OR Series I, volume XXXIX, part 1, pp. 15-16.

Chapter 9

Battle of the Corncribs

We have now fallen on stirring times. The writer having put his hands to the plow, there is no time for looking back. Well does he know that he had already passed through many dangers, both seen and unseen. But now his eye looks forward, and he tries as best he can to look into the future, but he is compelled to look through a glass darkly. Only things of the past are plainly visible. Looking into the past he sees the place from which he was driven, and there remain his loved ones, who are dearer to him than life itself. These are left behind in the midst of the enemy, and that enemy, judging from his acts, entirely destitute of human sympathy, but full of malice and brutality. Being thus surrounded, our loved ones were exposed to flame, bullet and outrage, while the neighbors, and in fact the whole country, was exposed to the insults of these inhuman wretches. We say wretches — for their acts proved them to be such.

Hence the writer determined to pitch into the midst of the fray, and taking a small squad of men, leaving the rest to guard the post, he crossed the Tennessee river right into the enemy's lines. Wherever the Federals found a Rebel inside their lines they styled him a "bushwhacker." Being now inside the lines, we became subject to that appellation, and they at once posted it on our back, and we have taken no pains to rub it off, from that day till this. Our home was inside the lines, and we claimed the right to be inside the lines. Hence we went inside the lines, fought inside the lines, and remained inside the lines — only as we saw proper to go out and in as we pleased.

Situated as we then were, we were constantly surrounded by danger, both by day and by night. Yes, a swamp fox surrounded by a pack of blood-thirsty hounds had as much chance for life as we had. But we were into the chase, and in it to stay until the last day late in the evening. So away

we went northward from the Tennessee river, leading a zigzag route up the Flint river valley, flanking everything and everybody, except those we wished to see. The reader will understand that our object was to gather recruits and to ascertain important movements of the enemy and to report to the Confederate authorities. And in the third place, to fight a little, if necessary. We say a little because we did not wish to get into close quarters until we got "the hang of things." We did not have long to wait until we had an opportunity to cut at least one eye-tooth. As we worked our way up the valley we gathered four young fellows as recruits. Having crossed the river with seven men, these four made eleven.

The first night we lay out in a dense forest in Flint river bottom. Early the next morning, between daybreak and sunrise, we came in the back way to old Mr. Berry Wade's,[1] our object being to get something to eat for man and beast. Wade lived in the Big Cove, eight miles southeast of Huntsville. His plantation lay between the mountain and Flint river, the house being on the east side of the farm, the latter being about a mile wide. Just under the bank east of the house ran a small branch making off due south. This branch was called "the bayou." In advancing from the river to the house we passed over what is called the "first bottom." Crossing the bayou, we ascended a bank perhaps thirty feet high, to the dwelling, which stood on the edge of the "second bottom." About sixty paces due north of the dwelling, on the same bank, was a pair of double cribs, with an entry between. We went into the dwelling and called for something to eat. The old lady refused. But as a number of Negroes were present, the situation was understood at once.[2] We began to puff and blow at a great rate, as though things would be upset, and that quick. The keys were demanded; she threw them down. We picked them up and commanded the Negroes to go to cooking.

Apprehending no special danger, we placed Charley Grayson on picket and went to the cribs to get forage for our horses. The most of the boys stacked arms in the entry against the east crib and began to shell corn. The writer had placed his back against the bulk of corn with his back toward the door and was shelling corn in a vessel between his knees. Our picket, like the rest of us, thinking of no danger, had gone into the house and was talking with the landlord. But, as we

learned afterward, we had been reported on the evening before; and the enemy had been piloted across the mountain and had spent the night in hunting for us. As we thus sat, the lieutenant,[3] turning his face southward, exclaimed, "Just look at the Yankees!" We knew from his expression that there were "oodles" of them. Immediately the word was given to get out of the crib, when we jumped and snatched our guns from where they leaned against the other crib. Three of the new recruits gave "leg bail" as they came out of the crib, and the gun of the fourth failed to fire. Four from eleven left seven to do the work.

When we looked out on these Yankees they extended beyond the bayou clear into the woods. We did not know whether they had any rear or not, while their front was within sixty paces of us, having begun to charge. Our picket had discovered them about the same time we did, and came running nearly parallel with the head of the column, exclaiming: "Rally, boys, rally!" We saw at a glance that what was to be done must be done quickly; hence, without taking shelter behind the cribs, we moved out into open space, meeting the head of the column. At the same time, the officer in command shouted at the top of his voice, "Company F move on the right and Company H move on the left!" ending with, "Fire, boys, fire!"

As quick as a flash the boys poured forked lightning right down the head of the column. By "forked" we mean "double-barreled." And they did not stop, but kept putting it there quick and fast. In a minute the head of the column seemed to have burst wide open. In another minute half a dozen of their horses seemed to be balanced on their backbones, feeling upward for the earth. We saw at once that we had them by the forelock, for they acted like men who did not know whether the storm was coming from the heavens or the earth. We are of the opinion that they didn't fire six guns during the whole action. We used buck and ball in our double-barrels, besides being loaded down with sidearms. And it is reasonable to suppose that we put every spring into action that we thought would do us any good. We kept pouring the leaden hail into them, driving them back down the bayou into the woods and finally out of sight.

Getting a good long breath, we concluded it was a good thing, as the fellow said, to hunt a new "posish." Therefore we threw ourselves into the saddles, and sifted across the big field.

We learned afterwards that when the Federals got into the woods they formed into a line, threw out their skirmishers, and advanced as cautiously as though they were meeting a grand army; and it was over an hour before they approached the corn cribs. But long before that time we were miles off among the Huntsville mountains, and not a man scratched, while the Federals had to send to Huntsville for ambulances to haul off their dead and wounded.

The enemy outnumbered us at least twelve to one. We learned afterwards that they consisted of a company just mustered into service, numbering eighty-five to a hundred men. We learned, also, that when they returned to Huntsville Company B of the same regiment[4] tantalized them for letting Johnston whip them with eleven men, while the truth of the matter was, there were only seven who did any fighting. Had they continued the charge they first started to make there would have been no salvation for us.

Our opinion is that the command given for Company F to move on the right and Company H on the left, combined with the vim with which we fought them, was all that saved us. And you had better believe that we were never again caught by the Yankees in a corn crib.

Notes

[1]*The 1860 Census, Madison County, Alabama, lists L. B. Wade, a 75-year-old native of Virginia. Wade was wealthy, owning real estate worth $20,000 and personal property totalling $10,000. (Huntsville post office, #364/362)*

[2]*Mrs. Wade obviously feared the Union troops would burn her home if the slaves told them she had willingly fed the Southerners. Thus Johnston pretended to force her to do so against her will.*

[3]*Presumably 1st Lieutenant Nathaniel Millard. The skirmish was fought on June 27, 1864.*

[4]*The Union regiment was the 12th Indiana Cavalry. Captain Robert S. Richart reported he had learned on June 26 that "Johns[t]on's band of guerrillas" was in Big Cove valley. He left Huntsville that evening with 41 men, moving cautiously until he camped at 10 p.m. He moved out at daybreak, marched three-quarters of a mile, and halted at a creek to water the horses. "As I started out with the vanguard," Richart continued, "we suddenly came upon the enemy under the command of the parson himself, to the number of fifteen, feeding their horses. I immediately attacked them, and, although they occupied a very strong position on ground that was unfavorable for cavalry to operate upon, yet at the expiration of fifteen minutes' sharp fighting we drove them in confusion, capturing 5 horses and equipments and wounding 3 or 4 of the band. We chased them into the hills near Blevingston Gap, a distance of two miles from the scene of the fight." The 12th Indiana lost one man, Private John Twiford of Company I, mortally wounded by "the third volley fired by the enemy." He died in Huntsville. One horse was killed and 10 injured. Richart confirms Johnston's statement that the cavalrymen were new, noting the men behaved well for "raw troops the first time under fire." Capt. R. S. Richart to Col. E. Anderson, Huntsville, June 30, 1864. OR Series I, volume XXXIX, part 1, p. 241.*

Private Horace B. Flint of the 13th Wisconsin Infantry also described the fight in a colorful letter home on June 28, 1864:

"I went out with the cavalry last Sunday. first night we Rode nearly all night and only got one prisoner and most morning had tied our horses up without a brittling [unbridling] or sattling and laid back about two hours. then got up and started. it was past day light. we went about two miles and Run on a squad of them. their mine bin twenty five. I couldent tell for sarten how many. they war in a yard feeding corn to their horses. Wal their was five of our Co. along, my self, Seth Gillard, W. L. Randolph and Asa Ridge and [illeg.]. and we had moved out of the [illeg.] We rode up in ten Rods of them and was watering our horses before eather farly seen me at this. I was at the head of the Co. and my mont had first been drinkin and I looked up and seen the Rebel Capt jump off[f] the stoop of the house and Run toards the yard. I told a Cavalry fellow and he told the Capt that came along at that time and we put spurs to our horses and the Rest Came along as fast as they could get out of the Crick. We went up within six Rods of them and Couldent get any nearer for a Copple of fences and By that time the Rebs had all got their gun and was poppin the Ball and Buckshot at us as thick as hale stones. They wer on a little Rats of ground, so the first fire went Clear over us. and then they began to Rake the horses and they wer new ones and was afraid. so they Raised and pitched so as we couldent do eny thing hardley. I got off[f] from my mont and let him go till the fuss were over. our loss wer one man mortley wounded, one horse killed and horses wounded, and three mules wounded, and one of our Co. struck with a spent Ball in the guts and make a black and blue spot and it was a little sore. that was Seth Gillard. My mont got wounded in the yankle joint and i think my self well off[f] that I did not get eny of the pills my self, for they came as thickly as hale. the Rebs loss was two wounded that we know of and a citizen says four of them was wounded and the Capt they don't think will live. We got 8 horses and saddles, two guns and one Revolver, and I think they got the worst of it. if they didn't I am Ready to try them again."

Pvt. Horace B. Flint to Mother, Whitesburg, June 29, 1864. A copy of Flint's letter is in the Heritage Room, Huntsville Public Library. Punctuation has been added for clarity.

Chapter 10

Fight on Yellow Bank

We suppose that by this time the reader has come to the conclusion that things were getting very lively. Yes, everything began to stir and move, the Federals scouting in every direction, full of wrath and vengeance; the Rebs watching and dodging and ever and anon giving them a "bit of a scare" by punching them under the fifth rib. And scare them we did, for before we got through with them they seemed to make it a point to "keep in the middle of the road."

While things were thus moving the post at Hollowell's Landing was put in charge of other soldiers, and our little band crossed the river into what we styled "the new Confederacy." At this time our command consisted of from twenty-five to thirty men. And as we hoisted the Confederate flag and unfurled it to the breeze, we all shouted, "We are for home and country!"

So at it we went, they after us and we after them. As we thus struggled our little band has been known to put to flight several hundred of the enemy. But occasionally we were in the lead. At various other times we made them get up and get; and when they started they seemed very anxious to get somewhere else.

Thus things went on until the enemy freighted down a whole regiment, which was placed within a stockade at Vienna, now New Hope.[1] The stockade occupied the spot where the residence of Dr. B. W. Hinds now stands.[2] We knew they were sent there for our special benefit; therefore, we gave them our special attention, being aware of the fact that when a new neighbor moves into a community it is the duty of all citizens to give polite attention to the newcomer. Not wishing to be impolite, we proceeded along this line to the best of our ability.

About this time the air was full of news. Among other reports we received news that the enemy had orders to show us

no quarter, but to shoot and hang us as so many dogs. Therefore we sent this dispatch to the colonel in command:[3]

"Sir — We learn that you have orders from headquarters, and those orders have been read in dress parade, that you should give our boys no quarter, but shoot or hang every prisoner.

"Now, sir, we have always treated prisoners as human beings, showing them special kindness, which course we wish to continue. Please be kind enough to let us know whether you have received such orders or not."

The answer came rolling back: "The Thirteenth[4] asks for no quarter, nor does it give any."

We wish to remind you that it was Company H of the Thirteenth that ran on us in the crib, and that it was Company B of the same regiment that tantalized the former when they returned to Huntsville. It happened at this time that Company B was sent out to capture that hateful band of "bushwhackers." On their way to execute these orders they determined to go by the house of Captain [Thomas] Owens,[5] a citizen of the neighborhood, who was then in the Confederate army. On arriving there they found no one save Mrs. Owens and the children, and as there was no man to tongue-lash, they put in to jawing the helpless woman, using many expressions that did not become a gentleman.

Among other things, they asked where old Bushwhacker Johnston was. Mrs. Owens replied that she did not know. They swore that they did not believe it. But finding that they could learn nothing about us, they started off, saying, "We shall be back within two hours and show you Johnston with his bald head." And sure enough, within sixty minutes they had an introduction to "Old Bushwhacker."

The Yellow Bank is a small creek winding its way through the low grounds of the Vienna valley, a few miles west of that place, now New Hope. In other days a hurricane had swept that section, tearing down nearly all the large timber, and the logs lay crossed and piled in every direction. We having arrived at this point, we placed our pickets at every possible approach of the enemy, and made ready to meet him. As usual, when we had time, we divided our army into three grand divisions, so that we could meet the enemy in front, attack him in the rear, and gnaw like a beaver upon his flanks. And we wish it known, once and for all, that we never

fired on any men until we had let them know we were there, and had ordered them to halt and surrender.

On came the enemy, flushed with anticipated victory. As soon as they reached the proper point we gave the command to them to "halt and surrender!" But they showing fight, we were not fools enough to stand there and let them have the first lick. Hence, the officer's pistol fired, as the signal for action. As quick as thought a shower of bullets poured into their front, rear and flank. And being surrounded, as it were on three sides, there was but one side left for their escape. Just then it was squally times! The fire flashed, the bullets whistled, horses reared and snorted and plunged over logs, through the water and in the brush; hats fell off, guns slipped from hands and fell rattling among the logs! It was a head-over-heels and heels-over-head operation.[6]

Just in the wind-up one of their horses, being wounded, seemed to take advantage of his rider and came dashing through our lines, dying as he ran; for just after he got through our lines he fell, sliding along on the earth, throwing his rider perhaps twenty feet beyond him. We thought the fall enough to have killed any human being; but after a little while we found there was life in the fellow, and we commenced rubbing him and bringing water on the brims of our hats for him to drink and to pour on him, until we found that he would live.

The Yankees had not more than run out of sight when one of our boys began to "pat," while others pitched in and danced "juber" right on the heels of all that carnage. "Strange!" say you. But such is life. While they were full of frolic and fun, they had souls as big as all outdoors, and would have followed their commander to the jumping off place.

After that fight every man in our command had first class arms, while on nearly every head was a brand new hat with a brass "B" in front. We believe the enemy lost at least half their hats, and more than a third of their guns, while a great number of them went back to Huntsville wounded and bleeding. We learned afterward from some of our Huntsville friends that when Company B got back into camp Company H, whom they had tantalized for their acts at "the corn crib," cried out, "Oh, yes! We told you old Johnston would fight!"

The Yankee who was wounded, and who was captured

as he fell from his horse, was found to be much better, and even able to travel; therefore, we concluded to send him back to his command. But before he started the major concluded to give him a little talk, and said to him, "Look here! We want you to go to your masters at the stockade and tell them that old Johnston's hand has been upon you, certain; and that he says that if you take the life of one of his men, after they have surrendered, that the lives of ten of your men will pay the forfeit!"

He replied that he was afraid he would be killed before he got there. But he was told to go ahead, for not a hair of his head should be hurt. Away he went, and we learned afterward that he made a faithful report.

We do not know but that this was the same "Yank" who caused the Federals to put out the report that Johnston always prays over wounded Yankees with these words: "Good Lord, enable my boys to take better aim next time that they may kill and not cripple!"

In the action described above we had only thirty-five men, and they were acting as infantry — fighting on foot. The boys called it "turning web-foot." And in the greatest victories we ever gained we never had more, in direct action, than from twenty-five to fifty men. And if the reader wonders at our success, we shall try to explain it. We never fired more than two volleys before the order was given to charge. And when we started we went like a whirlwind. And it was for the enemy to stay there or get further; and they never failed to get further the last nor the first time. When we determined to put up a complete job, we hid our horses out and turned ourselves foot-loose; and when this was done the boys knew there was work ahead.

Notes

[1]Incorporated as Vienna in 1832, the town was burned by the Union army on December 15, 1864. It was rebuilt after the war and reincorporated as New Hope in 1883. Thomas J. Taylor, History of Madison County, Alabama, undated manuscript from 1880s in the Heritage Room, Huntsville Public Library.

[2]Until recently, the site of the stockade was occupied by a warehouse. It is now vacant.

[3]Colonel Edward Anderson, 12th Indiana Cavalry. Johnston's actual message was obviously much more formal than he recalls.

[4]Johnston's memory failed him slightly. The Union regiment was the 12th Indiana Cavalry. Johnston did fight against the 13th Wisconsin Infantry later in the year, which explains the error.

[5]Thomas H. Owens raised a company for the Confederate army in the fall of 1861. However, the state of Alabama had no weapons available to arm the men. Therefore, Owens' company joined a Tennessee regiment, eventually becoming Company E, 37th Tennessee Infantry. Compiled Service Records, Microfilm copy 311, Roll 269, 37th Tennessee Infantry, Lacewell-Purkypile.

[6]The skirmish at Yellow Bank Creek took place on July 8, 1864. Lieutenant Colonel Alfred Reed, commanding the companies of the 12th Indiana stationed at Vienna, made his report to Colonel Anderson the day after the fight:

"The detachment under my command yesterday morning separated about five miles north of Owen's Mill, on Flint River, Company C going east to J. C. Drake's, who is the father of three of Johns[t]on's gang; thence we went south to Vienna; the other company (B) was ordered to make Vienna, via Owen's Mill. ... About three miles from Vienna the company was fired upon by Johns[t]on's company of bushwhackers and dispersed. The captain and Lieutenant Burden and 7 of their company were wounded, and the scout,

John C. Martin, was killed; 3 horses were killed, and some 4 or 5 wounded. The wounds on the men, though some of them are severe, are none of them mortal. I was with Company C. On arriving at Vienna I learned of the disaster to Captain Baker, and immediately repaired to the scene of action. After plundering the dead horses and men the rebels retreated to the southward. We followed them some distance, but night coming on we returned to this place. I shall keep Company C here and pursue my original plan against the bushwackers until further orders." Lieut. Col. A. Reed to Col. E. Anderson, Vienna, July 9, 1864. OR Series I, volume XXXIX, part 1, p. 354.

Chapter 11

Crossing the Federal Lines As We Pleased

It was always a mystery to our most intimate friends how it was possible for us to live in the midst of the enemy, surrounded, as we were, not by hundreds, but sometimes by thousands, and not be captured. In the first place, a majority of the boys were well acquainted with the entire country, including every nook and corner, and almost every tree, rock and stump. The valley we are now describing is called New Madison, because it was added to the original county after the Indians were removed west.[1] It is said to be twelve miles square, and almost entirely surrounded by mountains, which are very rough. Then scattered about the valley proper are smaller mountains, covered by a dense forest and a multitude of large boulders.

Knowing our danger, we seldom entered a house, or rested under a roof; we kept our own secrets, trusting no one except the very few we saw proper. In marching we made it a point to flank every house and everybody. When crossing roads on foot, every man stepped in the foremost man's tracks. At other times we would walk across the road backwards. Again, when we were seen marching in a certain direction — say in the evening near twilight — we would move forward slowly until darkness set in, and then countermarch, or flank around and go in an entirely different direction; and entering some gorge of the mountain, or some dense forest, we would remain there until we wished to change our location. It was therefore almost an impossibility for the enemy to follow our trail. As to following us into the woods or upon the mountains, that was the last thing a Yankee could be got to do. Some time previous to this they had come to the conclusion that their safest place was right in the middle of the road.

Again, when we were in the saddle and they were after us, if there were not too many we whipped them every time. If their forces were too large we tried to outrun them, and when we saw that might fail, we tried to trick them. Hence, in one of the three ways we never failed to save ourselves from their hands. Unless they were looking right at us we tricked them every time. Perhaps you have heard of a "Yankee trick," but we will show you a Rebel trick.

Wanting to know what was going on further back in the interior, some twenty-five or thirty of us threw ourselves into the saddle and put out to reconnoiter. Passing out at the head of the Big Cove and over Monte Sano, we struck the Memphis & Charleston Railroad at Fearn's Switch.[2] There we found something of a slight temptation to the boys. Seeing the telegraph wire, they dismounted and cut it, each fellow rolling as much as around his horse's neck as he could well carry. They then remounted and away we went, directing our course northward, between the main forks of Flint river, leaving New Market to the right and Hazel Green to the left. On getting to Mint Springs we had a few words with Brub Williamson,[3] and then put off along the road leading to Fayetteville, Tennessee.

Take notice, we were not certain that the Yankees were after us, but, as our custom was, we acted as though they were. And sure enough, after leaving Williamson we had hardly gotten out of sight when there came about 300 Yankees in hot pursuit. Williamson told us afterwards that he "thought we were gone world without end."

It was nearly night, and the crisis was now upon us. We knew a good camping spot in a dense forest about half a mile to the left of the road we were then traveling, and at the place we wished to spend the night. There was a dim road turning to the left and leading directly to that spot, but instead of taking that road we passed by it. After going the proper distance, one man reined his horse out of the road here, another there, and another yonder, until every horse was out of the road; then all riding to the center, the whole command was soon together at the appointed camping ground. This manuever the boys called "scattering our trail."

In a few minutes on came the Yankees, moving straight forward toward Fayetteville. But having lost our trail, and the night coming on, they struck camp. So there we

lay all night within three-quarters of a mile of each other, we watching them as close as a fox would watch a train of pursuing hounds.

The next morning they began to trail us, making circle after circle, but every one proved abortive. Finally they gave up and returned to headquarters, and we suppose they reported no property found. We have related this incident to show the reader some of our "tricks," of which we were full, and to catch us was what the enemy could not do; or, to say the least, they never did.[4]

The term surrender was not in our vocabulary, whether we were surrounded by ten or ten thousand; but we determined to go out in one of three ways — fight out, run out, or die out! — and the Yankees never hated "old Nick" worse than they did "Johnston's bushwhackers." And they may have thought of us as did the preacher of the stubborn will of man: "I had as soon undertake to sideline a catfish through the Mussel Shoals,[5] or hold a crop-tailed pig by the tail, as to try to convince some men of their error." We suppose that the catfish or pigtail, either, would have been a very slippery job. We were somewhat like the fellow's jaybird. The jay was sitting upon a limb, when a blue hawk darted at him; but just as the hawk was about to grab the jay the latter wheeled under the limb. As soon as the hawk passed by the jay whipped upon top and commenced screaming, "Too slick! too slick! too slick!" As the Federals had given up the chase, we went on about our business, asking them no odds.

As we have been talking about tricks, perhaps the reader will not object to hearing of a few more. Some of our tricks with the enemy were intended merely to harass them and to furnish amusement for our boys. The stockade at Vienna occupied rising ground, but just south of it about a quarter of a mile away stood the Methodist church upon a still higher hill. We would sometimes ride up to this hill, on the opposite side from the stockade, and begin to march around it until we had encircled it two or three times. And this would be done in full view of the garrison at the stockade. While in view of the enemy we would march slowly until we turned out of sight; then we would double quick, the front men falling in the rear of their comrades, thus keeping up an apparently unbroken column in sight of the Yankees. We would march in that way as long as we dared, without our

trick being discovered. The Yankees were known to tremble in their boots, while the Rebels would go off and enjoy the trick hugely.

Another trick that the boys played upon the enemy, when they first entered the stockade, was as follows. Squads of them would ride out every night, prowling about the country, committing mischief and doing devilment. When the boys thus found them out they would slip into their rear, cut grape vines, and after twisting the ends, stretch them across the road and tie them to trees, about high enough to strike a man in the middle as he sat in the saddle. Then the boys in front would fire on them, when they would run full tilt against the vines, which threw them here, there and yonder, while our boys would whoop and yell, enjoying themselves to the full.

We shall mention another trick which we practiced more than once. Upon seeing the Yankees coming meeting us as we traveled along the road we would call a halt, turn ourselves in the saddle, look back and give a long sweep of the arm, as if giving a sign to some one in the rear. This was enough, and we got rid of them in a hurry.

Perhaps the reader would like to cross the Tennessee river with us, back and forth, to see how it was done.

The river is from a half to three-quarters of a mile wide; yet we speak advisedly when we say that it was not much in our way then as a common creek is today, for we crossed it whenever we wanted to. A good part of the time we kept some kind of a craft on our own side of the river, with the scouts going from post to post, while the gunboat passed up and down every day or two.

To keep anything like a ferry boat was impossible. Therefore we took a long chain, fastened one end securely to the bow of a canoe and the other deep down in the water as far as we could reach. We would then put in rocks and sand until the canoe was sunk to the bottom, and there it stayed until we wished it resurrected. Then it would be raised and we would proceed to our business.

When we had no craft on our side the boys would tie their clothes on top of their heads, throw themselves on a rail or chunk, and across the river they would go. When we failed to find a craft on either side, we have built skiffs of light plank, four miles in the interior, then carried them to the

river and crossed our whole command. In crossing horses, when we failed to get a ferry boat, we would lead them into the river by the side of a canoe, having first placed a man in the stern who thoroughly understood his business. At the same time, men would hold the bridles who knew exactly how to give a horse fair play in swimming. Thus ready, we would launch off. And we do not recollect that we ever made a mishap. It is true that when the river was up we would float down some distance. In this way we carried our horses out and brought them almost at our will and pleasure.

Notes

[1]*New Madison is the name applied to the southeast corner of Madison County, once a part of the Cherokee nation.*

[2]*Now called Chase, Alabama.*

[3]*Probably A. O. Williamson, the only man of that surname listed in the area in the 1860 U. S. Census. In 1860, A. O. Williamson was a 29-year-old farmer. (#273/273, Hayes Store post office, Madison County, Alabama.)*

[4]*Brigadier General Robert S. Granger, commander of the Union District of North Alabama, described this fruitless pursuit of Johnston in a report of August 18, 1864:*

"On the 12th of this month a detachment of Tennessee [Union] cavalry left here and marched to within seven miles of Fayetteville, turned east, scouted the country on headwaters of Flint River and near New Market, and returned here on the 14th after having marched all one night. The commanding officer of the party reports the guerrillas as having left that section of the country and taken with them all stolen plunder and their families. Citizens represent that they have left with the view of crossing the Tennessee River. I have had all the mounted men of the Twelfth Indiana Cavalry scouting between Flint River and Paint Rock. They have killed and wounded a number. They are still in considerable force in that neighborhood. Before the receipt of your communication from General Milroy I had ordered three companies of Tennessee cavalry to co-operate with Colonel [Edward] Anderson to clean out the country. They would have been off three days since after their trip north. They leave immediately. Colonel Spalding has been ordered to send a force in the direction indicated in your communication."

Brig. Gen. R. S. Granger to Maj. B. H. Polk, Huntsville, Aug. 18, 1864. OR Series I, volume XXXIX, part 1, p. 462

[5]*Now officially spelled Muscle Shoals.*

Chapter 12

Citizens and Soldiers

By this time the Federals were hot to boiling heat. They had companies moving in all directions, and seemed determined to drive us out, or to destroy the whole country. As they went, they burned houses, arrested citizens and dragged them off to headquarters, had them court martialed and tried them for bushwhacking. Among other things, they got up a petition and had the citizens sign it, requesting us to cross the Tennessee river with our command. Some of the citizens signed it, but others refused. Among those who refused was Dr. [Isaac W.] Sullivan,[1] a venerable man, who was honored by every citizen living in the valley.

Dr. Sullivan came to our camp and told us that he had refused to sign the petition; when the officer in command replied, "Doctor, you go back and sign the petition, for it will do us no harm, and perhaps will make fair weather for you. By refusing to sign you lay yourself liable to be arrested, put in prison, and maybe your life taken."

Failing to move us by petition, they sent word that they would vacate the river and furnish us vessels to cross in if we would go. We returned them an answer to this effect:

"Gentlemen — We are much obliged for your kind offer; but we have never failed to cross the river whenever we wished to; neither do we expect to fail when we desire to cross again. This is our country, and here we expect to stay."

Next they sent us word that if we did not go out, and stay out, they would, when we were around, burn ten miles square. Say you, that was putting things down with the bark on? To this we replied: "You have already been burning. You have burned dwellings, cribs, barns, churches and fences, and you may burn on. Yes, you may burn old terra firma until the bottom drops out and she caves in! Then, if it be possible, we will bring grains of sand, one at a time, from some other sphere and stick them together until we have a foundation to

stand on, and fight you again over the chasm! You had just as well understand, once and for all, that we are here to stay!"

Getting no other word from them, we went on about our business and they went on about theirs, which was burning houses and arresting citizens.

About this time they had a company in the valley prowling around and pretending to be hunting for us. But we did not believe that they had any great desire to find us. At any rate, they had burned out a family at the lower end of the cove, and were returning to Huntsville across the mountain. We therefore made every necessary arrangement for the introduction.

As usual, we divided our command into three divisions — one to attack in front, another to sweep around in rear, and the third to work on the flank. In going up the mountain from the Big Cove, the road is very rough and the mountain rugged. And at the place referred to the road runs along the side of the mountain, having been dug and blown out among the rocks. At the upper edge of the road is a bluff of rocks perhaps twenty-five feet high, while at the lower edge there is a precipice which is impassable. Here the road is straight for perhaps a hundred and fifty yards, but at the upper end of the bluff it obliques to the right.

Now, our intention was for the attacking party to charge into the road at the upper end of the bluff; while the division lowest down the mountain was to sweep into the rear, and the third squad was in position to charge up to the edge of the bluff, where they would have been within forty feet of the enemy. The reader might ask, "Were you going to murder them Indian fashion?" We answer, no! We have told you before, and we tell you again, that we never did fire on the enemy until we first gave them a chance to surrender.

In a short time after we had prepared ourselves the Yankees came riding up the mountain, rattling the rocks in the road, and talking and laughing. Poor fellows! Little did they think how near they were to the center of the death trap! Nearer and still nearer they came, until they were near enough for our pickets to discover three or four citizens right at the head of the column. Yes, there were Dr. [John] Debow, Old Uncle Billy Wright, Squire Billy Moon,[2] and perhaps others; all as honorable citizens as ever lived in any community. They were on their way to Huntsville, and

happened to fall in with the Federals. The probability is that the presence of these good citizens proved the salvation of that company of Yankees. The officer in command knew that if we commenced action that perhaps all of those good citizens would have been killed. Hence we remained perfectly quiet, and allowed the whole command to pass by unmolested.

We tremble now whenever we think of the fearful trap we had those fellows in; and yet they never knew it, nor have they ever heard of it up to the present time. Indeed, no one ever knew it save ourselves. Just think of the consequences had those fellows refused to surrender! And it is very probable they would have refused. Also, should we have swept into the road, in their front, like a tornado, their rear would have been closed in as by an avalanche. And those men on the bluff would have run up close enough to have punched them with the muzzles of their guns, while the missiles of death would have raked the whole column from end to end. How could they have escaped? It was impossible for them to scale the bluff, or to jump off the precipice below. Their only possible chance of escape would have been to run over us; and that would have been a two-handed game, and a mighty rough game at that.

As soon as the enemy was out of sight some of our boys seemed to be much out of humor, because, as they said, "We had let a parcel of house-burners slip through our fingers unmolested." But as soon as they learned that those citizens were mixed up with the Yankees, they were perfectly satisfied, for they had unbounded respect for all those men.

Does the reader see in all this anything like the workings of Providence? Who knows but that the All-Wise Being allowed those citizens to leave their homes just in time to fall in with the Federals and accompany them across the mountain?

"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform!"

God has to do with many things that we know not. And those citizens crossed that mountain, attended to their business and returned to their homes, and lived and died without knowing what they accomplished, that day, on the mountain side. How wonderful are the changes that come over the minds of men!

At that time referred to the writer was on the side of the mountain, ready to give the word of command to fight, if necessary, and perhaps do wonders. But today he has no disposition to fight, but with all his heart thanks God that it ended as it did.

Notes

[1]*U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Alabama, New Hope post office: #352/351 Isaac W. Sullivan, 62. Doctor Sullivan gave his occupation as a farmer. Sullivan's son George, 21 in 1860, was also a physician.*

[2]*The U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, New Hope post office, lists the following: #495/492 J. T. DeBow, 41, physician, born in Alabama; #496/494 William Wright, 65, farmer, born in Virginia; #491/488 William Moon, 37, farmer, born in Alabama. The men were all neighbors.*

Chapter 13

Bacon — Yankee Prisoners — Mules

The squad under Johnston was not the only one operating within the enemy's lines. There were a number of men who had been commissioned and sent out to raise companies here, there and yonder. Among them were Captains [D. C.] Nelson, [Robert L.] Welch, [John C.] Drake, [Joel] Cunningham and others.[1] All these were gathering squads of men and harassing the enemy at different points. Cunningham operated for the most part along the southern border of Tennessee. Nelson's home being in Jackson county, Alabama, a great deal of his work was done in that section.

As these companies were organized they were thrown into a regiment, Lem Mead[2] being colonel.

It was very seldom that the whole regiment was together, as the companies were sent out to operate at different points; but they held communication with each other, so that they could cooperate and strengthen each other when necessary. At the time of which we are about to speak Captains Welch and Drake were with the writer.

There being a heavy force of Federals stationed at Woodville, squads would go out every day or two into the country, foraging, as they claimed. But the question was, did they pay for what they got? We answer, no, emphatically; they paid for nothing, except in a few cases. There was a while when the pickets on the Tennessee river would go into the country to get chickens, butter, etc., and paid for them. And these were never knowingly interfered with by our men. We could have picked them off like blackbirds, but we absolutely allowed them to go free.

On the other hand, when we came across a gang of prowlers we went for them. Twenty-two of these prowlers left Woodville and went down to the edge of Madison [county], prowling, and it seems that they had no respect for persons. They called on Old Uncle Peter Maples,[3] who was a Primitive

Baptist preacher, and as clever a man as one could find, and a Rebel through and through. In the same neighborhood, and at about the same time, they called on Mr. Butler,[4] who was another very clever man. They visited, also, Mrs. [Mary] Flippen,[5] a widow; but they did not visit her in the spirit of the scriptures — in her afflictions. On this trip they loaded themselves down with as fine a lot of bacon hams as were ever produced in the Sunny South.

While the Yankees were up in the old parson's smokehouse, pulling down those nice hams, the parson's soul, like Lot's, became a little vexed, and he cried out, "I wish the bushwhackers would get hold of you before you get back to camp!" They hadn't gone far before they met with five full-grown Rebs, Captain Welch with four men, who intercepted them right in the middle of the road. The hams were tied to their bayonets, and dangled behind their backs as they walked. Though they outnumbered the Confederates four to one, Welch abruptly ordered them to surrender. The Yankees threw their meat from their bayonets and made ready to fight. But they had not more than gotten rid of their bacon when the Rebs fired on them. Then they had it hot and heavy for some time, five contending with twenty-two. At last Welch gave command in loud voice to flank them on the left. This disconcerted them so that they bolted at once, jumping a fence and making for Paint Rock river, where they got under the bank.

When they ran they left one man dead and one mortally wounded. All the damage done to the Rebs were four bullet holes through one of their hats, the hat being double where the ball passed through, and it made four holes. The bullet passed so close to the head that it shaved off the hair as if done by a razor and raised a knot which remains visible to this day. If the Rebs had known, at the time, the exact situation of the enemy, they would have captured them all, for the Yankees left most of their guns where they crossed the fence. The Rebs got the pistols of the dead and wounded, and most of the guns belonging to the others.

Fortunately for the old parson, the dead man was the one that heard him say, "I wish the bushwhackers would get you before you get back to camp." If he had lived to report, the old man's life would have been in danger.

At the time to which we now invite your attention, Colonel Mead was in camp on a spur of the Cumberland Mountains, not far from where Green's Academy[6] now stands. He had a few men guarding some prisoners until he had an opportunity to convey them across the Tennessee river. Whether we were camped on the mountain or in the valley, we had to be exceedingly cautious in reference to the situation of the earth where our camp fires burned. Hence, we selected sinks, or low places, so that our fires could not be seen at a distance. If they had been built on elevated spots they would have become signal lights to guide the enemy to our camp.

Late one evening five Yankees rode up to Mrs. [Martha] Lewis's[7] gate — she being Colonel Mead's sister — and addressed her son, a mere lad, and asked, "Where is Colonel Mead?" The boy answered, "I suppose he is south of the Tennessee river." The Yankee rejoined, "No, he is not. He is on this mountain with in five miles of this place, and we are going to take him off tonight." And off they bolted.

As soon as the Federals were out of sight the boy, who knew what he was about, made a bee-line for the Rebel camp. On arriving there he learned that his uncle had taken a few men and gone on a scout toward Stephen's Gap, having left Captain Nelson in camp, with the rest of the men, to guard the prisoners. On learning what brought the lad to them, some of the men got uneasy, and proposed to leave the camp and move down under the brow of the mountain. "No," said Nelson, "the colonel left me here to take care of the camp, and I intend to do it." So they all remained in camp and the lad with them. The next morning, when the young visitor started home, he had not proceeded far until right ahead of him he saw a bluecoat enter the road, then a second, and then a third, when he recognized one of the horses as the same he had seen the evening before. But when he saw a gray- coat also enter the road he wondered if the Federals had captured Colonel Mead sure enough. A moment later he was glad to see the colonel and his squad come marching in with the five Yankees he had seen the day before as prisoners of war. That night all the prisoners were allowed to write letters to their families, after which they were carried across the river to headquarters.

Not a great while after this the Yankees had about 200 head of stock, mostly mules, in a pasture between Stephen's

Gap and Woodville, guarded by pickets. Having first found out where each picket post was located, Colonel Mead, one night, took thirteen men, and by creeping upon them unawares, captured them all without creating alarm. Then proceeding to a house where the main body were dancing, they captured them also. And taking the prisoners with the stock, they crossed the mountain in the direction of the Tennessee river. They struck the river at Roman's Landing, from which they could see the camp fires of the enemy, just below.

But undaunted, they began to make preparation for crossing the river, at which they worked with a will. Throughout the night they were ferrying and swimming stock across the river. One man is said to have worn out a new pair of buckskin gloves pulling at the oars. Shortly after crossing the river they beheld the bluecoats coming up on the other side in pursuit, and who fired at them. But the Rebs cleared themselves with all their booty.

For several days the Federals watched closely, day and night, expecting Colonel Mead to come back by the same route. But they finally came to the conclusion that a man who was smart enough to capture 200 head of stock, besides many prisoners, and convey them across that rugged mountain, and across the Tennessee river, had too much sense to return by the same trail.

Notes

[1] Captain D.C. Nelson commanded Company A of Mead's Battalion. Robert L. Welch was 3rd lieutenant in Company E before becoming captain of Company F. John C. Drake took over Company E late in the war. Captain Joel Cunningham led Company B.

[2] Colonel Lemuel Green Mead (1830-1878) was a lawyer from Paint Rock, Alabama. In September, 1861, he raised the Paint Rock Rifles, which became Company C, 26th Alabama Infantry (later renumbered the 50th Alabama). Mead led his men at Shiloh, but resigned his infantry commission on July 1, 1862. He was promptly commissioned a captain of partisan rangers and sent to operate behind the enemy lines in North Alabama and Tennessee. Mead was so successful that on January 18, 1864, he was authorized to increase his command to a battalion. Mead's command was particularly active in late 1864. On February 1, 1865, he reported that since the beginning of August "we have killed, wounded, captured or paroled (when we could not bring them off) over nine hundred Federal soldiers — captured over 300 wagons — about 700 horses and mules, and destroyed considerable portions of the Memphis & Charleston and Nashville & Charleston Railroads." Mead reported the number of men then present and fit for duty as one thousand fifty — a figure probably somewhat high. (He does not seem to have deducted his casualties from the total.) On March 11, 1865, Mead was authorized to convert his battalion into a regiment of three battalions. However, the war ended before this could be completed. Compiled Service Records, Microfilm Copy 311, Roll 443, 50th Alabama Infantry, M-R. (Johnston spelled Mead's name as "Meade." However, the Mead family did not add the "e" to their name until sometime after the war. It has been corrected throughout the text.)

[3] Rev. Peter Maples was a son of Noah Maples, a Revolutionary War veteran and early settler of Madison County. (Thomas J. Taylor, History of Madison County, Alabama.) The 1860 U. S. Census lists him as Peter Maples, 55, farmer, born in Tennessee (New Hope post office, #12/12).

[4]*Probably Canada Butler, 38, a wealthy planter with land worth $12,000 and $18,000 in personal property. U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, New Hope post office, #353/351.*

[5]*Mrs. Mary H. Flippen, a wealthy widow, was born in Virginia. She was 59 in 1860. U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, New Hope post office, #7/7.*

[6]*The Green Academy was opened in 1890 as a school for the Missionary Association of the Congregational Church. It overlooked Peter's Cove near Woodville. The academy was torn down long ago. John R. Kennamer,* History of Jackson County, *(Winchester, Tenn.: Southern Printing Company, 1930), p. 103-104.*

[7]*Martha Jane Mead (1823-1874) married Grant Allen Lewis on August 31, 1843. Kittye V. Henshaw, Evelyn S. Rochelle, and Addie K. S. Shaver,* Paint Rock Valley Pioneers *(n.p.: privately printed, 1986), p. 37.*

Chapter 14

Escape from the Stockade

In these sketches we have had occasion to use the term "homemade" Yankee. By this we mean to distinguish between men who came from the North to fight us and those who rose up in our midst for the same purpose.

After the fall of Vicksburg, there were a number of men who had fought for the Confederacy, who deserted their colors and were now lying around their homes. Among these was Ben Harris,[1] who with others went to the Yankees. These men collected in squads and companies, and pretended to be cooperating with the Yankees; but judging from their actions, they followed the enemy more for the "loaves and fishes" than for anything else. They were actually a terror to every neighborhood they visited. They shot many citizens from ambush, captured others and caused them to be sent to prison. Occasionally they succeeded in getting hold of a Confederate soldier. We give below a sample of their dastardly work.

One night they came dashing through a certain neighborhood,[2] and upon reaching the house of Mr. St. Clair, they commenced firing upon the house, although it contained women and children, and a ball passed through the door, and very near to the head of Mrs. St. Clair. They then dashed off at full speed to the next house, which was Mr. Shook's.[3] Shook having heard a noise, he stepped out to the smokehouse to see what is was, but upon seeing the raiders dash up to the gate he was afraid to go back into the house, but darted for the woods, having on nothing but his night clothes.

Those inhuman wretches then gathered a little boy and asked him who it was that ran from the house. He answered, "It was Uncle Shook." They swore it was a lie. Finding a rope they took the little fellow a piece from the house and tied the rope around his neck and swung him up. Letting him hang as long as they dared, without taking his life, they took him down. And after rubbing him with

camphor until he could speak they asked him the same question. He answered as before, "Uncle Shook." Up went the boy the second time. Again they took him down, and the same question was asked him, and the same answer returned. Up went the little fellow the third time, and again he was taken down. This time he determined to show as little life as possible, with the hope that they would not hang him again. So after they rubbed the skin off his wrists and ankles, trying to bring him to life, they concluded that he was dead. But as they left him, a "home-made" Yankee said, "I'll blow his brains out." A regular Yankee replied, "No you won't, sir! it's a shame and scandal!" Before they left they burned both houses referred to, leaving both families without shelter.

These same fellows, as they went up Paint Rock river, arrested an old citizen and dragged him off from his family; and having gone a little further they came upon a number of men who were digging a grave for one of their neighbors. Here they arrested another old citizen, and taking the two about three quarters of a mile, they shot them to death, and left them lying where they fell.

We realize the fact that such deeds as are described are hard to believe by this generation, but nevertheless they are well authenticated facts. Nor were they few and far between but were of frequent occurrence, up and down the Tennessee valley.

The Federals seemed to have a good appetite for prisoners. When they could not get hold of Rebel soldiers, they would take in civilians. At Woodville they had a stockade — and indeed at every station — and within that stockade were seven of Colonel Mead's men, among whom was Major Drake.[4] They also had a number of citizens. One of the seven soldiers they accused of being a spy, and had condemned him to be shot.

These soldiers got it into their heads they were going out of that trap. So every night they would dig and scratch the dirt floor with their pocket knives; and as they brought out the loose earth they would spread it on the ground and cover it with their pallets, so as to conceal it from the guards. During the day they would loll about on their pallets pretending to be sick.

On getting down to where they hoped to find the bottom of the enclosure, behold! they found two thick oak

planks standing on edge. They charged these oak planks with their pocket knives. And while they whittled, Major Drake sat by and whetted their knives for them. This work was all done at night, and while at it they would sing and talk, and talk and sing that their work might not be heard. Upon the night before the spy was to be shot they cut through.

The spy was so anxious to get out that he made them promise to let him go first, promising when he got through to poke a stick through the hole to let them know the way was clear. But upon breathing fresh air he seemed to forget everything but his little self, and away he went, leaving his comrades to take care of themselves. He must have possessed the selfishness of the man who prayed, "Lord bless me and my wife, my son John and his wife, we four and no more."

This gave the remaining prisoners a bit of a scare, and they began to parley; but it did not last long. For one young fellow — the largest of the seven — said, "I'm going out of here, and I will poke a stick back, when I am out." Knowing that it would be "nip and tuck" for him to squeeze through the hole, he took off his coat and pants, and pushed his coat before him, out he went head foremost, leaving his entire linen dangling on the edge of the hole, except, perhaps, the collar and wristbands. As he passed out, there was in a few paces of him, a picket reading a letter near a campfire, for it was a cold night. But like a brave man he poked a stick back to his comrades. Out came the rest of the prisoners, and away they went across the mountain, under weather freezing cold. The next morning they reached Paint Rock river, and a boy set them across on some cross-ties pinned together.

The citizens remained in the stockade, and the Yankees being ashamed of having been outwitted by the gray-coats, and having no proof against the citizens, they released them the next day, and they returned to their families.

Notes

[1]*See note 1, chapter 6. Mrs. Chadick noted in her diary that it was Ben Harris who guided the Union troops when they burned Vienna (New Hope) on December 15, 1864. Harris did not survive the war, dying in Huntsville on March 5, 1865, apparently of pneumonia. He is buried in the National Cemetery at Chattanooga in Section L, grave #9752. Mrs. Caroline Harris applied for a widow's pension on December 11, 1875. It was refused because she could not prove Harris had actually served in the Union army. (She claimed he had enlisted as a private in a black Louisiana regiment!)*

[2]*In Jackson County, west of Scottsboro.*

[3]*The 1860 U.S. Census, Scottsboro post office, Jackson County, Alabama, lists John J. St. Clair, 32, a Virginia-born farmer, and his family (# 395/395). Not far distant lived John Shook, 58, a Tennessee-born farmer (#374/375). John Shook was apparently "Uncle Shook." This incident probably occured around September 26,1863, when Captain Henry F. Smith's Company G, 4th Alabama Cavalry, attacked and routed Captain Ephraim Latham's Union scout company at Hunt's Mill, three miles west of Scottsboro. Following Smith's attack, "the Federals came and arrested two prominent aged citizens, John W. Shook and Cary Staples. They carried them to Stevenson and put them in prison. While they were there, they contracted smallpox. Mr. Shook was brought home, and he soon died." Kennamer,* History of Jackson County, *p. 60.*

[4]*John Calvin Drake was originally 2nd lieutenant of Johnston's company. He evidently succeeded to the command after 1st Lieutenant Nathaniel Millard had been killed and Johnston promoted. Drake perhaps acted as major late in the war.*

Chapter 15

Crossing the River with Ammunition

Having told the reader something about how we crossed the Tennessee river whenever we pleased, tricking and dodging the Yankees, we will now tell how we brought over the arms and ammunition.

It is reasonable to suppose that to get arms and ammunition from the Confederacy would be a long shoot and a brushy route. We therefore depended upon our own ingenuity for both. We scarcely ever had a fight but what we captured more or less arms and ammunition, and often more than we had present use for. And sometimes we captured a considerable amount of rations, clothing, etc. Therefore, when we had more than we needed for present use we devised plans to keep it. Our depositories were the caves of the mountains, a great number of which are found in that section of the country, and some of which are large, roomy and dry. In so doing we selected men whose heads were level, and who carried the captured articles and deposited them as they were commanded. Hence, we had deposits in almost every nook and corner for us. By this means we were always amply supplied with ammunition, except upon one occasion. Our ammunition, at that time, was sinking very low, and as the boys said, it made them "feel kinder spotted."

But it has been said that, where there is a will there is a way, and our boys had that will — a will that had never been broken, or even bent, up to that hour. So a way was devised, with a will behind it to push it into execution. Two of the boys were selected, commissioned, and sent away down in Dixie after ammunition. Without railroad, horse, wagon, or carriage, they went across the river, over the mountains, traversing the valleys, trudging through the mud and mire, and never stopping until they had reached Selma,[1] Alabama. There they got what they wanted, and then returned; but how they got back no one knew but themselves. That they had a

hard time of it is certain, for they had to hire wagons and teams to haul the ammunition over the mountains, and to pass through what was said to be an exceedingly dangerous region for Rebel soldiers in small squads. But they succeeded admirably and landed the ammunition safely on the south bank of the Tennessee river. Yet all danger had not been passed, for the river had to be crossed. And on the north bank the enemy had pickets stationed every few miles up and down the river, while every two or three hours patrols passed from one post to another. And in addition to this all their gunboats were prowling about, up and down the river, like "roaring lions, seeking whom they might devour."

But undaunted by these dangers one of the boys crossed the river and came to the rendezvous, and made his report. You had better believe the boys were glad to see "Didymus" — as they sometimes called him — for his Christian name was Thomas.[2]

After consultation between the major and his officers, a plan was agreed upon by which the ammunition might be brought safely over the river. The place was selected and the time appointed, which was to be in the night. Then Thomas and the officer in command agreed upon a secret sign, known only to themselves, to be given when everything was ready on both sides of the river. The sign was a simple one. Thomas was to return to the ammunition, and at the appointed time move it up to the bank of the river, while the officer referred to — when he had everything ready — was to take a piece of board, walk down to the river's edge, and splash the water, resembling as much as possible the flounce of a fish. The answer from the opposite side was to be the same. Everything available was at once put in motion; for we were going to bring that ammunition and those boys across the river in spite of pickets, scouts and gunboats.

The night came on — a very dark one at that — and we were about midway between two picket posts. Just below us a little creek emptied into the river, across the mouth of which had been thrown a fish-trap. Here we placed a squad of men. Just above us the road came out at the lower point of a bluff, with just room enough between the river and the bluff for the road. Here another squad was placed, commanded by Lieutenant [Nathaniel] Millard.[3] In the rear, between us and the mountain, the third squad was posted.

Considering all things ready, the officer in command picked up the piece of board and walked down to the water's edge and gave the signal agreed upon. The answer came back distinctly from the other side, though half a mile to three quarters of a mile away. To work we went, bringing the ammunition to our side, and carrying over men, women and children to the other side. These were families refugeeing from the Yankees into the sunny land of Dixie. We brought over also three new recruits who came to join us.

We were just getting underway when a noise let loose at the point of the mountain, as if Millard had thrown dynamite[4] into the center of that old bluff. As we listened, the sound rolled up and down the river, from bluff to bluff, from mountain to mountain, from island to sandbar.

"The cat is out of the wallet now," we thought, and there is no need of trying to be secret any longer. A courier was sent to Millard to know what was the matter, and word came back that the Federal patrol party had come down under the bluff, and that our men had fired on them, cleaning up the whole crowd. We sent back word to Millard to hold his position at all hazards, and as the noise had already been made, every one of the boys responded with the "Rebel yell," and continued at it as long as we remained there. Getting boats from the other side of the river we kept crossing and recrossing, until just before day light we finished up. Then falling back into a gorge in the mountain, we all lay down and took a refreshing nap, after which we proceeded about our business. The next morning the enemy withdrew their pickets for many miles up and down the river.

We do not wish any one to conclude that we thought that we had scared the enemy away. They must have received orders before hand to leave just at that time.[5] Some of the boys thought they had scared them off, but the writer never thought so. This was the only time that we had to freight ammunition from the Confederate lines.

As Lieutenant Millard's name has been mentioned above, we wish to make a short statement in reference to him. He was born in the state of Michigan, and when quite young he removed with his father's family to Texas. From there he went into the Confederate army, and a truer Southern man never breathed, or a braver man never shouldered arms, than he. We never saw him tried, but we believe that if a circular

saw had been dressed up like a Yankee, he would have come nearer charging it than any other man. We expect to say something more about him hereafter.

Notes

[1]*Selma was the location of a major Confederate arsenal and ship-yard. The city was finally captured by Union cavalry after a bloody battle on April 2, 1865.*

[2]*Possibly Private Thomas Chambless.*

[3]*Nathaniel Millard was first lieutenant of Johnston's Company E.*

[4]*Dynamite, of course, was not invented by Alfred Nobel until after the war in 1866.*

[5]*The Union forces retreated from most of North Alabama in late November, 1864, as a result of Confederate General John B. Hood's march on Nashville. They returned the following month after Hood's defeat.*

Chapter 16

The Bushwhackers' Nest

We begin again our regular occupation, which was to harass the Yankees all we could. We have told the reader before that they had a regiment stockade at Vienna, and that they were after us and we after them. Knowing that they had been placed there for our special benefit, we determined to give them our particular attention. Therefore it was a rare chance for them to go out and return without being thinned out to a greater or less extent.

They were in the habit of carrying their rations in wagons from Brownsboro, along the Deposit road to their stockade. The Deposit road leads south from Nashville, Tennessee, having been opened by General Andrew Jackson when he went south to fight the Indians. On the banks of the Tennessee river he built a fort, and called it Fort Deposit,[1] hence the name of the road that leads to that place.

Whenever the enemy went after rations we always gave them a bit of a scare. Yes, we cut them along this road until they actually became afraid to pass over it. But they passed two citizens and sent them to Brownsboro and had their rations transported by railroad up to Paint Rock, intending to have them carried to Vienna by wagons on the opposite side of Keel's mountain. But our eyes were open, and learning of their change of base, we changed ours to meet them, and took a position west of Vienna. Take notice, we were now on foot, therefore we had to double-quick across plantations and over Cedar Ridge for about six miles. But as our arrangements had been made before hand we were ready for action at any time.

The enemy having heard that we were after them, sent a heavy reinforcement, and which had already joined them. They must, therefore, have outnumbered us three to one. Our intention was to intercept them just above the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, called Walnut Grove. But in coming in

sight of the road, the officer in command, being in front, discovered the advance guard of the enemy had passed a little too far. He stopped abruptly and threw up his right hand, which halted the whole command. The order was then given to about wheel and double-quick, and away they went across a large plantation, until we reached the point of Cedar Ridge near the house of Dr. [Davis] Moore[2] and in full view of the stockade, where we halted and awaited results.

When we halted, we were so near out of breath we could hardly talk. But gradually we recovered our strength, while "fight" was almost ready to ooze out at every pore. And when we had divided our command into three squads, we were ready, willing, and waiting.

As the wagons necessarily moved slowly, it was some time before they came in hearing. But at last they came rolling on nearer and nearer, until just before they got to where we wanted them, they called a halt, which was nearly opposite our third squad; while our pickets were near enough to hear everything that was said by the enemy. When all at once, one of the drivers — a Dutchman — cried out, "Poys, keep a sharp lookout. Right there is the bushwhackers' nest!" The Dutchman proved to be a true prophet that time, for the bushwhackers' nest was there chocked full of eggs, and in less than five minutes every egg was hatched full grown, flopping and crowing.

Presently, the wagons moved forward, and when reaching the proper place they were ordered by us to halt and surrender. Refusing to obey, the signal for action was given, when all at once the fire flashed and the thunder rolled out from three different directions. We gave them but one volley, when the command came, "Charge them, boys! Right into them!" At the word charge, they swept down that mountain like an avalanche, while the Rebel yell roared on every lip. It is not worth while to mince words about it, for they lifted everything out of that road but the wagons and teams. There was not a man left on a horse. Had they stood their ground it would have been a hand-to-hand fight. But they jumped off their horses, rolled out of their wagons, and down the hill they went, over the fences and through the fields. Now and then they would trip their toes and fall, and actually looked like they were trying to run as they were getting up.

All this time our boys were not only shooting, but were making the welkin ring with their shouts. It appeared to us that from every mouth issued forth a dozen distinct and separate sounds. Never did we hear a more perfect tune played on the Rebel organ than we heard that day. Suffice it to say that our boys literally cleaned them up. There was not a Yankee left on the ground who was able to travel. They not only ran across the fields, but through the woods, and never stopped until they jumped into the stockade. We do not remember the number killed, but there were several, and we learned the next day that twenty-five went before the surgeon for medical treatment.[3]

We captured forty-two head of very fine horses, besides every team and wagon and their contents. Our boys lived fine for a while, for the wagons contained a great variety, such as pickled pork, lard, soda, candles, parched coffee, etc. Sure enough coffee, not "Dixie Rio" made of parched wheat or rye, but real coffee. How the boys would beat up that parched coffee, put it into their tin cups, set them on the fire and boil it! And just as soon as they thought it was cool enough they began to sip, smack their lips, and look independent as so many "journey-men wood-sawyers."

The wagons, of course, we could not take off and conceal. We therefore burnt them up. But while they were burning — which required some time — old Dr. Moore came to us, for it was near his house. The officer in command said, "Doctor, you go down yonder to that stockade and tell those Yankees, if they wish to fight, just walk out, for old 'Bushwhacker' Johnston is up yonder on the hill sure enough." The doctor was sent on purpose to try to screen him, for they were in the habit of burning every house near where they were attacked. But instead of coming, we learned from citizens that they spent all that afternoon carrying water into the stockade, expecting a siege that night. The next morning they sent two citizens again to Brownsboro for reinforcements, with whom they returned in the evening. The morning after, they pulled up stakes, and taking with them lock, stock and barrel, they left the valley. We were then in possession of about twenty square miles, and the boys claimed to be "lords of all they surveyed."

We do not know the exact number they had when they came there, neither do we know the number they took away.

But one thing we know, they lacked a great deal of taking away as many as they brought. They had been cut, scarred and shivered, until they were thinned out to only one hill. Seeing there was no chance to get more fight out of them, we gathered up our goods and chattels and went our way rejoicing.

Perhaps the reader would like to know what we did with our captured property. Well, we did with it as we did with all captures we made. In the first place, we always kept ourselves mounted upon the very best stock, and in the second place, we freighted all the rest over into the land of Dixie. As to the harness, we hung it up in one of those dry caves we told you about. And after the war was over, the boys took it and used it in hauling and plowing. We were talking with one of the boys a few days ago, and he said he knew where pieces of that same harness could yet be found. And if he is correct, there must be some of Uncle Sam's property lying mouldering in the clay "way down in Dixie."

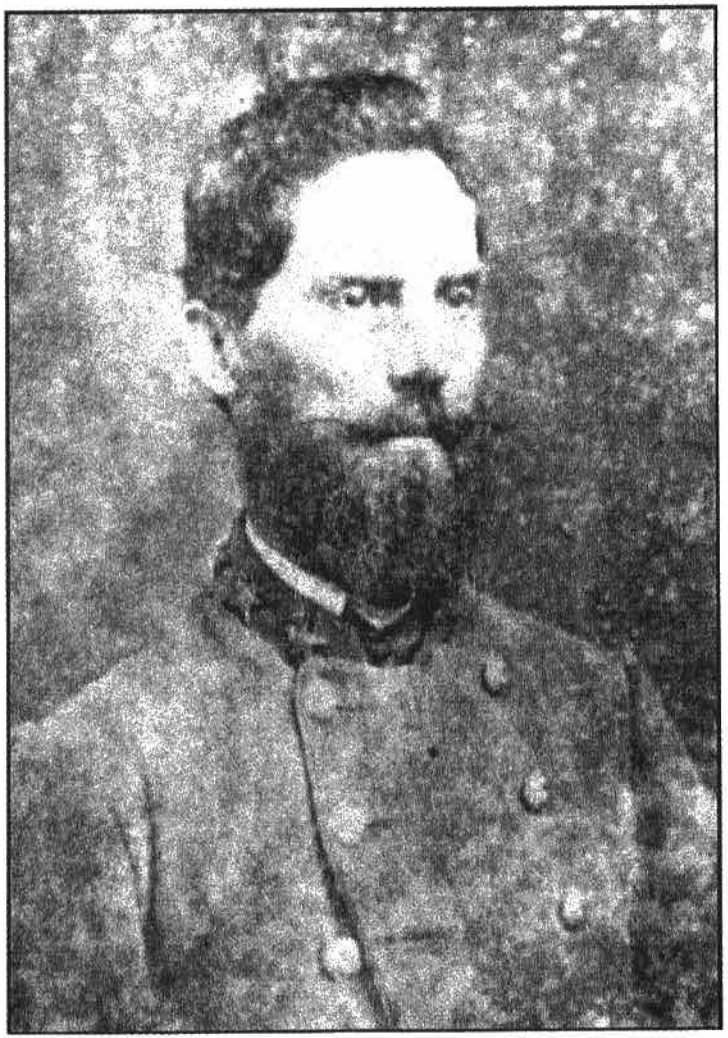
Notes

[1]*Fort Deposit, at the mouth of Thompson's creek on the Tennessee River, was established as a supply point by Andrew Jackson during the Creek Indian War in 1813. W. Stuart Harris,* Dead Towns of Alabama *(University of Alabama Press, 1977), p. 40.*

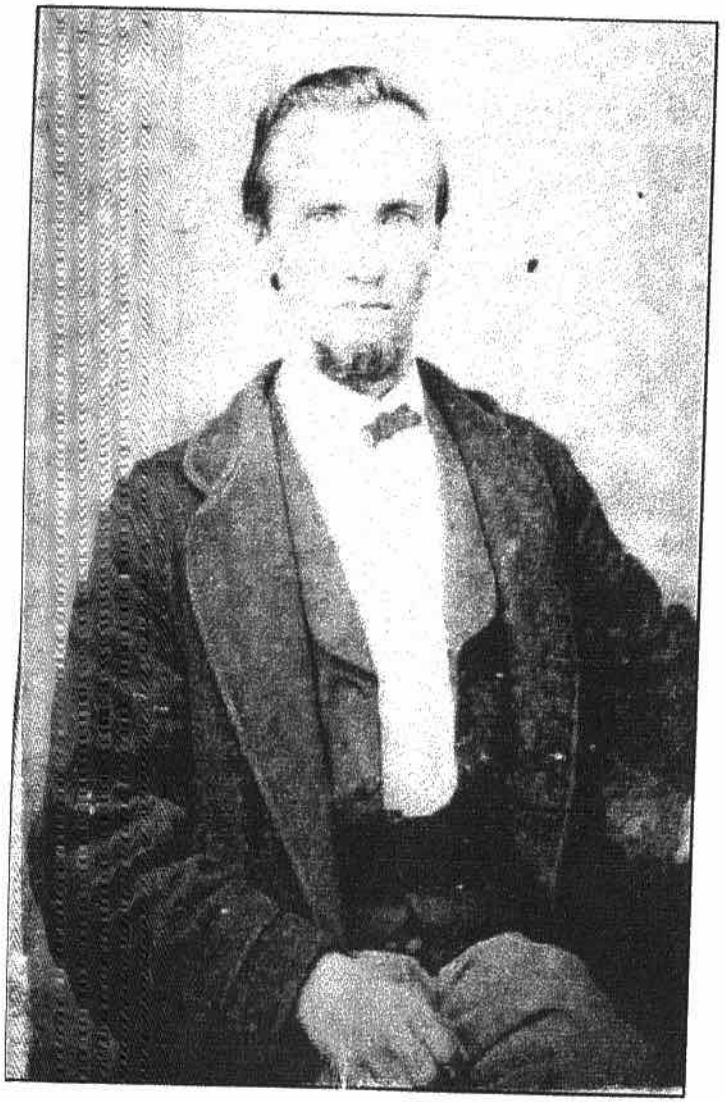
[2]*South Carolina-born Dr. Davis Moore was a wealthy planter as well as a physician. His land was worth $25,000 and his personal estate another $5,000. (U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, New Hope post office, #87/87.) Moore's 20-year-old son, 1st Lieutenant Bunyan Moore of the 55th Alabama Infantry, had fallen in battle three weeks earlier at Peach Tree Creek, Georgia.*

[3]*The Moore's Hill fight took place on August 11, 1864. The 12th Indiana Cavalry lost four men killed from Company H: Privates John Herman, Reuben Herman, Horton McKnabb, and Jacob Martin.* Records of the Adjutant General of the State of Indiana, *Indianapolis, 1867, vol. 7, p. 246. Johnston's company suffered at least one casualty. Aged veteran Andrew Jackson Cooper told Coy Glass in the 1930s that he had been shot through both thighs by the same bullet, but in the excitement didn't realize it until he passed out from loss of blood. Conversation with Coy Glass at the New Hope Public Library, September 24, 1989.*

Confederate veteran William T. Bennett also described the encounter in a 1933 interview. "Johnston put me on the end of the line with a talkative idiot named Glover, and told me to keep him quiet. We crouched and waited. Pretty soon, along came the Yanks, with a big Dutchman in suspenders heading them. Just as they got right to us, the leader turned to his men and said, 'Look out, here's the bushwhackers' hangout!' The idiot let him have it right between the shoulders, the whole load." Said Bennett, "The Yankees tore out, but we got the supplies. Joe Ed Peevy and I found a barrel marked 'coffee' in the lot and hid it in a haystack nearby. We then went around and told all the settlers in those parts to come to that spot if they wanted some coffee. All of them came, because coffee was scarce in those days. But when we opened the barrel, well -- we found the best looking lot of stick candy I've ever seen. It seemed to me that every house we passed after that had a kid standing in the doorway sucking some of that coffee." The Huntsville Times, *May 23, 1933.*

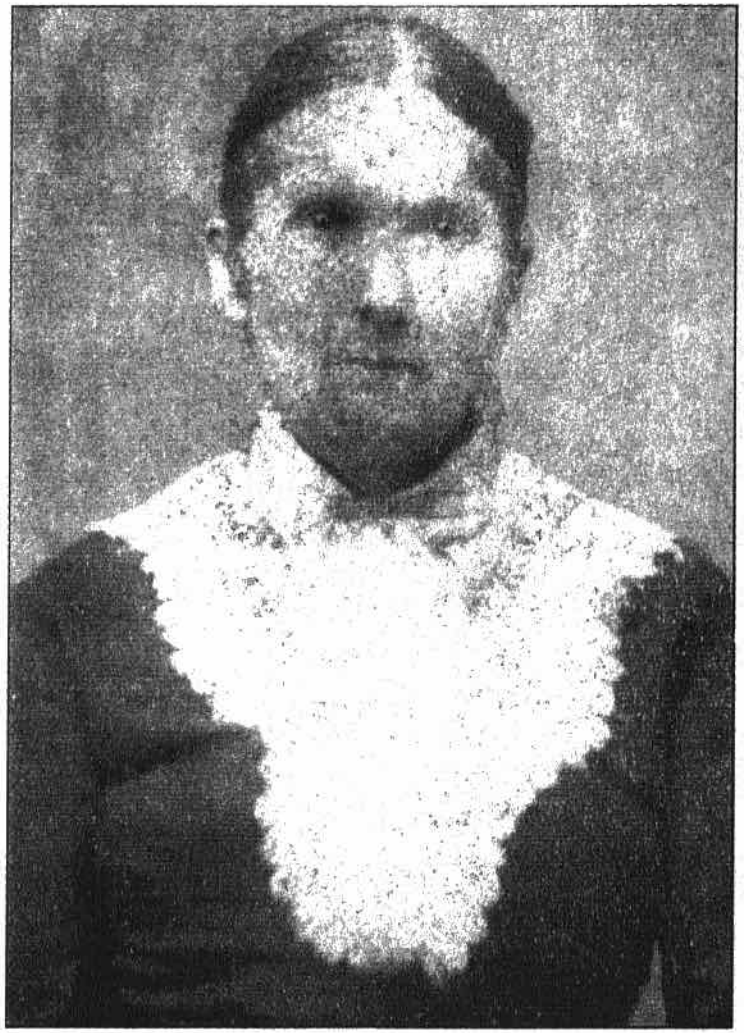


Col. Lemuel Green Mead, (1830-1878) commander of Mead's Alabama and Tennessee Cavalry Battalion.
Courtesy Mr. Norman Shapiro



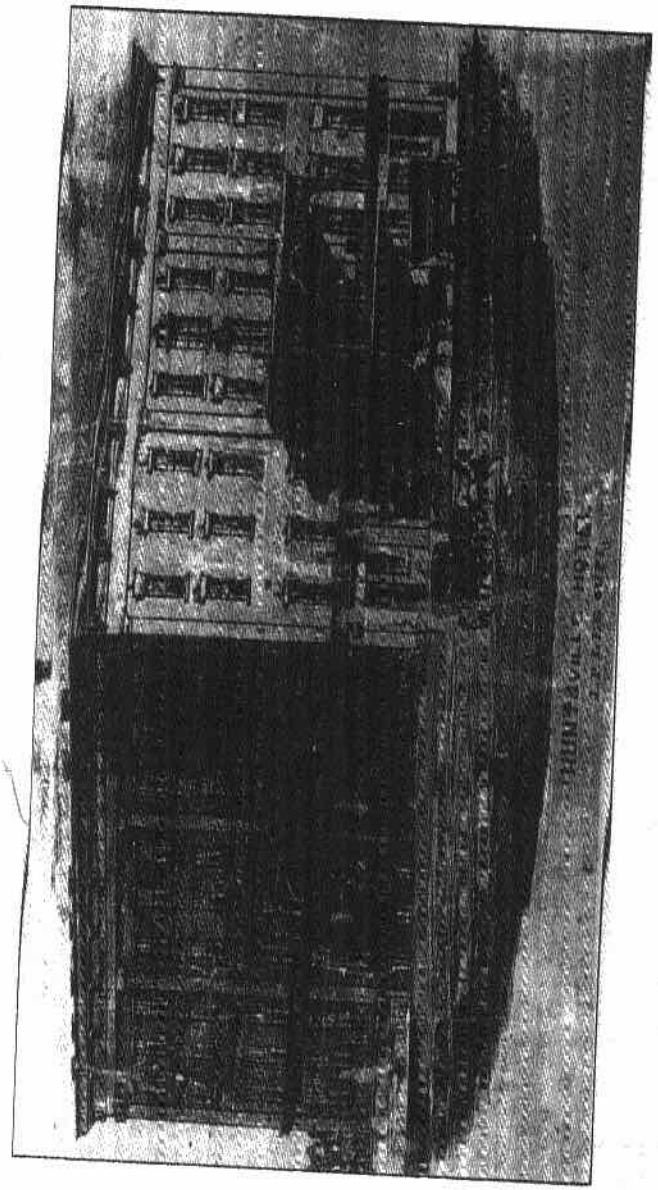
Melville Burr Johnston, (1847-1921) "Bushwhacker" Johnston's oldest son and a member of his company. After the war, Burr Johnston also became a Methodist minister.

Courtesy Huntsville Public Library



Mrs. Mary Elizabeth (Hamer) Johnston, (1833-1889) who was arrested and held prisoner in the Huntsville Hotel.

Courtesy Mr. David Frost



The Huntsville Hotel, a long time city landmark until it was destroyed by fire in 1910. *(From an 1859 Huntsville city map.)*

Courtesy Huntsville Public Library

Chapter 17

The Hewed-log Barn

Frequently we have used the term "home-made Yankees" in these sketches, and have said that these men were born and reared in the South; and yet they were cooperating with the Federals in prosecuting the war. But you ask, "Did they not have as much right to fight for the Union as they had to be for secession?" Perhaps they had, as far as sentiment was concerned, for there were thousands of honest men in the South who were Union in sentiment; and yet they held their tongues and kept their hands off the sword, doing no harm to any person. Neither they nor their families were harmed by a true Rebel soldier.

But those we refer to acted very differently, and the Southern people never believed that they had any right under the constitution to act as they did. The South was nurtured in the strictest states right doctrine, which implied that the state was sovereign in itself, and was merely a member of a general compact. And those who held this opinion claimed that this government is either an empire and the states are provinces, or it is a league of sovereignties that had parted with a few clearly defined rights, reserving all the rest. And that when South Carolina seceded in the winter of 1861, thousands of the Southern people deplored the act, but still believed peaceable secession to be the cornerstone of the states right doctrine. If it is an empire, secession is rebellion against the legally constituted authority, and calls for suppression, as much as a rebellion in Great Britain would be suppressed and punished. If on the contrary, the government is a league of sovereign commonwealths, then secession is an exercise of a right, and to oppose it is wrong. And to make war for that reason, and to force the South back into the Union was open tyranny — the stronger oppressing the weaker.

Therefore, men born and reared in the South could never be made to believe that their neighbors had any right to take an active part against their own people.

These "home-made" Yankees had been weeding a wide row in Jackson county just above us. They had influenced all the young men they could to join them, and had tried to force others. But these last would not drive a foot, but came over and joined our command, and proved to be as true as twisted steel. Not satisfied with this, these blue-fellows pitched into the fathers of our boys and harassed them so much that they were forced to bid adieu to wife and children, and take up their guns to save their own lives. So these old gray heads, with their guns in their hands, came marching in to our camp. And when they arrived and grasped our hands, and looked us full in the face, we saw in a twinkle of their eyes that they meant desperate business. Just think of a peaceable man being run off from home, and leaving his wife and children to the mercy of a set of desperados! Who would not fight under such circumstances!

These old fellows had been with us some time, and their sons much longer, when one morning these old men said, "Major, we think you owe us a debt of gratitude. The blue-coats are thinning out of this valley, so that the citizens can draw a few long breaths, while we can go up yonder in Jackson county and settle with those scoundrels who are harassing our wives and children."

"All right!" answered the Major, "just as soon as we can make the necessary arrangements, we will walk up and introduce ourselves to those blue-coats in 'High Jackson.'"[1]

Accordingly preparations were made. Our horses we put away for safe keeping; rations, sufficient to last us until our return, were put in good order. And leaving every thing behind but what we would actually need in a running march, we went, flanking every house and every human being, as far as possible.

On our way we waded Paint Rock river, and as we ascended the opposite bank, a young lady came tripping down to the river with a bucket to get some water. And as she was the first person who had seen us since we started, the officer in command asked the boys if they knew who she was. Being answered in the affirmative, and assured that she was all right, we spoke a few words to her, telling her to be certain to

reveal nothing she had seen to any one. It was not long until we had reached a dense forest, where we called a halt and rested.

While resting, we held a consultation, which resulted in the selection of two or three of those old Jackson county men to go forward and reconnoiter and bring back a report. At the same time they were told that the command would remain just where it was until dark. Then it would move forward to a certain point, where it would remain until they could make their report, whether that was soon or late.

The work they had to do was in their own neighborhood, therefore they knew exactly what they were about. About dark we moved up to the appointed place, where we had ample time to rest, for it was almost ten o'clock before they reported. Their report was about as follows: "There is a squad of men camped at such a point; there is a company of men camped at another point; and there is a full company stockade in a hewn log barn at the Perkins[2] place, on the Belle Fonte[3] road." The second squad named being furthest out of reach, we decided to pay our respects to the first squad, and then those in the barn.

Upon a number of questions being put to the scouts, it was very plain that the barn might prove a heavy load for us to lift, for the cracks were tightly chinked up to a certain height, above which could be used as port holes. The barn was standing east and west; and joining up to the east end and exactly parallel with the north side of the barn there extended a number of corn cribs, stables, and cow pens reaching nearly to the road, which was sixty or seventy-five paces.

Expecting heavy work, the officer in command inquired if there was much dry trash, straw or shucks about the barn. He was told there was, which gave us new hope. We went to a house and made us some of the best turpentine balls that we could; and getting a box of matches, we tested the balls thoroughly to see if they would produce fire.

Lieutenant Millard was ordered to take ten men and go and capture the first squad mentioned, then file left and rejoin us before we attack the barn. We had not been long about the place appointed for meeting when Millard came up with his prisoners, having taken in the entire squad. As quick as possible a few men were detailed to guard them, with orders to treat them kindly, but to be certain to keep them.

Marching directly toward the barn, when within a quarter of a mile of our destination we called a halt; and as usual, our command was divided into three squads. Some distance west of the barn stood a bunch of willows, to which our sharp-shooters, under the command of Lieutenant Drake, were ordered to creep, and then lie down. The second squad, under the command of Lieutenant Millard, was ordered to move along the Belle Fonte road until they got opposite the row of cribs and stables, and then lie down. Seeing that it would be impossible for the enemy to shoot exactly parallel with the side of the barn, two men were appointed from Millard's squad to take the turpentine balls and matches and crawl like so many lizards until they reached the barn, and there to lie still, against the ground, until fire and smoke were necessary, if it must come. These men performed their task admirably.

We had one squad against the west end, another against the east end, while the third was to move from the south directly fronting the last side of the barn. There was a ditch running west, which, if possible, we were determined to reach. And on we went, crawling very cautiously. As we crawled the enemy seemed half way to find us out, when all at once some one in the barn called out, "There's somebody down yonder!" "No, no!" said another. They seemed to be listening. While they listened we lay as still as so many mice. Then we would crawl again until the same voice cried out, "There is somebody down yonder!" Thus it went on, some affirming and some denying, until we reached the ditch, where we lay waiting for it to get light enough to see, so as to not hurt one another.

While lying in the ditch a gun was fired inside the stables, while some one of the enemy cried, "Here they are!" Then all was quiet. Presently, "bang!" went the second gun. The first shot was from the enemy's picket, which wounded one of our boys, who afterwards died of his wound.[4] The second shot was from one of our boys, who seeing a horse in the stable door, swinging his head up and down, he took it for a blue-coat, and at the crack of his gun the horse fell dead.

In a few minutes the crisis came, when we called out in a loud voice, "Do you surrender there in that barn?"

"What?"

"Do you surrender, I say?"

"Surrender? No!" with an oath.

Then we gave the command: "Colonel, charge them in front! Boys, fire!"

As quick as a flash balls flew from three different directions, on their mission of death. At the same instant all these squads charged as swift as their feet could carry them. On reaching the barn we found their guns scattered all over the floor, while some of them were screaming, others praying, while others cried out in every direction, "We surrender! We surrender!" And seeing the muzzles of Drake's sharp-shooters sticking through the cracks, we gave the order to cease firing, for in another moment perhaps half of them would have been dead.

The Yankees were then ordered to hoist a white flag. But they continued to cry out, "We surrender!"

"Hoist a white flag then," we insisted.

"Haven't got any," they replied.

"Come out of the house then," was the command. And upon looking up to the gable end of the barn, which was open, we saw a fellow with a smutty looking sheepskin shaking it for dear life. We learned afterwards that they had stolen it the day before from old Uncle Brookie Smith.[5] We captured the whole lay out save one.

The reader will remember that this occurred very near the railroad, which laid us liable to be run into by a heavy force of Federals at any moment. Hence we prepared a litter as soon as possible, on which we placed our wounded man, and taking all the prisoners, with their goods, we threw out our skirmish line and started back the way we came. We knew we had left one company of blue-coats behind us, and we ought to intercept them; but they had taken a scare and darted across the trail, and succeeded in getting to the railroad where they could get in their stockade.

On arriving at the river, we placed our wounded man in a canoe and floated him down against Paint Rock, from whence we carried him out to a vacant house in a thick forest, where we nursed and guarded him until he died. That night five or six noble young fellows from Marshall county joined us. They had been deceived by some of the home-made Yankees and persuaded to join them. But as soon as the boys found the trap they were in they made it convenient to come to us at the earliest opportunity. It was near night when they reached us, but knowing them as well as we did, we placed

them on picket at once. This was done not only to rest us, but to show that we had confidence in them. They all proved to be true.

The next morning we moved toward the Tennessee river with the prisoners. But just as we were getting across the river, along came an old gunboat, puffing and snorting. Had she been a minute later, she would have caught us right on the bank in full view. But seeing her through the timber we fell back a sag and waited until she passed out of sight. We then passed our prisoners over in perfect safety and sent them to headquarters over in Dixie.

Notes

[1]*Jackson County is sometimes called "high" because of its mountainous terrain.*

[2]*The Perkins farm was located just inside Marshall County, a few miles below Woodville in Jackson County. The original owner was Jabez Perkins, an early settler in the area. (Conversation with Charles R. Wells, Perkins family genealogist.)*

[3]*Bellefonte was Jackson County seat until 1859, when the government was transferred to Scottsboro. Bellefonte was largely destroyed by the Union army and never fully recovered. W. Stuart Harris, Dead Towns of Alabama, page 61.*

[4]*The wounded Confederate is said to have been Davis 'Doc' Russel, 19-year-old son of Henry Russel. Russel family tradition recalls that Doc Russel was killed at a log barn or corn crib in Marshall County while serving with "the bushwhackers" in late 1864. Doc Russel's name does not appear on the muster roll of Mead's battalion, though his 48-year-old father is listed. (Conversations with Joseph B. Nalls of Huntsville, Alabama, April and May, 1991.) Shortly after the release of the first edition of Johnston's memoirs, Charles R. Wells of Meridianville informed the editor that the "Perkins place" stood just below the Jackson County line on the old road from Woodville to Grant. An unpaved road visible from the hilltop is still known as the Bellefonte Road. Mr. Wells took me to see the skirmish site, where the 170-year-old Perkins home and log barn stood. However, we arrived one year too late. A new owner had torn down both structures and built a modern home on the site. Nevertheless, the hillside looks much the same, and the ditch where Johnston's men lay is still visible.*

[5]*U. S. Census, 1860, Jackson County, Alabama, Paint Rock post office: #307/307 Brooks Smith, 59, born in North Carolina. Smith owned land worth $7,000 and personal property totalling $24,000. Brooks Smith was the father of Captain Henry F. Smith of the 4th Alabama Cavalry.*

Chapter 18

Huntsville Hotel Contains a Lady Prisoner

For a few minutes, we wish to speak of something that made the most profound impression upon the writer than anything that occurred during the Civil War. It is in reference to a lady prisoner, the wife of Major Milus E. Johnston.

Everything connected with war is unpleasant, and the shedding of human blood is horrible. And how painful it is to stand and look upon comfortable houses burnt to the ground, and to see the fathers and mothers with their little children huddling around them for protection, or to see them move off to seek shelter as best they can under the foliage of timber, beside fallen trees or shelving rocks, and perhaps to sit and lie there all night in the cold. This is bad enough to think about; but after burning and destroying everything, then to arrest a young and tender mother, and to tear her infant from her breast, forcing her off as a prisoner, is almost unbearable.

That there were thousands of honorable men in the Union army, the writer never doubted. Yes, as highminded gentlemen as ever breathed were in the Federal army. But they enlisted in the army of the United States to make war on men and not on women and children. Their aim was to help to crush out what they called "the rebellion." These men, no doubt, accepted commissions, fought bravely, shed their blood and died to restore the old union of Washington. They did not mean to burn houses over the heads of helpless women and children, to arrest women, and hang prisoners. They did not mean to make a hiss and byword of the flag they fought under. And we would say here, that we never believed the arrest referred to was made by the authority of the United States. The act was too low for an enlightened and honorable government to stoop to.

Before we proceed further we wish to say that, while we know the name of the man who arrested this lady, the number of the regiment to which he belonged, and the name of the state from which he came, we are not going to publish either.[1] He may have a wife and daughters yet living, happy and cheerful; and possibly their eyes may fall upon these lines. And if so, we do not want the wife and daughters to know that the husband and father ever stooped so low as to take an innocent woman a prisoner of war.

The lady to whom we refer was born of Christian parents, rocked in a religious cradle, and brought up in the very lap of the gospel. She was reared, also, with much tenderness and care, and we presume she never wanted any of the comforts of life, as her parents had a plenty and to spare. When grown to womanhood, it, perhaps, would have been hard to find a more perfect model of woman kind. About the medium height; weighing about one hundred and thirty-five pounds, she stood erect, with her head always thrown aloft; large dark brown eyes with heavy lashes; her hair almost as black as a raven; while her rosy cheeks showed the picture of health.

We have already said the blue-coats burnt us out three times. But now we are going to state the facts just as they occurred, and leave the reader to draw his own conclusion. At first, they burnt the dwelling with all the out-houses, except a dining room and a loom-house. The dwelling consisted of five rooms, two below and two above, while the fifth formed an ell.[2] After the burning the family got what was left and placed it in the dining room and loom-house. Mrs. Johnston, at the time of her arrest, was in the loom-house, while her child was asleep on the trundle-bed, over which was a mattress lying upon some boards across the joints.

While in this condition the blue-coats came to burn the second time. To get the house on fire, one of the men took a new broom that was standing near, stuck it into the flames and set the mattress afire, which was just over the sleeping child. The mother seeing the fire falling upon the sleeping babe, pushed the blue-coat away and punched the mattress down, when the rascal struck the mother over the head with the burning broom, which singed her hair and burnt at least a dozen holes in her dress. When he did that, she seized a tea boiler, intending to hit him over the head with it, but it

slipped off the handle and she missed her aim. She then jerked up a poker and continued to frail him until he had passed out of the house into the yard. There an officer interrupted and took the fellow away. This unexpected defense prevented the Yankees from setting the house on fire until she finally saved most of the furniture. But before they left they succeeded in burning the last house to the ground, which left the family entirely without shelter.

After the blue-coats had performed the second burn the family moved 3/4 of a mile to another plantation where they had some houses into which they went. Does it not seem that any set of men, who were right in either heart or head, would have called off their troops by this time, and let the helpless family have a little rest?

But no, here they came to burn them out the third time. They were going to finish up the job now, as there was no one to oppose them save a few helpless women. The pleading and prayers of the women availed nothing, for the house was set on fire. By an extra effort of the women, while the house was burning, they succeeded in getting out a part of their furniture, but had to stand with tears in their eyes and see the balance consumed under the last roof they had to shelter their heads. But to cap the climax, the colonel proceeded to arrest Mrs. Johnston, tearing her infant[3] from her breast and forcing her to leave it at home, which was then nothing more than the woods. He then placed her in the saddle and made her ride horseback twenty-three miles through the roughest weather of that winter.

It being in the afternoon when they left, they had to spend the night in the Big Cove, about half way between the starting point and Huntsville. Her husband, having been off on a long scout, was returning, and spent the latter part of the night at the upper end of the valley, perhaps within six miles of his wife, who was a prisoner of war. And had the husband known the condition of his wife, it is probable the Big Cove would have witnessed a scene entirely out of the regular channel of nature. There might have been "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." But he did not know.

On reaching Huntsville, it was said that the whole garrison was disgusted at the conduct of the officer. The prisoner was placed in the Huntsville hotel to board at three dollars a day, and at the personal expense of the miscreant

that arrested her. But what do you suppose was the feeling of the husband of the prisoner, when he thought how tenderly she had been reared; and when in her young womanhood she had left her mother, home, and friends and cast her lot in with him. She who had soothed his pillow in sickness, who had stood by him in health and encouraged him in all his duties and trials.

We had trials before this, and had often been tempted severely, but we had never been introduced to anything like this. And if there ever was a time when the prince of darkness called a council of war, commissioned his officers, and armed his soldiers, at the same time throwing wide the gates of the lower regions, and bidding them charge a poor, weak human being, it was then. Whether the tempters came by companies, battalions, regiments, brigades, or divisions, we knew not, but we are sure they were there by legions. The temptation was to cherish vengeance against everything that wore the blue, and to prevent it settling in the heart was accomplished by appealing in agonizing prayer unto God. We had to summon to our aid all the human kindness in our nature, reach out for the examples of great and good men before us, and gather every particular of grace from every nook and corner of our soul. But on combining all these things together, we found that the scales did not balance. Hence we threw ourselves and everything else right down at the foot of the cross asking God to help us for the sake of the blood of Jesus Christ. Thank God, we gained the victory at last. But the conflict was awful.

The writer and his boys knew all about the situation of Huntsville, and also of the garrison stationed there. We knew every street, nook and corner. We knew where every picket was stationed at night. We knew even the number of the room occupied by the prisoner. In short, we had "all the ropes" in our hands. And we had determined to go by night, and slip those pickets, enter the prisoner's room and take her out, or die in the attempt. We knew we had men who would follow us to the very jumping off place, and hence every arrangement was being made for the rescue.

While this was going on, Captain [Robert] Welch, who had been sent to convey thirty-five prisoners into the land of Dixie, on hearing of the lady's arrest, hurried a dispatch into

the city, saying: "I have thirty-five prisoners, and if you do not set Mrs. Major Johnston at liberty at once, the last one of them will look up a tree!"

But about that time, Doctor Wright,[4] a noble fellow, who had known the prisoner all her life, happened to be in town and at the Provost Marshal's office, when that officer[5] said: "Doctor, if I knew how to get Mrs. Johnston home I would set her at liberty." The doctor answered: "If you see proper to set her at liberty, I will see her safely home."

The officer wrote a pass for doctor and Mrs. Johnston, and they at once started on their way. On the street they met the colonel who had arrested her, and he took the passes from them, saying: "Mrs. Johnston is not a prisoner of the government, but she is my prisoner."

The doctor returned and informed the Provost Marshal of what had happened. He at once wrote new passes, and on handing them to the doctor, said: "Now, you go on; and if that fellow interrupts you again report him to me, and I will teach him a lesson he will not soon forget." The doctor then passed the pickets unmolested and conveyed the prisoner safely to her home and friends.

This was a happier ending of the matter than at one time could have been expected. Whether it was brought about by Captain Welch's threat or by a sense of justice, we know not, but she was very promptly set at liberty. The facts already given in connection with insolent talk said to have been given the prisoner made an impression upon the mind of the writer not easily erased. And it pains him to think of it yet, much more to write about it.

The writer claims no extra amount of goodness, but if he knows his own heart it is as free from malice, prejudice, and revenge as that of common men. But if God be willing, he would rather not meet that colonel and know him, until we meet in the presence of that All-Wise Judge, who will administer justice between angels, men and devils. We wish the reader to understand us distinctly. The writer well knows that he is as liable to err as other men, therefore he wishes to "abstain from all appearance of evil," and that is all of it.

Notes

[1] *The officer who imprisoned Mrs. Johnston was Lieutenant Colonel Bedan B. McDanald of the 101st Ohio Infantry Regiment. On the evening of January 17, 1865, McDanald led his regiment down Big Cove Road to seek the men who had captured a small forage party that day. The 101st Ohio was joined by 25 men from the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry, guided by the notorious "Captain" Ben Harris. "I burned some fifty tenements on my line of march that were occupied by bushwhackers and their supporters," wrote McDanald, "leaving their families in a homeless, helpless condition, with orders to leave the country by going north or moving South of the Tennessee River." OR Series I, volume XXXV, part 1, pp. 194-5.*

There seems to be some confusion as to the proper spelling of McDanald's name. He apparently wrote it "McDanald." However, the Official Army Register of the Volunteer Forces of the United States of America for the Years 1861, '62, '63, '64, and '65 *lists him as "McDonald," while the 1860 U.S. Census for Crawford County, Ohio, also spells it that way. He is surely the "B. B. McDonald" who is buried in grave #1063 at Oakwood Cemetary in Crawford County, Ohio.* (Cemetaries of Crawford County, Ohio. *Vol. II. Galion, Ohio, 1988.) "B. B. McDonald" died on Christmas day, 1880, eleven years after the death of his own young wife.*

[2] *This was the home of Rev. John Hicks Hamer.*

[3] *The infant was Emma May Johnston, born October 1, 1864. On December 18, 1888, Emma was married by her father to James Melville Gardner of Chambers County, Alabama. She died May 1, 1941. Hamer, p. 38.*

[4] *Thomas A. Wright was a physician who lived in Paint Rock, Jackson County, Alabama. Dr. Wright was 27 years old in 1860. (U. S. Census, Paint Rock post office, residence #19.)*

[5] *Lieutenant Colonel John W. Horner of the 18th Michigan Infantry was the provost marshal at this time. "This Col. Horner excels all the provost marshals we have yet had in his malice and ill will towards those who he does call Rebels,"*

wrote Mrs. Chadick of him. "He certainly has provost marshal on the brain, and reminds us of another illustrious namesake, Jacky Horner, who, in his unbounded pride, exclaimed, 'O, what a great, big boy am I!'" Nevertheless, it was Horner who released Mrs. Johnston from captivity.

Mrs. Chadick described the incident in her diary on February 18, 1865:

"Heard some news today: the wife of the rebel Col. Johns[t]on, whose cavalry has annoyed the Feds in the vicinity of Huntsville excessively was brought to town a prisoner a short time since and retained four days from her little infant, six months old. Johns[t]on had been capturing several Federal prisoners, which so exasperated the authorities here that they sent over a company of soldiers to burn the houses of innocent people and lay waste to the country, which they accordingly did. The women stood with their children around them, looking on and defying them, saying they had worked for what little they had and to burn it away! They could work for more and they would turn out and bushwhack them themselves!

"They laid Johns[t]on's house in ashes, and Col. McDonald brought his wife to town, saying if anything would bring him to his senses, he thought that would!"

Chapter 19

In Close Quarters

At this stage of the game, times were getting very lively. The blue-coats were moving in every direction, while our boys were scattered all over the country in squads, and meeting the enemy at every crook and turn.

The writer is apprised of the fact that men differ in opinion in regard to the policy of keeping soldiers inside the Federal lines.[1] In the first place, being inside the lines they could find out almost every movement of the enemy and convey reports to the Confederate authorities. In the second place, operating as we did, sometimes scattered in squads all over the country, and at other times concentrating our forces, we were able to attack in less or greater number as circumstances required. And acting as we did, the enemy was deceived, making him think that our strength was five times as great as it was; and thus believing, they kept a heavy force at every station.

If we are correct in the above, the reader will see at once the thousands of Federal soldiers were retained to watch us; otherwise, they would have been at the front facing our forces in line of battle. But enough on this line.

The major took a squad of men, and moving up Flint Valley northward, passed through Maysville. There he met Colonel Mead with whom he held consultation, with intent of mischief to the blue-coats, who were then in a stockade at Brownsboro, two miles below Maysville. Our idea was to "toll" them out of their den, and have an open field fight. But they would not toll worth a cent. We do not know how long we were fishing for them—perhaps all night and part of the next day — but they would not bite. At last we concluded to have a fight or a foot-race. Hence, we moved off down the Deposit Road, which passed close by and in full view of the stockade. Our advanced guard was composed chiefly of young men, among whom was Thomas Chambliss,[2] who learned, while in

Maysville, that the blue-coats had insulted his sister, which of course put him in an ill humor. On arriving right opposite the stockade, he filed right a few paces. Then squaring his horse, he emptied two six-shooters at the blue-coats round about the stockade, which ran them into their holes like so many rats.

While this was going on the other boys were busy taking in prisoners who had been straggling out to the mountains to our left. Having taken all the "mudanchors" within our reach, we moved forward down the Deposit road. As we crossed the point just below them, they fired a volley at us from the stockade.

The reader will understand that as we crossed that point, we were in full view of them and they could count every one of us. This gave them the advantage, for we could tell nothing about their number, they being hidden in their den. Therefore, they mustered a heavy force, consisting of cavalry and mounted infantry, and pursued us with at least three times our number. On reaching Doctor [John] DeBow's — where Captain John W. Grayson[3] now lives — we called a halt. While there they fired on our rear at long range, when we wheeled and let slip at them, which caused them to fall back at once. We then threw ourselves into a regular line of battle and waited for their approach. In a minute Dr. DeBow came running out of the house and begged us not to fight there, as his wife was very ill. As a matter of course, we moved down the Deposit road.

Thus we continued southward until we got to Mr. Johnnie Allison's,[4] where Colonel Mead left the command and rode off toward the house. We suppose that he went to get something to eat, for Allison was a well-to-do farmer, and soldiers like to eat once in a while. Therefore, the major took command and moved forward to Cave Spring, where he called a halt.

The reader will remember that the Deposit road ran due south, and that we were traveling south when we halted at this point. At Cave Spring the road passed through a gap, there being a mountain on each side. The rise in the gap is not more than eight or ten feet above the level earth on either side. On the left, going south, is Cave Spring, a sink in the earth fifteen or twenty feet below the general level, and containing about an acre of land. The spring flows out of the

mountain on the east side and into the mountains on the west side, passing directly under the road, the road being connected with the mountain on the west. On the right of the road stands a dwelling, the east end of the house being next to the road. The yard fence running north and south was exactly parallel with the east end of the house, the later forming a part of the fence, hence there was just enough room for the road to pass between the house and where the earth began to sink toward the spring.

On the south side of the house, extending up to the edge of the road, and toward the south perhaps two hundred feet, lay as many scraggy rocks and rough boulders as were ever seen, perhaps on any other spot of earth of the same size. Upon reaching this gap we filed right, up the gradual rise, toward the main mountain, for about fifty paces. Then filing right again, we were exactly parallel with the road we had been traveling, where we were ordered to halt and dismount, hitch and feed the horses. After which we were ordered to take our rations and deploy in skirmish line, just on top of the bank overlooking the road which the blue-coats were compelled to travel, if they followed us at all.

"Now," said the major, "you can whip as many Yankees as can be freighted along the road. He then left the command and went down to the house to have a few words with Mr. Cobb[5] who lived there. On reaching the house he stepped in and seated himself at the door and commenced conversation with Mr. Cobb. Perhaps in ten minutes Colonel Mead came on and went directly to the command; and on seeing that the colonel had come from the direction the Yankees were likely to come, and that he was with the command, the major became perfectly satisfied and continued his conversation with Mr. Cobb.

The old adage is, "Talk about the devil, and his imps will appear." So it was in this case; for the conversation had not proceeded more than three minutes, when looking in the direction Mead had come there were seen the tops of five or six hats, just rising the bank about thirty paces away. The question was asked in mind, "Who are they?" But before it was possible to answer, their whole bodies rose above the bank, clad in full blue. At the sight of them, the major exclaimed, "Yanks!" And springing to his feet he darted through the entry and over the fence, among those rough

boulders, falling and rising until he had struck smooth earth perhaps two hundred feet south of the house. At the same moment the blue-coats charged. Dashing past the house along the road, they wheeled right into line, ready to receive their fleeing enemy almost at the muzzle of their guns.

Perhaps it may be hard for some readers to swallow what we say, but we assure them that there is no exaggeration in this. Being at the spot a few days ago, the writer reined up his horse, then fixing his eye as near as he could upon the identical spot where he struck the smooth earth, he measured the distance with his eye, between the Yankees and the Reb, and believes that it could not have been more than thirty feet from the enemy's guns when they first fired on him. They not only fired once, but continued to fire as long as they could see anything to fire at. As the Reb ran away from them, the twigs fell thick and fast along his track, as the bullets cut them off. But out he went without a bullet touching him in either flesh or clothes, as far as he knew.

The firing of the Yankees aroused our boys, and the Colonel threw them into line and charged the blue-coats like a cyclone. In that charge young Tom Chambliss was killed, and his comrades were very sorry to lose him, for he was a noble young fellow. We suppose Colonel Mead exposed his men too much in order to save the writer. But happily for him, he had skipped clear out of their reach before the charge was made, and fell into ranks as his own men straightened up from the charge.

Then we had a warm engagement. We pushed the Yankees so tight that they slipped down into that sag of earth near the spring and took refuge among the rocks. The bank on the south side being a gradual slant, they very conveniently got their horses down with them. We threw ourselves in their rear and cut them off from their base, but being protected as they were by the bluff of rocks they prevented us doing them the damage we otherwise would have done. Soon the night set in, and under the cover of darkness they slipped out and moved off due south, in the opposite direction from their base. In that way they gave us the dodge; but we made them travel at least thirty miles to get back to their base.

Until this day, it is a mystery how Colonel Mead could have traveled the road at least three-quarters of a mile, and

no more than five minutes ahead of the Yankees, and yet not see them. But stranger still was it for the Yankees to have passed our whole command, and it within fifty yards of the road, and not discovered by it. Nevertheless it is true.

While we did not use the blue-coats so roughly as we wanted to, yet we gained the better part of the fight; for we captured a number of prisoners, besides killing a few of the enemy.

Notes

[1]*Colonel Alfred A. Russell, 4th Alabama Cavalry, was one of those who saw little value in keeping Mead's men where they were. "In compliance with orders from Major General [Nathan B.] Forrest," he wrote on January 17, 1865, "I would have brought to the army not less than 1,500 men, who are now within the lines and their services lost to the country, but for the contrary influence of some of the staff officers of Brigadier General [Philip D.] Roddey and S. D. Cabaniss, inspector of conscription." Col. A. A. Russell to Maj. A. P. Mason, Jan. 17, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLV, part 1, pp. 775-6.*

[2]*Private Thomas Chambless was a member of Johnston's Company E. Chambless was only 16 when he was killed. (U.S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Alabama, New Hope post office: # 515/512 Jane Chambless, 36, born in Alabama, domestic. Her children were Thomas, 12; Nancy, 10; Joel, 8; Marthy, 6; and Rebecca, 4.)*

[3]*On May 15, 1862, John W. Grayson had succeeded Thomas H. Owen as captain of Company E, 37th Tennessee Infantry Regiment. Compiled Service Records, Roll 268, 37th Tennessee Infantry, Daffron-Kiuser.*

[4]*U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Alabama, New Hope post office: # 487/486 John Allison, 57, born in Ireland. Allison had prospered in America. His land was worth $15,000 and his personal property $57,232.*

[5]*Several men named Cobb lived in this area and it is not clear which one Johnston meant. It might have been Allison's brother-in-law, Williamson R. W. Cobb, a former U.S. Congressman. However, W. R. W. Cobb died on November 1, 1864, of an apparently accidental gunshot, which would mean this incident would have had to have happened shortly before that time. Owen, vol. III, pp. 357-8.*

Chapter 20

Young Davis Riddled with Bullets

Young [Patrick] Davis, of whom we are about to write, was in his seventeenth year, and the son of a clever widow.[1] He had never been connected with the Confederate army in any respect, but had been staying at home and working hard to keep his mother and sisters from starving.

He had just closed a hard week's work, and had gone off a short distance to Flint river to take a bath and wash off his mule. While there, the blue-coats came along and arrested him and took him before their colonel for trial. And it was said that this officer was a minister of the gospel[2] before he entered the Federal service.

The young man was first accused of being a bushwhacker, and afterwards of being a spy, both of which charges he was convicted without evidence. If it had been possible to search the three worlds, heaven, earth and hell, there would not have been a particle of evidence found against him. But what do you suppose was the decision of that colonel? He sentenced that innocent boy to be shot. Taking him along the Deposit road to the foot of the little mountain below Maysville, they lashed him hard and fast to a tree and literally riddled his body with bullets. They then dragged the body off and threw it into a sink in the earth and left it there.

This occurred, perhaps, on Saturday afternoon. The boy failing to return home all that night and the next day, the uneasy mother and friends were hunting and enquiring for him. Hearing that the blue-coats had passed up the road Saturday afternoon, the mother got on an old mule that was scarcely able to travel, and went up the road in search of her lost boy.

By this time the women of the neighborhood near where the boy was shot, had gotten together, and with the assistance of their little boys, had lifted the dead boy out of the sink into which he had been thrown. But on finding the

body so awfully mangled, they decided that it would be best for the mother not to see him. So when the mother arrived, they persuaded her to go to the nearest house to save her from the awful spectacle.

The reader will remember that there were but few men in the country at that time, and they were afraid to even speak, much less to act, in the least suspicious way. But they ventured to nail up a box, while the women prepared the body as best they could for burial. The body was then placed in the box and hauled to the graveyard and put out of sight. But the mother was never allowed to look upon her dead boy.

A kind woman, neighbor of the unfortunate widow, upon hearing that she had been left behind at the house to which she had been taken, placed herself on a blind horse and went over to render the poor woman all the assistance she could. On reaching her friend she found her frantic with grief, but managed to place her on her mule, while she got on her own horse, and they started for the home of the unfortunate family. But they had not proceeded far until it was found that the poor woman was not mentally able to guide her mule. Hence she was compelled to guide her own blind horse with one hand and lead the mule with the other, while at times she had to hold her friend in the saddle. We think if tears ever fell in heaven, there was weeping there that day. And we believe if demons ever hissed at any living man, they must have hissed at that fiendish officer.[3]

Just after this cruel incident happened, the writer with a squad of men passed up the valley one night; and arriving at this same widow's house, he, with a few other men, called a halt at the gate, and found a Federal lieutenant[4] in the house, which was at once surrounded. But upon having a talk with the sisters of the murdered boy, we learned that the lieutenant was engaged in trying to gather testimony upon which to bring his colonel to justice for his crime. We at once sent our respects to the officer, and assured him that not a hair of his head should be hurt. Then bidding the young ladies good-night, we pressed forward after the command.

We wish the reader to know that the above was not the only case of the kind, but merely one among many. Every particular of the above sketch was related to the writer by the noble woman that led the mule that bore the unfortunate mother home.

Just after the surrender the writer was called on to preach the funeral of young Davis. The services were held at Cedar Grove church, just below where Gurley now stands. On which occasion the house was crowded, with perhaps one-third of the congregation consisting of Federal soldiers, then stationed at the bridge across Hurricane creek. And notwithstanding the preacher was surrounded by Federal bayonets, he did some plain talking. While he did not use rough or insulting language, every point in the case was presented without fear of men or devils. Suffice it to say there was good order among both the citizens and soldiers. Below the reader will find what Mrs. McBroom says about the tragedy of the young man's death, and also what her husband says about what occurred at the church.

Mrs. McBroom's Statement.

"The above sketch is every word true; for I am the woman who led the mule that bore Mrs. Davis home, after her dead boy was buried.

"[signed] Mrs. Amanda McBroom."

Mr. McBroom's Statement.

"When the Federal soldiers arrived a the church door, Major Johnston said: 'Come in friends, and stack your arms in the corner there. When I was in the army I fought you with all my might; but now I am in the pulpit and will preach to you with all my ability.' After service a number of the soldiers shook hands with the Major.

"[signed] C. C. McBroom." [5]

Notes

[1]In 1860, Mrs. Lucy Davis was a poor 37-year-old widow with three daughters and six sons. Her son Patrick would have been about 18 in 1864. U. S. Census, Madison County, Alabama, New Hope post office, #507/504-2.

[2]This was Colonel Edward Anderson, 12th Indiana Cavalry. Colonel William P. Lyon, 13th Wisconsin Infantry, met Anderson at Claysville, Alabama, on July 24, 1864, just three weeks before Davis' murder. Anderson "used to preach in Chicago and latterly in Michigan City," wrote Lyon. "I think he is the roughest man I have met lately; but he is talented and brave." Adelia Lyon, Reminiscenses of the Civil War (San Jose: Muiron and Wright, 1907), p.155. (This volume by Mrs. Lyon includes her husband's diary and correspondence.)

[3]Mrs. Chadick notes in her diary on both July 29 and August 16, 1864, that Union soldiers had called citizens from their homes, accused them of feeding bushwhacker, and shot them. On August 21, 1864, she told of the killing of Davis:

"A trial is going on in town today. Colonel [Edward] Anderson, who commands at Brownsboro, has been having innocent citizens shot like dogs. A young man named Davis was carried before him last week and asked to take the oath. He said he could not take it. Then they asked, if he was to go into the army, which one would he go into. He replied that he had his old mother and her family to take care of and could not go into either army, but, of course, if he was forced to go, being a Southern man, his preference would be on that side. Anderson replied, "I'll fix you. You shall not go into either!"

"He was kept until the next morning, when Col. Anderson gave him a pass to go home, and then sent out a squad of men with orders to kill him. He begged hard for one-half hour to go home and see his mother. He was shot in 14 places, a Negro having the second shot, and his body carried into the mountain and hid.

"The men in the neighborhood were afraid to look for him, and a Federal soldier piloted Miss [Ann] Vincent to the spot under promise of secrecy, and she and other ladies carried the body home. Another man was afraid to make a coffin without a permit from Col. Anderson.

"This brutal officer refused admittance to the mother of the murdered man, but she forced her way into his presence, told him he had murdered an innocent man and broken a mother's heart, and that she would have revenge. She came to town and went to the officers in command and told them that, if they did not bring Col. Anderson to justice, she would mount her horse and go herself in search of the Rebel cavalry.

"She got up her witnesses and brought them to town, and he is now being tried. This man is a Congregational preacher. Between robbing, thieving and murdering, they will give the North a glorious name in history. Houses that have been occupied by officers and their reputed wives have been completely plundered." The following day, Mrs. Chaddick wrote: "Col. Anderson, the murderer of Mr. Davis, has been sentenced to five years imprisonment. Mild sentence for crimes such as his."

Edward Anderson was definitely tried for murder, although not in Huntsville. Gary L. Morgan, assistant chief of the Military Reference Branch, Textual Reference Division of the National Archives, writes that the records of both the Huntsville court of inquiry and the Nashville court martial cannot now be located. (Letter of July 30, 1990.) Mr. Morgan did provide a copy of the charges brought against Anderson. These are (1) murder, (2) unjustifiable homicide, and (3) conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline. The information in the charges agrees with Johnston's account and Mrs. Chadick's diary. The unfortunate victim was killed "on or about" August 14, 1864, "without proper trial and without sufficient evidence that the said Patrick Davis was guilty of any crime."

An obviously irritated Anderson wrote Brigadier General W.D. Whipple on January 5, 1865, requesting leave to obtain counsel in Indianapolis for his court martial for "killing guerrillas in Alabama last summer." Seventeen days later, Colonel Lyon noted in his diary that he had "just received orders to go to Nashville for the defense in the case of Colonel Anderson, 12th Indiana Cavalry, who is on trial for ordering a young man, who was probably a guerrilla, to be shot last summer at Brownsboro." Lyon, p. 193.

For some reason, the court-martial failed to convict Anderson. He returned to his regiment and was mustered out

with it on November 10, 1865. Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army. *(Washington: Adjutant General's Office, 1865), part VI, page 19.*

[4]*The list of witnesses at the Huntsville court of inquiry includes "Lt. John Western" of the 12th Indiana Cavalry. Therefore, First Lieutenant John Weston, the regimental quartermaster, would appear have been the officer Johnston encountered. While the trial records have disappeared, the correspondence relating to Anderson's court martial can be found in his compiled military service record.*

[5]*Christopher C. McBroom does not seem to have served in the Confederate Army. He was boarding in Huntsville with his wife, Amanda, and two children in 1860. Apparently he and his family left the city during the Union occupation. (U. S. Census, Madison County, Alabama, Huntsville post office, # 176/176.)*

Chapter 21

Hazel Green — Wagons Captured

Soon after the Cave Spring affair, we determined to move northward with a small squad of men, and to investigate the position of the enemy in that direction. Our route lay between the forks of Flint river and bearing northwest toward Hazel Green. Not a great way from that place we fell in with Colonel Mead, who also had a squad of men. And as he was our superior officer we fell into ranks with him, and thereby made the command stronger.

We at once commenced winding our way through the country in different directions, to hear and see what we could. Hazel Green, a small village in the northern part of Madison county, is surrounded by a beautiful and fertile country, made up, for the most part, of well-to-do farmers.

We had not proceeded very far before our scouts brought us word there was a large wagon train a short way off, out foraging, and a large body of Federalists in charge of it. Hearing this report did not satisfy us fully, but created a desire to see that of which we had heard. Therefore we were not long in making the necessary arrangements. As soon as our boys heard the news every one of them straightened up in his saddle and reined up his horse. At the same time the horses began to champ their bits and paw the earth, as if they too were anxious to see something.

At length, the colonel gave orders for us to move forward, and we obeyed by moving slowly until we reached a point as near the enemy as we desired, when we called a halt. Here the colonel ordered a squad to bring on the attack, when our boys went at them in full "Rebel style," which was about as fast as their horses could carry them. But as the blue-coats had, in some way, heard of our approach, they had time to make preparations to meet us; which they did by throwing their wagons in line, so as to fight behind them for protection. Some, however, took position in the dwelling house, and others found shelter in cabins about the yard.

Being thus situated they were, during the fight, getting rather the better of us. But at this crisis the colonel commanded the writer to dash forward and support the struggling little band.

At the word, off went our boys at a sweeping gallop, but instead of continuing the charge from the east as the others had done, we wheeled right and entered a lane that came down from the north, leading directly to the house near which the enemy was posted. Down this lane we went, and get there we did. At the same moment our first squad recharged, the double charge from two directions proving to be a perfect rout of the enemy. They ran out of their houses and from behind their wagons, and we after them cutting and slashing. We took in the whole "lay out" except one man. And a Texan,[1] who was with us, ran him a number of miles, but failed to get him.

We had one man killed at this point, or rather he was so badly wounded that he died soon after. A blue-coat had hidden in a ravine, and Captain [James L.] Baxter[2] coming upon him ordered him to surrender, which he did. But the captain failed to take his gun from him, and when he turned to look in another direction the Yankee shot him. This was killing a man to whom he had fairly surrendered. Had we been as desperate a set as some thought we were, that Yankee would have died for his treachery. But he did not, for he was sent over the river with the rest as a prisoner of war.

Captain Baxter was a noble fellow, and we hated very much to lose him. Dr. [David] Shelby,[3] who lived near by, was called to him at once, but his skill as a physician failed to save the captain's life. It was while bending over and working with Baxter, that the doctor recognized the writer, and had no need to ask what command that was.

That night we camped in what was called "the barrens," with our prisoners. While in camp the Yankees and Rebs got into a competition of song. The Rebs would sing the Yanks some of their ringing war-songs. Then the Yanks would hurl one of their war-songs back again, and thus it went, tit for tat, for several hours. Had a stranger passed by at that time he would have thought the boys were the best of friends.

But right in the midst of this jollification, one of the blue-coats happened to ask a Reb if he knew old Bushwhacker Johnston. The Reb answered, "I saw him leading that charge on you fellows this evening." It was said that, at this answer, their feathers fell, and they seemed as if they would have crawled into a hole. If "Old Nick" had been there with all his imps, it might not have produced a more sudden shock. The reader may conclude that we had no more singing that night, although the prisoners were in absolute safety. We do not remember the number of prisoners we captured, but we took more prisoners than we had men in our command. Neither do we remember the number of wagons we captured, but one of our men told the writer not long ago that there were twenty or thirty.[4] As we could not preserve the wagons from recapture we set fire to them where they stood. But we took special care of the horses, including the teams, and every prisoner. Yes, we repeat it, we took special care of the prisoners. They had plenty to eat and drink, and not a hair of their heads was hurt.

The prisoners with the horses and mules were conveyed across the northeast corner of Madison county, thence across the western part of Jackson county to Law's Landing, where they were transported across the Tennessee river, into the land of Dixie.

Notes

[1] *If this had been Lieutenant Millard, it seems likely Johnston would have said so.*

[2] *James L. Baxter was captain of Company H, organized in Lincoln County, Tennessee, on October 8, 1864. Compiled Service Records, Mead's Confederate Cavalry.*

[3] *U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Alabama, Meridianville post office: #359/325 David Shelby, 44, physician, born in Tennessee.*

[4] *On January 19, 1865, Mrs. Chadick wrote in her diary: "Two wagon trains have been captured within the last two days. One near Meridianville by Col. Meade, consisting of 9 wagons and 18 men! The authorities are so exasperated that they gave an order yesterday that every house in the country for 15 miles around Huntsville should be laid in ashes.*

"The country people are suffering dreadfully from the depredations of the enemy, and in many instances, not only all their stock, provisions and means of subsistence have been taken from them, but their clothing and bedding have been taken and the alleged excuse for all this is that they harbor bushwhackers! While those in command know very well that Meade and Johns[t]on's men are regular cavalry, yet they persist in calling them bushwhackers and, if any of them are so unfortunate as to fall into their hands, they are treated as such!"

Hazel Green is located a few miles north of Meridianville, and this must certainly be the capture described by Johnston. Thus the incident appears out of chronological order.

Chapter 22

Crossing the Tennessee with Colonel Russell

When General [John B.] Hood was moving from Atlanta toward Nashville, the writer was on the south side of the Tennessee river; and had he known that the general was advancing northward with his army, our command could have given him important information concerning the situation of the enemy along that river. But he had gotten very near the river before we knew anything about it.

For instance, at Decatur we could have given him a report of both the situation and number of the enemy. As it was, General Hood as he passed that place, merely fired on the garrison,[1] filed off, and crossed the river lower down. While if he had been fully informed he could have taken the place without the loss of a man, for the enemy was very weak at that point.

Just at that time Colonel [A. A.] Russell, in command of the Fourth Alabama Cavalry, came along, and we fell in with him. The command then moved up on the south side of the river, and we forded it at old Bell Fonte. We had rather a watery time of it getting over, and several of the boys got a considerable dunking. But we finally passed over safely.

Being now in what was considered the enemy's land, we started up through Maynard's Cove, in a northwesterly direction; and as we advanced the home-made Yankees began to scamper like so many rats to their holes. Passing over a spur of the Cumberland mountains, we dropped down into Paint Rock valley; and as soon as we reached the valley we could hear horns blowing in every direction, that being the signal for the rats to hunt their holes.

But about the mouth of Guess' Creek, the boys came in sight of some of the blue-coats, and pitched into them like a "thousand of brick," and the matter was settled in pretty short

order. The command then moved up the valley, and upon reaching Duckett's,[2] we called a halt. The main body of the regiment remained at that point, while Colonel Russell sent a regiment higher up the river after a clan of home-made Yankees, who had been weeding a wide row in that valley. The company that went were not long in finding their game, for they soon returned and made their report, as if the matter had been settled in short order.[3]

While we remained at Duckett's, the Federals sent out a pretty heavy force, both of infantry and cavalry, to attack us. When they arrived we exchanged shots with them for some time, and thereby prevented them from doing us any special damage.[4] Night came on directly, and knowing that the enemy was a little heavier than we cared about carrying, unless it had been absolutely necessary, we took the mountain in the direction of New Market. A day or two afterwards they touched us again near the latter place, where we had some pretty heavy skirmishing. We tusseled with them in the lane, in the gap, and up and down the creek and still held them off so they did us no serious damage. At last they gave over the pursuit and fell back to Huntsville.

Leaving Colonel Russell near New Market, the writer took his boys, consisting of about forty in number, and moved off due west, striking the Meridian road near McDavid's old mill.[5] Here we wheeled left and proceeded down the road leading directly to Huntsville, for Hood was then moving directly on Nashville. The reader will bear in mind, however, that we did not know at that time the Federals were about to leave.

On passing through Meridianville, which is eight miles from Huntsville, the writer being in the rear of the command, and being recognized by the citizens, the ladies came out to the street to congratulate and shake hands, but he put spurs to his horse and dashed off; perhaps to save their property from the flames and themselves from personal insult. A short time after we passed through the village, we met a squad of armed Negro soldiers, the first our boys had ever met. How it was we met them at the time and place we did, was a matter of conjecture among the neighbors at that time, and continues so unto this day. Some supposed that we knew all about it and had come on purpose, while others attributed

it to Providence. Whether Providence had anything to do with it or not, it is certain the boys did a complete, though a disagreeable job.

Negro Soldiers Cleaned Up

There were a company of Negro soldiers[6] coming out of Huntsville on a foraging expedition, who, if they were not regulars, were heavily armed. They were also "pressing" wagons and teams, robbing smokehouses, cursing women, and doing generally as they pleased.

Just before we met them they had gone to Captain William Roper's,[7] and after pressing his teams, they entered the smokehouse to sack it. But his daughter, Miss Elvira,[8] who was a very fine, but courageous woman, began to expostulate with them begging them not to rob them of everything and starve the family to death. They told her if she opened her mouth again they would "shoot her damned heart out." The author does not like to repeat such language, but we are trying to present things as they occurred.

The next day after the above incident happened, these same Negroes marched to their slaughter. Being out again on their mission of plunder, they were marching up the road toward Meridianville, while we were marching down the road toward Huntsville, meeting each other, though entirely ignorant of each other's approach. Just below Meridianville, about half a mile, lived Mrs. Battle,[9] on the right; still further down, about two miles, lived Mr. Charles Strong,[10] on the right; and still further on, say a quarter of a mile, lived Mrs. Pleasant Strong,[11] on the left. These three families had offended the Negroes in some way, it was said, and having reported to the Federals, the Negro soldiers were on their way to burn them out of house and home. But whether Providence had anything to do with it or not, we got there just at the crisis, for the Negroes were within fifty yards of Mrs. Pleasant Strong's gate.

Just at this point the road bends, bearing around the mountain to the right, going south. The crook in the road and the trees standing near by hid the Negroes from us until we came almost full against them. We had out an advance guard under the command of Captain John Drake.

We had passed Mrs. Battle's and Mr. Charley Strong's, and were approaching Mrs. Pleasant Strong's when the writer galloped out to the advance guard. He at once ordered them to file right, up to the point of the mountain so as to see over, for they were almost in sight of Huntsville. Just as they were about to obey orders, we looked along the crook in the road and beheld a line of Negro soldiers peering out from behind the timber, like so many blackbirds. We saw at once that they were mounted and heavily armed. The writer then turned in his saddle and with a motion of his hand, called at the top of his voice for the column to forward, and they came up at a sweeping gallop. And just as the column reached the advance guard, the Negroes having thrown themselves into some kind of a line, poured a volley of shots into our ranks.

Now let the reader imagine the feelings of a Southern soldier as he is fired upon by Negroes, and they the first armed Negroes he had met. Fire! Flames! Vesuvius! No word of command was given, but the boys charged them as though all hell had been let loose to propel their onward rush.

It was said that one of the advance guards shot off six Negroes as he passed through them, firing right and left, leaving the rear to finish up the rest. When the writer reached the front the boys had finished their deadly work. It was ascertained by the neighbors afterwards, that one of the victims that day was an inoffensive Negro who lived near by, and was on his way to Huntsville. And that the soldiers compelled him to return with them. So the poor fellow, like "old dog Tray," lost his life by being found in bad company.

The whole squad of Negroes were killed, except one, who, like the lame captain, started upon the retreat in time; but the boys pushed him so close that the fire from the Federal pickets compelled them to retreat. When that Negro reached town, he tumbled out of the saddle and rolled on the grass under the shade for half an hour before he got breath enough to tell his story. That evening along every road that led into Huntsville Negroes could be seen pouring into the city like crows flying to their roost.[12]

After settling up with the Negro soldiers we moved east to the top of a little ridge out upon a plantation, where we had a full view of the valley in the direction of Huntsville. There we formed a line of battle and waited for some time, to see if there was anyone who wanted to fight. But finding no one to

accommodate us, we moved eastward again in order to join Colonel Russell, who had moved down Flint river toward the railroad.

That night, it so happened that we were at Captain William Roper's gate. And there being a goodly number of gray-coats about, Miss Elvira Roper and Miss Cornelia Clopton[13] were busily engaged distributing coffee and nick-nacks, and talking to the boys. When Miss Roper ascertained that the writer was in the crowd, and he being pointed out to her at a distance, she came running to express her gratitude for the disposition of the Negro soldiers who had abused her a few days before. As she came, both hands were extended, and the tears gushing from her eyes, while shouts of thanksgiving rang from her lips, she seemed truly happy to meet her deliverer.

While we are satisfied that nothing but the blood of Christ can atone for sin, yet if we should lack but little getting into heaven, we would hold up both hands and cry: "Lord let the woman's tears prevail!"

A short time after the boys pitched into the Negroes, there came along a physician, who lived in the neighborhood,[14] and we suppose he had been to see a patient. At any rate, he fell in just behind the boys and seemed to enjoy the excitement. We do not know that he cried "hurrah, boys!" with his lips, but we are satisfied he said so in his mind. But as soon as the excitement was over and the doctor had time to reflect, he wheeled his horse and was taken with a considerable getting away. He looked like a man who wished to find the route to some other point. We guessed at his thoughts, which were about this: "If the Yankees should catch me at this Negro killing, I would go up salt river, or some other dangerous water course."

Notes

[1]Hood made a diverstonary attack on Decatur from October 26 to 28, 1864, while his army passed west of the city .

[2]U. S. Census, 1860, Jackson County, Alabama, Paint Rock post office: #111/111 R. Duckett, 62, born in North Carolina, real estate $7,500; personal property $11,500. Two of Duckett's sons, Brown and Thomas, were privates in Company C of Mead's Battalion. Compiled Service Records, Mead's Confederate Cavalry.

[3]Mrs. Mary Steger of Maysville, in a letter to her sister, wrote that "Russell's regiment at one time killed 21 Jackson C[oun]ty Tories." Mary Steger to Mary Eliza, Hamilton, Ga., Feb. 17, 1865. The letter is in the Huntsville Public Library.

[4]The fight at Duckett's Plantation occurred on November 19, 1864. Colonel J. W. Hall, 4th Michigan Infantry, reported about thirty horses captured plus an assortment of camp equipment. Col. J. W. Hall to Lieut. W. M. Scott, A. A. A. G., Larkinsville, Nov. 21, 1864. OR Series I, volume XLV, part 1, pp. 636-637.

[5]An 1875 map of Madison County shows a mill where Mountain Fork joins Flint River. The old road to Meridianville and Huntsville passed just west of it.

[6]The black soldiers in Huntsville may have come from the 106th U.S. Colored Infantry, organized some months earlier at Decatur, Alabama, and then stationed at Pulaski, Tennessee. Frederick H. Dyer, A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion (Des Moines: Dyer Publishing Company, 1908), p. 252.

[7]U. S. Census, 1860, Madison county, Alabama, Hayes Store post office: #454/454 William Roper, 59, born in Virginia. Roper's land was worth $10,800 and his personal property $32,490.

[8]Elvira Roper was 22 in 1860.

[9]U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Meridianville post office: #217/197 Josiah D. Batlle, 46, born in North Carolina. Another well-to-do cotton planter, Battle's land was valued at $16,600 and his personal property at $26,819. Mrs. Batlle's name was Mary.

[10]U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Meridianville post office: #216/196 Charles W. Strong, 55, born in Virginia. Like most planters around Meridianville, Strong was quite wealthy. His land was valued at $36,330 and his personal property $45,705. That personal property obviously included many slaves. The old Strong house, built from the timbers of a wrecked steamboat, still exists, although it has been concealed behind a modern brick veneer.

[11]U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Hayes Store post office: #475/475 Elizabeth Strong, 50, born in Alabama. Pleasant Strong had left his widow in comfortable circumstances, with $18,000 in land and another $35,000 in personal property.

[12]At this time, the Union army was hastily preparing to abandon Huntsville. On November 26, 1864, Mrs. Chadick noted in her diary: "It is said that Rebel cavalry are hovering in the neighborhood, and that seven Negro soldiers were killed today near the house of Charley Strong." The black soldiers Johnston encountered were actually no more undisciplined than many white Union troops had shown themselves to be when not properly supervised by their officers.

[13]Cornelia Clopton and her sisters lived with the John Penny family, next door neighbors of William Roper. (Hayes Store post office #455/455). Cornelia was 17 in 1860.

[14]Possibly Dr. David Shelby, who lived in Meridianville.

Chapter 23

Tearing Up the Railroad

After leaving Captain Roper's that night we moved off and fell in with Colonel Russell, and at once commenced tearing up the railroad. The reader may wonder what that was done for. General [R. S.] Granger, who was in Huntsville, was in the act of leaving, going by the way of Stevenson, thence to Nashville to fight General Hood; and we wished to detain him as much as possible.

In tearing up the road, we dismounted and marched in line up to the track, just as thick as we could stand, then laying hold of the cross-ties, we raised the yell, "Turn over the United!"[1] And as we lifted we made her crack and tremble. And when we got a long span set on edge, leaning from us, that would half lift what was immediately connected with it; and thus we turned over hundreds of yards at a time, which came down with a mighty crash. After we got the track turned over we piled upon the steel rails, logs and chunks, and then set them on fire. This was done in order to heat them until they would bend and become unfit for use. Thus we hindered Granger for several days; but at last he worked his way through, and advanced towards Stevenson.

After Granger left Huntsville, we went to the city and had a jollification with the old friends. While there an old acquaintance came to the writer and invited him to come down and take some refreshments. Thinking he meant something to eat, away we went, having a sharp appetite. But lo and behold when we entered the room, there they were drinking drams. Dick twigged it, Tom twigged it, and we suppose Henry also. They met the writer, liquor in hand, patting him on the shoulder, saying, "Come drink with us." But the answer was returned, "Gentlemen, we are found in the wrong pew, for we do not drink with any man, woman or child. You will please excuse us." And he left the room at once.

Shortly after leaving the room, we found Colonel Mead, and set out at once with our command in pursuit of General Granger. We knew he would have to travel slowly, as the railroad was to be repaired before him. We camped that night near Maysville, some twelve miles in the direction of Stevenson. The next morning Colonel Russell came on from Huntsville, and Colonel Mead's command fell in with his. When Russell came up he remarked, "Major, we are a little late, but it is the fruit of our dissapation last night. But we shall stir those bluecoats pretty quick."

On reaching Paint Rock, twelve miles further on, we learned that we were getting very close to the rear of the Federals. Colonel Russell being chief in command, selected his advance guard from our command, and placed it in charge of Lieutenant Millard. On going about three miles further, Millard sent word back, that he had come in sight of the enemy. The colonel sent word back to the lieutenant to "pitch into them like a thousand of brick," and it was hardly sooner said than done, for Millard was ready, willing and waiting. As soon as Millard fired, Colonel Mead turned over his command to the writer, put spurs to his horse and dashed forward to join Millard, for they were all his boys.

The attack was made just as the extreme rear of the enemy was fording Paint Rock river. There was a splashing of water, whistling of bullets, snorting of mules and horses, and screaming of refugees; for there were hundreds of refugees following Granger out. The Yankee soldiers leaving their rear wagons, retreated after the main body at a breakneck speed. Mead and Millard pitched across the river, flying on their track like so many bloodhounds. From there to Stephen's Gap, a distance of seven miles, they continued that impetuous charge. They passed, as they went, hundreds of wagons loaded with household goods of every description, while their owners, both white and black, left everything and fled into the mountains. And as we had received no report from our advance guard, we were satisfied that they had struck no heavy mettle. Therefore, we moved on at our regular gait.

We have not the language to describe what we saw, as we moved forward. In places the road was literally blockaded by wagons and teams. But what was more wonderful, a great part of what the wagons contained seemed to have been taken out and scattered pell-mell over the earth.

There were trunks, boxes, beds, quilts, blankets and sheets everywhere; while crockery of all grades was scattered in every direction. But who did all this can not be proven by this witness. It was not done by our advance guard, for they had swept after the enemy. It was not done by our main command, for the writer was in our fore-and-aft. Neither was it done by the citizens along the road, for the time was too short for them to have reached there, had they been disposed. Therefore, we concluded that the refugees themselves had thus mixed their things in order to get some special article to carry away with them, as they fled into the mountains.

At Stephen's Gap the Federal cavalry charged our advance guard, and our boys were forced to wheel back and fly to the mountains to save their scalps. But the blue-coats continued their charge down the road toward the main command; and a little above Woodville, on an elevated spot, we saw the enemy coming in full tilt, when Colonel Russell ordered us to fall in line. But Captain [Henry F.] Smith,[2] with his keen eye, saw at a glance that the Federals were sweeping around a bend in the road next to the mountain, and he took his company and dashed across an old field in order to cut them off. Then we saw the prettiest race we ever witnessed.

Had the Federals advanced toward us thirty seconds longer, there would have been no salvation for them. But they saw their exposed situation just in time, when they about wheeled. We had a full view of the race for about a mile and a half. For some time things seemed to be hung in the balance — the Yanks trying to get through a gap by which they entered, while Smith was straining every muscle to head them off. But at last the blue-coats dashed through the Gap, and cleared themselves on to their main command. We followed on until we reached the Gap, where the enemy made a stand on the other side of the valley, and sent their bullets whizzing back around our ears.

We then threw our skirmish line to the right upon the mountain and poured a volley into them in return; and they supposing that we were preparing to flank them, gave leg-bail and got somewhere else as fast as possible. The night came on, and we fell back in order to find rest for ourselves and horses.[3]

Notes

[1]The United States Military Railroad operated on all Southern lines in occupied territory.

[2]Captain Henry F. Smith commanded Company G of the 4th Alabama Cavalry. This company was enlisted on September 7, 1862, at Larkinsville, in Jackson County. Compiled Service Records, Roll 17, Russell's 4th Alabama Cavalry, M-T.

[3]This appears to have been the engagement at Paint Rock River listed on page 667 of Dyer's Compendium *as occurring on December 7, 1864. The* Compendium *names the Union troops involved as the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry, detachments of the 11th, 12th, and 13th Regiments of Indiana Cavalry, and a portion of the 2nd Tennessee (Union) Cavalry. The Union loss is given as 39 missing. The only account in the* Official Records *is a brief report by Lieutenant Colonel W. F. Prosser of the 2nd Tennessee. Prosser wrote, "We drove a small force of rebels across the creek yesterday in our advance, and about half an hour afterward the enemy appeared with an engine and a train of cars. We drove them back again some two or three miles, but shortly afterward they appeared again with the train and some cavalry, and we skirmished with them until dark, when they retired. I endeavored to capture the train, but was not successful." Except for the train, which Johnston does not mention, the two accounts seem to describe the same encounter. Lieut. Col. W. F. Prosser to Lieut. S. M. Kneeland, Paint Rock Bridge, Dec. 8,1864.* OR, *ser. I, vol. XLV, part 1, p. 640.*

Chapter 24

Tennessee Eye-Water

With Colonel Mead in command, we left New Market and passed through the "barrens" toward Tennessee. Just above New Market one of our boys, who had a sore-back horse, changed horses with an old citizen unknown to us. But the one he left was the better of the two horses, save the sore back. Directly after going into camp on Elk river, our scouts brought us word the Federals were pursuing us, which news made us very restless. About the same time, the old citizen came after his horse. Have him he must and have him he would. If he had brought the other horse with him, the change could have been made at once. We reasoned with him thus: "Look here my friend, to set that young fellow afoot here in the barrens while the enemy is pursuing us would be little less than murder, which we cannot agree to. But we will see that the horse is returned at some future time."

The old gentleman got mad and went off swelling and puffing. We fully intended to make our promise good, but before we got back a squad of young fellows left us and returned to the Tennessee valley, the young fellow with the exchanged horse among them. They scarcely had reached the valley when the Federals ran into them, wounded the man and killed the horse. So this made it impossible for us to comply with our promise. While the old gentleman kept the other horse, we are fearful that he died not thinking well of the major. We mention the above incident to show that disagreeable things happen that could not well have been avoided.

We crossed the Elk river into Mulberry village, Tennessee, and thence on north of Fayetteville. On leaving this place, we concluded that there was a chance to catch some game. Hence away we went eager for the fray. When we entered the town, which we did from the north, the bluebirds had all flown south in the direction of our own country. We spent some time in town with our old friends.

Finally, we bade our friends adieu and pitched out after the [Union] home guards, as they were called. On we went the next day and night and part of the next day, but they gave us the slip and got back to their den.

While in Tennessee, the boys got hold of what they were pleased to call "eye-water." The reader may know what that was, which makes the boys feel very large some times. When they had gotten hold of "eye-water," some of the boys began to act and look as saucy as many monkeys.

Just think of a noble young man, a good soldier and a daring officer, and capable of doing anything that is noble, to surrender himself to that worst of all enemies — whiskey, while liable to be attacked by the enemy at any time. Whiskey is the curse of all Christendom. It is as deceitful as the devil, and will roll sand after sand out of the human compound until he ceases to be a man, and becomes a brute. Enough whiskey run through a man will finally make him steal. We do not mean that he would steal money or a horse. We simply mean that when his money fails, his sponging and all else fails, he will appropriate that which is not his own in order to gratify his craving thirst.

We could give the name of a young man of considerable means, who got to dissipating and wandered off West. Continuing to drink, first his money failed. Then his credit failed, and his friends all failed. When he got to taking goods that merchants hung out as samples, sold them, and bought liquor with the money, he was arrested and put in prison. His old friends followed him West and took him out. But he soon went back to his old habits and did the same thing again. Thus he went on, in and out of jail, until his friends saw that it was of no use to assist him, and gave him up as a doomed man.

"O brandy! Brandy! bane of life!
Spring of tumult, source of strife;
Could we but half thy curses tell,
The wise would wish thee all in hell!"

Chapter 25

A Wild Goose Chase

Just after Hood fell back from Nashville,[1] the Federals were too numerous in the Tennessee valley for it to be safe for us, for there were thousands of them there.

The major having been born and reared in the northern part of Middle Tennessee, he took it into his head that somewhere in that direction there was a spot of earth where the blue-coats were not so plentiful. And as we were worried both day and night where we were, and needed rest, we concluded to migrate in search of that blissful clime. Arrangements were therefore made, and off we started with about forty men. A pretty daring undertaking, say you, when the Confederates had just been driven out of the state, and across the Tennessee river. Daring or not, we had no better sense than to undertake it; not knowing when we started out but that we would make a circuit entirely around the city of Nashville.[2]

Our route lay along the top of the mountain that divides Flint river from Paint Rock river, descending the mountain where the village of Huntland, Tennessee, now stands. From there we advanced northward until we crossed Elk river. Then we turned rather eastward, leaving Winchester to the right and Tullahoma to the left. We were now on what is called the bench of Cumberland mountain.

Our object was to avoid notice. We did not wish to be seen by any human being. Hence, we paid no attention whatever to roads, but traveled by sun, moon and stars, with the help of our pocket compass. Yes, at the hour of midnight we have halted, struck a match and looked at the compass to ascertain the direct course.

Passing across the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, we then bore north of east, leaving Manchester on the left and Hillsboro on the right. Just beyond Hillsboro, we called a halt as the sun was going down. Our object in halting

was to gather up some rations for ourselves and forage for our horses. For which purpose we distributed the command among the citizens, that we might not burden anyone more than was necessary. While gathering rations, one of the boys stepped into a house, and upon coming out said, "Major, there is a stack of pies in yonder as high as I am." The major answered, "You let those pies alone. They do not belong to us."

About that time the major was sitting on his horse with his legs crossed, one foot on each side of the horse's neck, when hearing a slight noise to the left, he turned his head and saw a company of blue-coats in full view. When they saw our gray coats, they wheeled right about and away they went. Yes, they went like they intended to get there. As they ran, we looked at them and laughed, but not a gun was fired.

By this time we had learned the secret of the pies, for they had been baked for the supper of the blue-coats. They were old fashioned peach tarts in the shape of a half-moon. The boys were ordered to walk in and take possession of the pies, for we had concluded that if they were good for the blues they must be good for the grays.

We then moved in the direction of McMinnville. But we did not proceed far before we turned into a dense forest, where we fed our horses and ate our supper. After supper, when we had rested a little, we mounted and pressed on toward McMinnville. The reader will bear in mind that we had men with us who could turn blue-coat whenever they wished, for they had blue uniforms with them. And being able to mimic the German or Irish at will, they had a jolly time among the citizens.

As we moved on, they would enter houses, dressed in blue, and passing themselves off as belonging to Major Armstrong's command of home guards, they could procure as much information about the blue-coats as the families possessed. On the other hand, if a gray-coat had undertaken the same thing, he would have found himself among the closest set of "know-nothings" he had ever encountered; for the people thought that there were no other soldiers in the country besides the blue-coats.[3]

Thus things went on until after midnight, when our boys reported that the Federals were a few miles ahead of us guarding a large squad of Confederate prisoners. But on we

went until we came in sight of their campfires, where we halted and held a council of war, the officer in command stating the case as follows: "Boys, we can set all those prisoners at liberty, and we had rather do it than eat when we are hungry. But in so doing we shall kick up a fuss in these low grounds of sorrow, which may cause us some hard fighting. You know we started out seeking rest, but now it is left with you as to what we shall do."

They answered, "We will go in search of rest." So we filed right into a dense forest, hitched our horses and lay down and fell asleep. But we did not sleep for long, for before day we were in the saddle pressing onward.

We firmly believed that the Yankees we had seen the day before would follow us next morning. With this in mind — like a fox before the pursuing hounds — we made for the Cumberland mountains, which loomed up in the distance. Between daybreak and sunrise we reached a point on Hickory creek, near a post office called Vervilla, which was near the foot of the mountain. There we called a halt to gather up something to eat for man and beast.

When we reached the gate of a flourishing farm house, our boys at once introduced the landlord to "Major Armstrong, of Shelbyville, Tennessee," which proved to get us into quite close quarters. We heard an old Methodist preacher once say, "There are some people who will not tell a lie, but they will hammer on it mightily after it is told." When we got through with this incident, we shall leave the reader to decide whether or not there was any hammering done. The landlord proved to be the incessant talker, and having a number of relatives living near Shelbyville, he began to inquire in reference to them:

"Well, Major, how is brother Jim getting along?"

"All right, all right, sir, as far as I know."

"Well, how is cousin Tim getting on?"

"Well, sir, I presume he is moving on the same old track."

"How are Uncle Joe and Aunt Kate?"

"When we heard from them last they were all O. K."

"Very little change in any of them, I guess," concluded the old gentleman.

And you had better believe we were glad when he ceased asking questions about his kinfolks. But he immediately began in another channel.

"Major," said he, "I was the first man in the homeguards in Warren county, but they are plentiful now. Why, sir," he continued, "there is one company now up in Brush Creek Cove, and another across Northcut's Gap, and still another beyond Rather's Gap. Why, sir, we are going to run all these thieving Rebels clear out of the country." Thus we got a number of dots that were useful to us.

We soon crossed Hickory creek, and away we went making for a point of the mountain that could be seen in the distance.

At the foot of the mountain some of the boys dismounted and drew a set of cooking utensils from one of "Jeff Davis' foundries" — as they styled it — which consisted of boards two feet in length which had been penned up to dry. These they used as johnnie cake bakers. Then up the mountain we went, and upon reaching the bench we found a pond of clear water, into which a stream ran above and out below.

Here we dismounted and hitched our horses, when some went to feeding and some to building fires, while others washed the smooth side of their oilcloths. Then putting a chunk at the lower side to make them cup up, they poured the meal upon the cloths, without sifting, and getting water from their canteens, poured it upon the meal and worked up the dough. Then patting it in cakes on the boards, they set it before the fire to toast. While this was going on, some were frying meat. In less than one hour after we arrived, we were all eating with coming appetite.

Notes

[1]Hood's shattered army made its way back to Georgia after its crushing defeat at Nashville on December 16, 1864. Forrest's cavalry acted as rear guard and fought heroically to preserve the Southern army from destruction.

[2]Johnston's journey would take him through the Tennessee counties of Franklin, Grundy, Warren, and Van Buren.

[3]Political sentiment was divided in East Tennessee. In some areas Union sympathizers formed "home guard" companies and intimidated their pro-Southern neighbors. Confederate sympathizers might have feared Johnston's men were actually pro-Union home guards trying to trick them into revealing their sentiments.

Chapter 26

An After Breakfast Fight

While eating our breakfast, we had a man in the rear so posted that he could command a plain view of the valley from which we came. It was not long before he came walking back and said, "Major, those fellows are coming."

"All right, you go back and watch them and report again."

Coming up a second time, he said, "Major, they are tracking us like so many hounds."

He was sent back as before. The third report was that they were not more than two hundred yards off down under the hill.

The order was then given to mount. We moved forward slowly along the main road, which led through a very narrow gap, the mountain rising on each side. After passing through the gap, we about wheeled and faced the enemy, forming a line as near to the gap as possible.

On came the blue-coats, moving right at us. But not being satisfied with our position, we dropped back a few paces out of sight of the enemy. Then we moved directly to the left of the mountain, and again out of view, when the next thing the enemy knew we were in line of battle on the side of the mountain, just overlooking them. As they came on in line of battle, our boys were ordered to hold their fire. The truth is we did not want to fight, for we had not gone there to fight. Besides, the enemy outnumbered us at least seven to one. Yet we intended to fight before we would run.

Let the reader understand that we were climbing a narrow spur which pointed down into the gap, while to the left it connected to the main mountain. Here came the Yankees closer and still closer, until at last they fired on us. Upon which our boys were ordered to go to work, which they did with a vim. Then we had it tit for tat, until we saw that the enemy could flank us to the right and thereby get on the mountain behind us. This we determined they should not do,

and in order to prevent this our right wing was told to drop back behind the brow of the hill and run up, unobserved by the enemy and form on the left.

Thus we kept climbing the mountain and fighting as we climbed, when at last our right wing — which was all the enemy could see — fell back, and the enemy thought that we were routed. So they raised a yell and came charging up the mountain. But before they could get to us our right wing had formed on our left again, and we were ready for them once more. Yes, good ready and waiting. The order was given our boys to hold their fire, which was done until we could see the whites of their eyes. Then at the crack of the major's pistol there was almost an instantaneous flash along the whole Rebel line, and immediately the word was given to charge.

When the gray-coats bounded forward, they not only checked the enemy's advance, but hurled them back down the mountain, rolling, tumbling, falling and rising, and not allowed to stop long enough to draw a good breath until they landed back in the valley at the foot of the mountain.

Our boys then moved back up the mountain to their horses, for they had hitched them out of the way until they had settled the little matter with the blue-coats. We then mounted our horses and moved along a narrow backbone of the ridge, not much wider than would permit us to ride in double file. Just beyond the narrows was a beautiful spot that had been cleared. There we about wheeled into line to await whatever might follow. We waited about an hour, but finding the blue-coats were not disposed to return, we rode on our way rejoicing.

The result of our skirmish was that on our side there was not a man scratched. But we lost one horse. On the other side, the officer who led the charge was mortally wounded, and we were told afterwards that he died in the village of Alexandria, Tennessee..[1]

Continuing our march northeast, we soon reached Collins river and went into camp. We found the citizens so near scared to death that it was impossible to procure information, except that the Federals were shooting and hanging Rebels, both day and night. Learning that a Mr. Hill lived near our camp, we took one man about midnight and went to his door. He opened the door, and we met him under the garb of a Mason, he recognizing and acknowledging the same. On letting him know who we were, he then talked freely and frankly. But what the topic of our conversation was is no one's business, except that he was a brother of Colonel [Benjamin J.] Hill [2] of Tennessee, whom we had set across the Tennessee river at the mouth of Paint Rock.

The next day we found a man who lived across the spur of the mountain in the direction we had been traveling, and having heard from Mr. Hill that he was all right and was going home, we mounted and he piloted us across the mountain. That night we camped on a little stream called Rocky river, when it began to snow and continued at it for two or three days and nights. This began to make us feel spotted. Yes, more spotted than we ever felt before. Yet we would not let our men know it, either by word or act. The snow would enable the enemy to track us as so many rabbits. We therefore concluded we had better seek a hole and slip into it, and if possible, pull the hole in after us.

In order to do this, we left camp and followed the side of the mountain between its base and summit, where we are satisfied a horse never traveled before. We were going up Rocky river, and near its head. We came down the mountain where the stream trick led among the rocks; while the mountains on either side pressed down so close together that there was barely space for the little stream and the neighboring road. Just there spans out a good large cove, which the inhabitants called the "Gulf," and which embraced the head of the river. Into that cove we plunged. And being surrounded by mountains, save the little notch by which we slipped in, we concluded we would be as safe as anywhere in that part of the country.

Finding the inhabitants well-to-do and having never been foraged on, we struck up camp, and found that they had corn, meat, and sorghum in abundance. So we dressed some of our boys in citizen's clothes and sent them to mill, and supplied ourselves with plenty of meal. Then keeping one eye wide open, we ate, slept and rested, doing very well under the circumstances.

After the snow had melted, and man and beast were well rested, we mounted and started up the mountain toward Altamont. On reaching the top of the mountain and the main road, we wheeled right and down upon the headwaters of Elk river.

As we passed Pelham, about sundown, the natives looked at us in wonder. Two or three miles beyond this little village, we passed Billy Gwynne's — an old local preacher.[3] The writer had never seen him, but was well acquainted with his boys. Getting near the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, we wished to know where the Federal pickets were posted; and we were certain that we could get the information from Brother Gwynne. He came to the door, but would come no further. We then began to ask him questions, but to our astonishment we could not have squeezed any information out of him had we put him under a cider press. To squeeze him a little tighter, we gave him some home thrusts and said, "Look here, Brother Gwynne, you have a son named William, who merchandised a number of years ago in New Market, Alabama. Then you have another son whose name is George, and he is an itinerant preacher. He married Dr. Sullivan's daughter, in Madison county, Alabama, and instead of calling her by her real name, they gave her the nickname of "Pig."

But my gracious! He didn't know William, George, Pig, nor puppy! By this time the major had come to the conclusion that Brother Gwynne was the biggest living know-nothing he had ever seen. Therefore, he shouted, "Forward, march!" and we dashed across the railroad, went away out into a gorge of the mountain, hitched our horses, lay down, and went to sleep.

The next day we got back to our old stamping ground safe and sound. After we got where we could get a full breath, the boys told us candidly that they would not only have given all they had, but all they ever hoped for, to have been off that wild goose chase.

Notes

[1]Isaac D. W. Cobb recalled this encounter sixty-nine years later. Cobb tells virtually the same story as Johnston. Cobb says that they numbered only about 30 men and had been followed "by around 400 Federals for the entire day." The company "turned off in a wooded cove in search of food." As they were finishing their meal, the picket "suddenly fired several shots and rode past them," shouting that the Yankees had arrived. The Confederates climbed up a hill behind the spring to wait.

"We didn't know what was coming," said Cobb, "so we laid up there on that bluff and waited. Jimmy Lewis, our orderly sergeant, was sitting partly in the clear watching, his gun across his knee. Almost the first bullet the enemy fired grazed the top of Jimmy's head. With a yell, 'I can't that that,' he walked right out in the open and shot the Yankee captain down when he showed up down below. They had us outnumbered 10 to one, but they couldn't stop us after that." Interview in The Huntsville Times, *May 23, 1933.*

[2]Benjamin Jefferson Hill (1825-1880), a merchant of McMinnville, had been commissioned colonel of the 5th Tennessee Infantry Regiment (later renumbered the 35th Tennessee Infantry) on September 11, 1861. In 1863, he became provost marshal of the Army of Tennessee. On November 30, 1864, Colonel Hill was promoted to brigadier general. Warner, Generals in Gray, *p. 136. "Mr. Hill" was most likely J. W. Hill, 37, a farmer with a wife and six children in 1860 (U. S. Census, Warren County, Tennessee, McMinnville post office, #1166/1166). He could also have been John P. Hill, 27, a farmer with a wife and two children (#1164/1164).*

[3]U. S. Census, 1860, Franklin County, Tennessee, Hockerville post office: #1373/1348 William G. Gwinn, 65, born in Tennessee, a Methodist minister. Gwinn, who in 1860 lived with two of his daughters and one son, was well-to-do. His land was worth $6,000 and his personal property $16,740. Gwinn may have been a Unionist, or he may simply have refused to help Johnston for fear of reprisal by the Union troops.

Chapter 27

Random Sketches

In this chapter we intend to make some dots, or in other words, set a few stakes, leaving the reader to fill up the gaps, which were not far apart. Such incidents were of frequent occurence both by day and night, all up and down the valley.

On the plantation of Captain John Harris,[1] lying just below Larkinsville, was a squad of Federal soldiers in a house which was used as their quarters. During the night, while some of them, perhaps were asleep, others talking, and some singing, all at once the window was chock full of Rebel firearms, accompanied by the word "surrender!" The Rebel officer in command,[2] being under influence of whiskey, did not wait to receive the surrender, but ordered them to fire, which was obeyed, killing several of the enemy. Of course, the firing was entirely unnecessary, for the enemy would have surrendered in a minute without resistance.

The firing disconcerted the Rebels, for it aroused the Federals who were close by, and who rushed to the spot; while the Rebels, hearing them coming, retreated in disorder, not being able to carry off anything. This was all caused by the effect of whiskey, for if they had not fired at all they would have no doubt carried off all those prisoners without it being known until they were entirely out of reach.

Such conduct cannot be too severely condemned, for it was unworthy of the character of a true soldier.

The Rebels, always ready to damage the Yankees in every way they could, got it into their heads to capture a train on the railroad. And for that purpose they went to Stephen's Gap, where there was a deep cut through the gap of the mountain. Just below the mouth of the cut, they threw a cross-tie across the main track. Then taking two more ties, they set

the lower ends against the permanent ties in the track, the upper ends being elevated about the loose ties so as to meet the train.

This done, they took their position on each side of the road, and soon the train came along. As soon as it reached the proper point, the Rebels fired on it. But a number of Federal soldiers being on the train, the fire was returned. The engineer seeing the obstruction upon the road, stopped the train; and while some fought the Rebels, others ran and removed the obstruction. Then reboarding the train, the engineer opened the throttle and away they went, while the disappointed Rebs stood gazing after their lost prize.

At another time the Rebs undertook a similar project. This time there were no soldiers on board the train, and when the attack was first made, they thought they certainly had the prize in their hands.

The train had stopped above Larkinsville, either for wood or water. All of a sudden the Rebs charged right up to the engine, and covering the engineer with their pistols, they commanded him to surrender. But almost as quick as the order came, the engineer seemed to throw open the throttle, then falling flat on the floor of the cab. The train departed off snorting as if Old Nick had been in its rear. The Rebs stood looking after the train in disappointment, as one of them said, "They were too slick this time."

At another time the Rebs had captured two Federal soldiers near where Gurley stands. The Federal garrison being close by, the captors put both of the prisoners upon the same horse to convey them to the main command. But by the time they reached Paint Rock valley, night overtook them and it was quite dark. As they were passing along a lane, they ran square up against a company of Yankees, almost in arm's reach of one another. Each party fired about the same time, and at the same time wheeled and ran in a different direction.

It seems that the Confederates came to their senses first, and called a halt. On turning around they heard the Yankees' horses clattering over the rocks, while sparks of fire were flashing all along the track as they ran. It is true that none of the Rebs were hurt, but they had the mortification to

see their two prisoners ride one of their horses off and return safely to their friends.

George St. Clair[3] was an excellent soldier, but at times he became entirely too adventurous. At any rate, George fell into the hands of the Federals as a prisoner, and believing they had an important prize, they determined to make sure work of him.

On their way to headquarters with their prisoner, night overtook them, and fearing to ride in the dark they went into camp. That night they lay in a house, and when St. Clair retired, he made it convenient to get as near the door as possible. Waiting until the Federals were fast asleep, he slipped out of the door like a scared cat. Jumping on one of the Yankees' horses, he returned in triumph to his command.

George rode that horse nearly the rest of the service.

While the Federals were guarding the water tank where Gurley now stands, there being a very heavy force there at the time, they sent a wagon foraging four miles away. But before they returned, the Rebels got after it. The Yankees tried to get home with their booty, while the Rebs were trying to capture it.

The Yankees succeeded in getting almost back in sight of the tank, when the Rebels came dashing up to their rear, and flanking right and left they made a full charge all together, capturing pretty near everything with little damage to themselves.

But being so near the garrison, the Federals ran out reinforcements, and the two parties began fighting like so many wildcats. Captain Nelson, who was in command, finding the odds against him, retreated, having lost two men. But he killed three Yankees and wounded a number more.[4]

Acorn Hull is a little cove, perhaps three miles long, butting back against the Cumberland mountains. The land is rich, and at that time the farmers would have been well-to-do had it not been for the war.

At the time of which we speak there was a company of Negroes stationed near Larkinsville.[5] We suppose that they were styled regular Federal soldiers. Be that as it may, eleven of the Negroes went into the cove on a pilfering raid. They were catching chickens, geese, ducks, and taking everything they could put their hands on. They were soon discovered by the Confederates, five in number, commanded by Captain Nelson, whose home was in Acorn Hull Cove. And in sight of where they stood, his old father had been taken into the cedars by the Federals and shot to death.[6]

With one remark we leave the reader to imagine what happened when the Confederates met the Negro soldiers. The Negroes fought well, for they were well armed. Two escaped, one sank himself in a creek, and the rest were all killed.

[1]While several families named Harris lived near Larkinsville in 1860, Captain John Harris, a Confederate veteran, was a post-war resident. He is evidently the J. R. Harris shown living southwest of Larkinsville on a 1907 map of Jackson County. Captain John Harris died on his plantation on August 23, 1916, at the age of seventy-five. Obituary by Frank B. Gurley, Confederate Veteran, vol. 24 (1916), p. 560.

[2]Two of Mead's companies had been raised in Jackson county, Alabama: Captain D. C. Nelson's Company A and Captain Frank E. Cotton's Company C. The unnamed officer might have come from either of these.

[3]George W. St. Clair was a sergeant in Company A. Compiled Service Records, Mead's Confederate Cavalry.

[4]This apparently was the engagement on February 16, 1865, reported by 2nd Lieutenant Willson Dailey of the 73rd Indiana Infantry. Daily wrote that a forage party of twenty men under Sergeant Daniel Hensly was sent to a plantation three and a half miles distant on the Brownsboro road. On their return, the forage party was attacked one and a half miles from Gurley's Tank by "fifty men of Russell's Fourth Alabama Cavalry, under command of Captain Britton and Lieutenant Olds." Daily named the Confederate casualties as Jack Hickman, killed, and Allen Grant, wounded. However, Allen Grant was actually a private in Captain D. C. Nelson's company, as was a William C. Hickman. According to Dailey, none of the Union soldiers were wounded, although two were captured. The prisoners later escaped, and might have been the two men who rode away on one horse during the surprise encounter in Paint Rock valley. Lieut. W. Dailey to Col. W. P. Lyon, Gurley's Tank, Feb. 16, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, p. 46.

[5]"Major Hannon, with four Negro companies, was stationed at Scottsboro, with headquarters in the freight depot, to guard the railroad. These Negro soldiers did much damage to the citizens in taking livestock and other supplies and intimidating the towns-people." Kennamer, History of Jackson County, p. 58. The black soldiers were members of the 101st U. S. Colored Infantry, a regiment formed in Tennessee to act as laborers and garrison troops. On March 19, 1865, Union Lieutenant Jonas F. Long, Assistant Inspector of Railroad Defenses, reported "another attack by the enemy, made upon the garrison of colored troops under Lieutenant Becker at Stevenson's Gap. The Rebel Colonel Mead, with about 300 Confederate cavalry, keeps himself in the neighborhood of Boyd's Station and Stevenson's Gap and made several attacks upon the garrison stationed at that place." On March 18, Lieutenant Long reported nine of the black soldiers missing in action. "Lieutenant-Colonel Wade, now in charge of the railroad," Long continued, "sent reinforcements last night, which are apt to stop them from capturing any more of the garrison." Lieut. J. F. Long to Maj. J. R. Willett, Huntsville, Mar. 18 and 19, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, pp. 86-87.

[6]U. S. Census, 1860, Jackson County, Alabama, Division 4: #478/478 David Nelson, 51, a farmer, born in Tennessee. The elder Nelson was a poor man, his land being worth just $200 and his personal estate $100. David Nelson, 22 in 1860, was the oldest of six children. Captain Nelson's brother James and a Richard Nelson also served in his company.

Chapter 28

Lieutenant Millard

As this name has been mentioned heretofore in these sketches; and as the bearer of it died far away from his kindred and the eyes of some of his kindred may fall upon these lines, the writer thinks it would be but right to give a short sketch of what he knows of this young soldier.

Lieutenant [Nathaniel] Millard was born in the State of Michigan, emigrated with his parents when a boy to Texas, and just as he approached manhood he entered the Confederate army. At first, he served under General Longstreet in Virginia. But afterwards, while carrying the Rebel flag at Missionary Ridge, he was thought to be mortally wounded, and while lingering in the hospital his command left him and returned to Virginia.[1] However, he recovered unexpectedly and fell in with us only until he should have an opportunity to rejoin his old command. But the opportunity never occurred.

Millard was of medium size and stood up as straight as an Indian, while every expression of his countenance indicated a noble soul. A braver man never drew a sword, for he appeared to have no sense of fear.

Some of our boys whose homes were in Jackson county wished to revisit their old neighborhood. And as Millard expressed a desire to go with them, he was permitted to do so, making a squad of ten men. The reader will bear in mind that this was during Hood's retreat from Nashville, while the Federals were following close in the rear.[2]

Two companies of home-made Yankees had just returned to their homes in Kennamer's Cove, which was in the same neighborhood into which our boys had gone. And Millard, who was in command, hearing of their whereabouts, determined to attack them by night. Now, just think of men attacking an enemy that outnumbered them ten to one! But at them the lieutenant went, at the head of his little column,

driving everything before him, when he fell mortally wounded. When Millard fell his men gave back, and the enemy retired in an opposite direction. Had Millard lived, he would have either captured or routed the whole crowd.

The poor fellow did not live long, but expired just as he had taken a drink of water from the hand of some kind woman who ministered to him in his last moments.[3]

The writer has wished many times that he could have been present at the death of that brave boy to encourage him as he passed over Jordan to the other shore.

Millard's men having fled, and the Yankees stampeded, there was no one left to bury the dead officer except a few kind women who lived near-by. They dug a hole in the ground as best they could, wrapped up the body as neatly and tenderly as only woman could do, and buried it out of sight.

When the boys returned to us and made their report, we took the command and went to the place, took the remains of Millard out of the earth, conveyed them into Madison county, and buried him with honors of war within the graveyard of Mr. Sol DeBow's,[4] on the east side of Flint river.

All honor to the memory of Lieutenant Millard.

Notes

[1]*Nathaniel Millard would appear to have been the young man of that name who enlisted at Monticello, Arkansas, on June 10, 1861, in what became Company C, 3d Arkansas Infantry. Millard's age appears on the muster roll as 24. This regiment served in Virginia and temporarily joined the Army of Tennessee in 1863 as part of Longstreet's Corps, just as Johnston says. The card abstracts in Millard's military file show he was promoted to corporal on February 2, 1862, and appointed sergeant on December 19, 1862. The 3d Arkansas fought as part of Robertson's brigade at the Battle of Chickamauga on September 19 and 20, 1863, and Millard presumably was wounded there. (Longstreet's Corps was not at Missionary Ridge.) The muster roll for January-February, 1864, lists Millard as "absent without leave since Nov 1/63." Six months later, Millard was "Dropped from the roll by order of Capt. A. C. Jones." A photocopy of Millard's compiled service records was obtained from the National Archives.*

[2]*The latter part of December, 1864.*

[3]*Lieutenant Millard was slain on December 18, 1864. Captain John B. Kennamer's Union scout company had just returned to Kennamer's Cove from their post at Paint Rock bridge. The Southerners attacked at supper time, scattering the surprised Tory soldiers. Silas P. Woodall of Kennamer's company fired the shot that mortally wounded Millard. Millard's men then fled. "Damaris ('Aunt Love') Kennamer, as brave a woman as ever lived, immediately ran out to see who was hurt, and came upon the Confederates, who had taken shelter behind a barn." It was she who performed this last act of kindness for the dying young officer. John R. Kennamer and Lorrin G. Kennamer,* The Kennamer Family, *pp. 338-339.*

[4]*Nathaniel Millard's grave near New Hope remains unmarked to this day.*

Chapter 29

The Still House

We take it for granted that the reader will bear in mind that we were connected with a regiment of men under the command of Colonel Lem Mead.[1] Of course, this regiment was composed of different companies. But these companies were often divided and subdivided into squads.

These companies or squads, as the occasion might require, were sent out all over the country or valley to attack the enemy at as many points as possible; and these attacks were to be repeated "lick for lick." One object was to harass the enemy as much as possible, and in so doing we aimed to prevent him sending hundreds, if not thousands, of men to the front.

Now if the reader will listen, we will relate a little scrape which occurred between a squad of the Rebs and blue-coats at Cox Still House, on Clear creek in Paint Rock valley.[2] The still house was situated at the head of a very narrow cove. Did you ever reflect that such places as coves and gorges are the places where the devil selects and locates his machinery to distill eternal death? The still worm — did you ever see one? — is an ugly looking monster. It is crooked and twisted round somewhat in the shape of an old-fashioned cotton gin screw, and is somewhat the color of lead.

To the still men take all kinds of grain and fruit, such as corn, rye, apples and peaches, carrying these through a process which they call distillation. The essence of these goes trickling down through the nasty, ugly worm, and men catch it and preserve it with wonderful care. When it is completed, some call it "eye water," some "stimuli," while others call it "the over joyful." But no matter what its name, there is something in its power and attraction to draw. It has brought to itself gold, silver, and even diamonds; and it has caused men to sell out home, character, health and life itself.

The attraction of alcohol seems to be greater than that of the North and South Pole. Men gather to it like bees to bait, or like vultures to carrion. They suck and suck until presently their tongues are ringing like chatterboxes. They grin like monkeys, dance like dervishes, curse like demons, and fight like devils! But enough of this.

Forty blue-coats had gone up this valley to that great place of attraction. Some were killing and picking chickens, some robbing hen's nests, some making eggnog, while others were playing cards. O, what a jollification they were preparing to have! But behold! twenty-five gray-coats, who had been on the lookout, came sweeping up the valley in their rear and literally hedged them in.

Perhaps these twenty-five were as daring a set of men as ever shouldered a musket. They had presented themselves at that time to transact some special business. So they sent three or four of their number around the mountain to get behind the foragers and, as the little boy said, "to give them a bit of scare." This was done by creeping through the timber down the mountain side until they came within point blank shot of the enemy, when they poured a volley into them accompanied by the Rebel yell.

The crack of a gun and the Rebel shout were generally about enough for the blue-coats. The half-picked chickens fell from their hands, cards scattered everywhere, eggnog was spilt, and whiskey canteens all left behind. Mounting their horses, down the road they flew. But the next thing they knew they had landed in the trap set for them below. The Yankees having run right into the Rebs, they seemed too much frightened to fight. While the bullets whistled, the enemy's horses snorted, reared and plunged, sometimes bringing man and horse all in a heap.

But this did not last long, for the blue-coats seemed anxious to surrender as soon as the word was given . Suffice it to say that of the forty blue-coats that visited the still house, thirty-eight were either killed or captured, their horses and arms included in the capture. But if a single Reb was scratched, we do not recollect it.

We do not know how many of those chickens the Rebs ate, nor how much egg nog they drank, nor how many canteens were emptied. But it is reasonable to suppose that

our boys had a pretty jolly time. In conclusion we would say that the prisoners were all conducted safely through the lines over to the land of Dixie.

[1]*On March 15, 1865, Colonel Mead was authorized to reorganize his ranger battalion into a regiment of three battalions. The Alabama companies became the 25th Alabama Cavalry, with Johnston as Lieutenant Colonel. The Tennessee companies became the 27th Tennessee Cavalry. Seven incomplete companies were to compose another undesignated battalion. Together, the three battalions formed Mead's Cavalry Regiment. Compiled Service Records, Roll 443, 50th Alabama Infantry, M-R.*

[2]*Cox's Still House apparently was a popular gathering place for both sides. The still house was the scene of another fight on January 25, 1865, when the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry attacked a detachment of Mead's men there, capturing seven. Among the prisoners was "the Lieutenant Jones we had chased earlier in the day." The compiled service records of Mead's battalion show Private Jesse Keel of Company C as captured in this engagement. The officer taken prisoner must have been 1st Lieutenant L. B. Jones. John R. Kennamer, in his* History of Jackson County, *writes that 1st Lieutenant Bryant Jones "with part of the company, turned and retreated rapidly, but the other part of the company, led by 2nd Lieut. John A. Brown, were surrounded and six of them captured. Kennamer provides the prisoners' names: W. J. Fletcher, J. B. Parkhill, Dave Stephens, West Hazelwood, Elic Sinclair, and William Morris. However, no Sinclair appears on the muster roll of Company C. The prisoners were kept in Camp Chase, Ohio, until the end of the war. The Pennsylvania cavalry lost one man in the fight, Private Phillip P. Miller of Company M. Miller died of his wounds and was buried on a nearby hillside the following day. The Pennsylvanians then burned the still house. Suzanne Colton Wilson, compiler,* Column South *(Flagstaff: J. F. Colton & Company, 1960), p. 262. Kennamer,* History of Jackson County, *pp. 60-61.*

Chapter 30

Paint Rock Bridge

After Hood fell back across the Tennessee river, the Federals returned into the Tennessee valley in great numbers, even thousands. And they had placed guards at every railroad bridge and other important points up and down the valley.

Among these points, the bridge where the railroad crossed the Paint Rock river was guarded by two companies, one which our boys styled the regular Federals and the other they called "home-made" Yankees.[1] The end of the bridge juts up against a bluff, at a point of a spur of the Cumberland mountains. Near the end of this bridge stood several houses, while just under the hill, southward, stood several houses. The regular Yankee soldiers occupied the houses near the end of the bridge, while the home-made Yankees occupied the houses down under the hill, the two companies being situated but a few paces apart.

At this point the mountain juts down to the railroad and close to the end of the bridge. As you ascend the mountain in a northeast direction the surface of the earth is covered with cedar and other growth, which extends down within a few feet of the road; while the entire point of the mountain is covered with bluffs and loose boulders scattered in every direction.

Colonel Mead, with others, planned the capture of the bridge. The time was set on a certain night, and it so happened that the snow was about three inches deep. Our many squads were notified— or we thought they were — to report at a certain place at a certain hour. But as we learned afterwards, a number of them failed to get the notice, and therefore failed to come. But a few of the boys having reported, with a unanimous consent, it was decided to make the attack with our little handful. According to our recollection, our number did not exceed thirty-five.

As a matter of course our boys took refreshments and rested the fore part of the night, for it was our intention not to spring upon our game until about dawn of day. So at the proper time, we ascended the rugged mountain on foot, as it was impossible for a horse to climb it. Having reached the top of the mountain, we began the descent, working our way through the dense growth, for the boughs of the cedar hung nearly to the ground.

The loose rocks and rugged boulders, with the snow clinging to the low boughs of the cedar, made it a cold as well as a slow march. But at last we reached a point as near as we dared approach the enemy without attracting their attention and called a halt, where we waited for the appointed time. We did not have to wait long, for our calculation with reference to the time to reach that point was very accurately made.

A little streak of day having made its appearance in the east, the command to move down the mountain was given in almost a whisper, and we began to descend, being very careful where we placed our feet at every step. Soon after, the final signal was given and the boys plunged forward eager for the fray.

The attacking party knowing the location of every house, sprang at once to every door, and catching the enemy napping, they had their guns leveled on them almost before they knew what had happened. Hence we had captured forty-four prisoners without having to kill but very few.

But what about the "home-made" boys down under the hill? When they heard the racket up at the bridge — and it was a pretty loud one — they were taken with a getting away. Having been awakened out of sleep, they did not wait to get shoes, pants, coats, hats, nor anything else, but ran off just as they arose from their beds. It was said that some of them ran for miles in that condition without halting once. They had saved themselves by starting in time, but the Rebs got all they had except their "individual bacon."

One piece of artillery was captured also, but as there were thousands of Yankees in convenient reach, we spiked the gun and rolled it into Paint Rock river.

After burning the bridge, we went our way rejoicing, carrying the prisoners with us. At the proper time, the prisoners were conducted safely across the Tennessee river and delivered to the Confederate authorities.[2]

Notes

[1]The "regulars" were Company G, 13th Wisconsin Veteran Volunteer Infantry, 2nd Lieutenant Samuel C. Wagoner commanding. The "home-made" Yankees were Captain John B.Kennamer's scout company of about thirty men. It was Kennamer's company Lieutenant Millard had attacked in the fight that cost him his life. There were also 20 cavalrymen and two artillerymen at the bridge, for a total Union strength of about 110. Col. W. P. Lyon to Lieut. S. M. Kneeland, Huntsville, Jan. 3, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLV, part 1, pp. 639-40.

[2]Paint Rock Bridge was captured and burned on the morning of December 31, 1864. Colonel William P. Lyon of the 13th Wisconsin was furious with Lieutenant Wagoner for disobeying direct orders to camp his command on the elevation above the bridge and to fortify his position. Instead, Wagoner had simply moved into the existing buildings. Lyon reported Lieutenant Wagoner and 37 men had been captured, as well as one of the artillerymen. The remainder of the Union soldiers escaped in the confusion. The prisoners were turned over to Lieutenant "Pete" Whitecotton, of the Nitre Works guard company, who took them across the Tennessee river at Claysville. Lyon originally estimated 400 Confederates had conducted the attack.

Lyon also wrote that Mead's men "left the gun unspiked, but mutilated the carriage." This would seem to indicate the cannon was recovered and examined. Nevertheless, treasure hunters still come to Paint Rock Bridge to search for the "lost Napoleon." Ibid.

Chapter 31

The Death Trap

Just after the surrender of General Lee,[1] we and the enemy agreed upon a truce, which upon our part was sincere; but upon the enemy's part was treacherous.

Fourteen of us were advancing up Flint river valley, and upon reaching a sag in the road, about sixty paces south of Mrs. McClung's residence,[2] we beheld just at the top of the hill a Federal column consisting of a regiment of infantry and a large squad of cavalry. A little further on, and we would have run into each other. They fired on us, and as you may well suppose, we wheeled and were taken with a considerable getting away from there. We had to retreat down a lane, which was straight as an arrow for about a quarter of a mile, while they shot at us as long as we were in sight.[3]

The writer's horse ran from under his hat and left it lying on the ground, over which the Yankees raised a great shout when they picked it up. But we were thankful that the head was not in the hat.

On went the blue-coats pressing southward to the Tennessee river. Our forces, though scattered at that time, were gathered together as fast as possible, when we followed in their rear and swung on their flanks day and night as long as they remained in the valley.

Of course, we were not able to measure arms with such numbers in a fair fight, but we were continually alert to take any and every advantage of them. And you had better believe we forced them to keep in the middle of the road. Unknown to them, they gave us opportunities to rain them, and which we would have accepted with a free good will had it not been for the truce mentioned above.

Our opportunities we shall mention directly. Still southward pressed the Yankees, while we were hanging on their flanks, and so near them at times, hid in the thickets by the roadside, that we could see the whites of their eyes. We

counted the whole command, and to be candid, our sharpshooters could have killed every officer they had, for they were all mounted.

The blue-coats were so afraid of the bushes — or something in the bushes — that they would not go round the mud holes in the road, but waded right through them. Had they scattered and commenced pilfering as was their custom, they would have gone up "salt river" or some equally dangerous stream. So on they went down Paint Rock, making for the Tennessee river. On reaching the river, they turned down under the bluff in the direction of the mouth of Flint river. Here is where the "death trap" was set, or might have been set.

The passage between the river and the bluff is exceedingly narrow, there being barely room enough for a wagon to pass with convenience. At the lower end of the road, to the left, was the river; while at the upper edge, to the right, was a bluff of rock from one hundred to two hundred feet high and nearly perpendicular. And to make the prospect more fearful, the blue-coats passed under that bluff in the night.

One could see at a glance that we could have hedged them in above and below. But that was not half of the danger to which they were exposed. On top of the bluff immediately over their heads, the loose rocks and boulders were lying thick; and we could have sent those rocks down — some weighing a ton — rolling and crashing and thundering upon their heads, which perhaps would have thrown a large part of these unsuspecting Yankees crushed and mangled into the waters of the Tennessee. The rolling of the rocks upon the army of Alexander the Great by his enemies, as it charged up the steep heights, was but child's play compared to what might have happened that night.

But we let them pass. Going out at the lower end of the bluff, they turned northward again, up Flint river toward their base. The next day they reached Owen's old mill.[4] All the while we were keeping them such close company that they appeared uncomfortable, for as they forded the river they showed scare, as we were in full view of them. As their rear guard reached the bank toward Huntsville, we rode up on the opposite side.

Notes

[1]*General Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Ulysses S. Grant on April 9, 1865. Although Lee was then ranking officer of the entire Confederate army, he surrendered only the troops under his actual command. The war lasted for a few weeks longer, with some Confederate units west of the Mississippi River holding out as late as June. The last battle was fought on May 13,1865, at Palmito Ranch, Texas. Ironically, it was a Southern victory.*

[2]*The only McClung listed in that part of Madison County by the index to the 1860 Census was a single man. William M. McClung, 26, was a farm manager. (New Hope post office #483/481) Possibly McClung had married during the war.*

[3]*On April 3,1865, Lieutenant Colonel John W. Horner led 65 men from his Michigan regiment "on a scout in the direction of Vienna." He went down Big Cove to the ford of Flint River, then sent a mounted detachment to within four miles of Vienna. "From various sources," Horner wrote, "I learn that Johns[t]on's command are scattered between Flint and Paint Rock Rivers, from the railroad to the Tennessee river." Two days later, Horner "started with 100 infantry and Captain Reed's company of Alabama [Union] scouts in the direction of New Market. I crossed Flint River at Bell Factory, ten miles from this place. From that point I sent out small detachments to New Market, Maysville, Killingsworth's Cove, and Sharp's Cove, from which places we drove out small parties of Rebel thieves." It was apparently this second outing that Johnston encountered. Lieut. Col. J. W. Horner to Brig. Gen. R. S. Granger, Huntsville, April 5, 1865 and April 7, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, pp. 510-511.*

[4]*Now the town of Owen's Cross Roads.*

Chapter 32

Approaching the End

We are now approaching a dark period, yes, a solemn period: the fall of the Confederacy. Evil spirits were abroad in the air, and dark and heavy clouds were gathering from every point of the compass. Thus situated one day, in the depth of a dense forest, the major mounted a log and began to talk somewhat along this line: "Boys, things begin to look dark and gloomy. We never entered the army until we were driven to it. But after we were driven, we determined to stay there until the last day in the morning. It looks as if that day were approaching.

"A short time ago, Hood moved upon Nashville, and our hopes rose high as Hood's columns advanced. On reaching Franklin, Tennessee, instead of flanking the enemy as he might have done, he charged their stronghold, and left General [Patrick] Cleburne, horse and rider, upon the top of the breastworks, while thousands of dead and wounded lay in every direction.[1] Then as he moved on Nashville, he lingered until the enemy had time to reinforce upon him from every quarter. And when a decisive battle was fought, he was hurried back beyond the Tennessee river, leaving thousands of his men struggling over the country and many others as straight out deserters.[2] And here we are left as a mere speck on the map of Dixie.

"Look at General Lee, with his grand army — in quality if not in number — defending Richmond! See the renowned Grant marching against him, with what was thought to be the grandest army of the world. Moving on with the watchword, 'On to Richmond so early in the morning!' But he found it something more than a breakfast spell, for they ate many a dinner and supper before they reached the point of their destination. As they went down through the wilderness and touched Lee they struck flint, nay, more like the Rock of Gibraltar! They struck again and again, but every time they

were hurled back with their dead and wounded; until the whole world was literally astonished at the clash of arms in America, the determination of the Federals and the valor of the Confederates.[3] At last the brag general was compelled to switch off and slide down toward Richmond by a different route.

"At the same time, Lee moved along his flank, while ever anon his cannon would belch forth flame and say to Grant, 'Thus far shalt thou come and no farther!' And after the Federals had gotten in front of Richmond, Lee held them in check, although his army had been whittled down by sickness, desertion and bullets to little more than a corporal's guard, showing Lee to be one of the greatest chieftains of history. Do you know, boys, that General Lee surrendered only nine thousand stands of arms at Appomattox?[4] Had every soldier that justly belonged to the Confederate army been at his post, Lee would have pushed Grant into the "Shad Lake" or some other pond equally as large and dangerous. But Lee has surrendered, [Joseph E.] Johnston has surrendered,[5] and as far as we know all have surrendered. Hence it looks very much like we have been beaten and all is lost.

"Now, boys, hear me for the last time. Had I no one depending on me for a living and no one to care for but myself, and just one man to walk by my side and press Southern soil, just as long as we had strength to stand upon our feet we would fight those blue-coats hilt to hilt. But your unworthy commander has a family depending upon him for support. Therefore, for their sake we are going to surrender, and you who wish to go with us shall have the best terms possible to be made."

A large majority of those present agreed to surrender with us, while the rest refused the proposition. At once, we sent a dispatch to the Federal commander in Huntsville, which ran as follows:

"General [R. S.] Granger, Dear Sir: We have concluded to surrender our command, provided you will give us a living chance. But we wish it distinctly understood that after we surrender, we are not to be marched through the streets of Huntsville, to be tantalized like so many monkeys, or court martialed, shot, or hung like so many dogs; or in other words, if we are forced to sell out, we intend to sell out at the very highest price. We repeat it, give us a living chance and we will

surrender all the men we can get to come in.

"Respectfully,

M. E. Johnston, Major."[6]

General Granger replied, in substance, as follows:

"Major Johnston, Dear Sir: I will grant you, with pleasure, the same terms that were granted to General Lee and General Johnston.

"Respectfully,

Granger."[7]

At the same time he proceeded to state the terms so plainly that they could not be misunderstood. The reader will understand that there had been so many threats against our command that we had no notion of surrendering until the terms were laid down in black and white.[8]

After a few more dispatches had passed between the two parties, the terms of surrender were agreed upon, and General Granger appointed a man to receive the surrender, while we appointed a man to make it. Rather in "grand army" style, the reader will perceive. Colonel [William] Given was appointed by General Granger to receive the surrender. In the meantime, we had requested the general to allow none of his men to come south of the Memphis & Charleston railroad until after we had met him, giving as a reason that it would tend to scatter our men and render it difficult to get them together to surrender.

Notes

[1]Furious that General John Schofield's army had slipped past him the previous day, Hood hurled his men in repeated charges against the Union positions at Franklin on November 30, 1864. Hood's army suffered over 6,000 casualties, twice as many as Schofield's. The popular Cleburne was one of six Confederate generals who fell in the unnecessary battle.

[2]Having wasted nearly one-fourth of his strength at Franklin, Hood's greatly outnumbered army was crushed in the Battle of Nashville on December 15 and 16, 1864. Hood was removed from command and General Joseph E. Johnston put in his place.

[3]The Battle of the Wilderness was fought in Virginia on May 5 and 6, 1864. Grant tried to overpower Lee, but lost more than 17,000 men and accomplished nothing.

[4]Lee surrendered about 28,000 men at Appomattox, although this number includes the names of many men not actually present.

[5]General Joseph E. Johnston surrendered his forces to General William Sherman near Raleigh, North Carolina, on April 26, 1865.

[6]Johnston wrote to General Granger on May 8, 1865. The original letter was misplaced, but Colonel William Given recalled it was substantially as follows:

"Sir: Yesterday Colonel Horner sent a demand for the surrender of the forces under my command, but stating no terms. Will you please state the terms upon which my surrender will be received, and if acceptable I will surrender my command at any time and place after Wednesday that you may designate. As my men are all south of the railroad, I can get a greater number of them if your forces are stopped north of the railroad than if they extend their raid south of it.

"Very respectfully, yours,

"M. E. Johnston,

"Major, Twenty-fifth Battalion Alabama Cavalry."

Col. W. Given to Brig. Gen. R. S. Granger, Huntsville, May 8, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, p. 563

The Confederate War Department had in fact appointed Johnston lieutenant colonel of the 25th Alabama on March 27, 1865, just a week before the fall of Richmond. Johnston apparently was never notified of his promotion. Compiled Service Records, Mead's Confederate Cavalry.

[7]Granger's reply on May 8, 1865, was to inform Johnston that Colonel Mead had twice refused a summons to surrender, stating that "he saw no military necessity for such a step." Therefore, Granger had been instructed to declare Mead "and his forces outlaws, and proceed against him with the utmost vigor." However, Granger offered to "rescind my orders so far as to permit yourself and the battalion under your command to surrender under the same terms granted to Generals Lee and Johnston. Colonel William Given, One hundred and second Ohio Infantry, is selected by me to receive your surrender at 12 m., on Thursday next, May 11, 1865, at Trough Springs, on the mountain four miles from this city."

Johnston accepted Granger's offer the following day. "Lieutenant Richmond," wrote Johnston, "is the officer appointed by me to receive the terms of surrender." Brig. Gen. R. S. Granger to Maj. M. E. Johnston, Huntsville, May 8, 1865. Maj. M. E. Johnston to Brig. Gen. R. S. Granger, n. p., May 9, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLIX part 1, pp. 564-565.

[8]On May 6, 1865, Brigadier General William D. Whipple, evidently speaking for General George Thomas, had written from Nashville: "The general hopes you will kill Mead and his party and not capture them." Johnston had reason for concern! Brig. Gen. W. D. Whipple to Brig. Gen. R. W. Johnson, Nashville, May 6, 1865. OR Series I, volume XLIX part 2, p. 637.

Chapter 33

Terms of Surrender

We shall have more to say about Colonel Given as we proceed, for there were things that occurred while we were with him that much astonished us. Wherever we touched the colonel, he proved to be all over a man; and we would add that he was the first blue-coat that had given us this evidence since the war began.

We were to meet Colonel Given at Trough Spring on the side of the mountain, about half way between the base and the summit. And at the appointed time away we went to become prisoners of war. We arrived at the appointed place first, which was on the public road leading from Huntsville to Vienna. We did not have to wait long until we heard the blue-coats coming. There was quite a crowd of them, and they had two brass bands.[1] And to finish the thing up well, they had brought along a ten gallon demijohn, which they said was full of old apple brandy. In the crowd were Dr. [John] Patton, Squire Tabor, and old Ben Jolly,[2] all staunch friends of Johnston and his boys, and they were present to make as fair weather for the bushwhackers as possible. As they approached, the Federals were making the welkin ring with music.

As soon as we heard them coming, we had a white rag flying high in the air. Then we beheld a Union flag with a white flag waving close by its side, advancing to meet us. Colonel Given and our appointed officer met first, after which this notorious bushwhacker advanced and was introduced to the colonel. As soon as the formal salutations were ended, the bushwhacker remarked, "Colonel, permit me to say that you are the first Federal, officer or private, whom I have met since the war began who treated me as if I had been anything above a four-footed animal." The colonel replied, "I am sorry to hear that, major."

"I know that is plain language, colonel," we rejoined, "but it is nevertheless the unvarnished truth."

In a few minutes Colonel Horner, who had fallen in behind us with his regiment, came marching up. As soon as the major laid eyes on him, he turned to Colonel Given, saying, "If we had met that man ten minutes before we met you, there would have been a fight, for we never intended to surrender to that fellow." And we found before we got through with him, that Given was not burdened with respect toward Horner.[3]

Soon they began to drink their apple water, and some of them became rather lively. Among other things, they urged the major to drink also; and they kept pressing him so that he became uneasy, lest they should try to pour it down him. At length he said, "Gentleman, if I were in the habit of drinking at all I would drink with you today, but you must excuse me for I do not drink with man, woman, nor child." Just at that moment, Dr. Debow said, "I am authorized to do Major Johnston's drinking." Which gave the major elbow room to slip out.

Thus things went on for some time, and the Federals, if no one else, seemed to enjoy themselves hugely. The agreement was that we were to be paroled on the ground and set at liberty. But presently it began to rain, and there was little chance to write paroles in the rain.

Colonel Given then proposed that we march into town, where we could find shelter. But we objected. He continued to urge and we to object. At this crisis up stepped old Uncle Ben Jolly, and with his strong commanding voice called out, "Major, move into town with your men. It is true we cannot treat you as well as we would like to. But I've got plenty of meat and bread, and two large rooms covered with carpets where your men can lie crossed and piled. Besides, I've got the best Rebel gal in all America."

Then Colonel Given began to urge again, and under the pressure of both we yielded. When the latter was appointed to receive our surrender, he asked our courier some pointed questions.

First: "Are not Johnston's men poor men?"

"They are."

Second: "Will they not need their horses in order to make a crop?"

"They will."

"Well, you tell the major to dismount his command and come into town on foot, for if I do not see their horses I will not have to report them."

This sounded strange coming from a Federal soldier.

When Ben Jolly had finished, Colonel Given pitched in the second time. He was standing in the midst of his officers, when he called out, "Major, it is true your men laid down their arms, but let them shoulder them again and march right into town, and if I had my way, I would allow your men to keep their arms to kill some of those rascals who might give them trouble." We leave the reader to draw his own conclusions, while we pass on.

The time we are writing about was the middle of May, 1865, and what we have just mentioned occurred in the afternoon. As it continued to rain, we were finally compelled to go into the city. And as we entered the city, there were two roads, one entering the upper and the other the lower part of town. The arsenal where they intended to deposit our arms was in the lower part. Colonel Horner, who was in advance, took the right hand road, while Colonel Given took the left hand, leading to the arsenal.

We had not advanced far into the town, when Horner sent a courier across a number of streets, ordering Given to take the right hand road. We were by the colonel's side when he received the order and saw his eye flash as he answered. "You tell Colonel Horner that I am in command here, and he will do well to attend to his own business."[4]

In a few minutes we halted near the arsenal, when a number of citizens and soldiers gathered about us. And while our arms were being stored away, we could hear the soldiers and citizens making various remarks, when one of them exclaimed: "Well, those fellows did more execution than any set of men I ever heard of, to use such pokestalks for guns!"

If we had been so minded, we could have made the secret plain to him. The fact was when we found out we had to surrender, we hid our best guns in caves for safe keeping. And we are of the opinion that there were no better arms of the kind in all the United States than those we hid away. On the other hand we doubt whether a sorrier set of guns could have been gathered up in all Dixie than those we surrendered.

Night came on very soon after our arms were stored away, and the next thing that concerned us most was a place of lodging. But the enemy put no special guard over us, but allowed us to stay with our old friends, while the citizens vied with each other in trying to make us comfortable.

Notes

[1]*The bands were those of the 18th Michigan and the 102nd Ohio. They had requested to be allowed to play at the surrender. Col. W. Given to Lieut. S. M. Kneeland, Huntsville, May 29, 1865.* OR *Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, p. 561.*

[2]*U. S. Census, 1860, Madison County, Alabama, Huntsville post office: John Patton, 21, born in Alabama, was then a "student of medicine" (Huntsville post office #57/57). "Squire Tabor" was possibly William B. Taber, 45, a Connecticut-born manufacturer (Hayes Store post office, #481/481). Benjamin Jolley, born in Virginia, was a 50-year-old farmer in 1860. (Huntsville post office, #367/365). Also among the citizens present were James Kellogg and Calvin Newman.* ibid., *p. 563.*

[3]*Colonel Horner had been moving against Mead's men north of the railroad. He had received the surrender of Captain Nelson and about 150 men and captured a Captain G. W. Berry and about 25 others. Horner had already executed Berry and two of his company. Maj. Moses D. Leeson to Capt. E. T. Wells, Pulaski, Tenn., May 13, 1865.* OR *Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, pp. 558-560.*

On May 11, 1865, Mrs. Chadick wrote: "Col. Johns[t]on and his men came in today and surrendered to Col. Givens. He declined surrendering to Col. Horner, but said he would surrender to a gentleman. Their request to retain their horses, which were their private property, had been refused by Col. Horner."

[4]*Horner was obviously attempting to take charge of the surrender. He marched to the edge of Huntsville ahead of Given and asked for the bands to be sent to him. Then he tried to redirect the procession past General Granger's headquarters. Given wrote he ordered the courier to tell Horner "that I am going directly to the arsenal to deposit the surrendered arms, and that General Granger is in Decatur, and I do not propose to have these prisoners reviewed by his orderlies." Given's irritation is plain. Col. W. Given to Lieut. S. M. Kneeland, Huntsville, May 29, 1865.* OR *Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, p. 562.*

Major Moses D. Leeson, 5th Indiana Cavalry, clearly speaking on behalf of Horner, wrote an official letter of complaint over the surrender proceedings. "Drawn up in line," Leeson claimed, "were some 150 ragamuffins, bushwhackers, guerrillas, horse-thieves, and murderers. Men — no, not men — demons, who had never been in the Southern army; regular parricides, ready to be received by officers belonging to the great and glorious Government of the United States, and they too drunk to receive them in decency and order. And Colonel Horner, who is a soldier and gentleman, gave orders that the pageant be marched to Huntsville to complete the surrender, and ordered my regiment to take the advance." General Granger's response was to bring charges against Leeson of conduct unbecoming an officer for making a false report. Maj. M. D. Leeson to Capt. E. T. Wells, Pulaski, May 13, 1865. OR *Series I, volume XLIX, part 1, pp. 558-560; Brig. Gen R. S. Granger to Lieut. S. M. Kneeland, Huntsville, May 31, 1865.* ibid, *p. 565.*

Chapter 34

The End

The next morning when everything was in a bustle up and down the streets, our boys were gathering at the point at which they were to be paroled. When we reached Colonel Given's headquarters, he gave us a firm grip of the hand, as a pleasant smile spread over his face. He began business at once, and while writing the paroles, in stepped one of his aides and said, "Colonel, here is a U. S. horse out here." Raising his head, the colonel replied, "You may go away from here, sir. There may be a U. S. horse out there, but I do not see him."

Perhaps an explanation would not be out of place here. When the United States government bought or captured a horse, it was branded with U. S. and ever afterwards it claimed to be Uncle Sam's property.

Colonel Given continued his writing, but it was not long before the same fellow came back and said, "Colonel, there are three or four U. S. horses out here."

We saw at once the colonel was stirred, for he used such strong language in reply that we shall not repeat it. Among other things he said, "If I were to go out there perhaps I would find half a dozen U. S. horses, but I do not see them. Sir, you go away from here, and stay when you are gone!"

The fact was there were more than half a dozen U. S. horses there, but the terms of surrender where that our officers were to retain their horses as well as their sidearms.

After so long a time our command was paroled and released as citizens of the United States.[1] On parting with the colonel, he gave us a hearty shake of the hand, accompanied by a cordial invitation to call at his headquarters whenever we were in the city.

In regard to Colonel Given's antecedents, the writer knows nothing. But rumor says that before the war he was a "Copperhead" Democrat, and was opposed to the war. Whether

this be true or not, our opinion is that the Union army never had a truer soldier or a more superior gentleman than Colonel Given.[2]

About three years ago we met a reporter for the *Courier Journal*, who said that while he was traveling in the West, the rumor was current that Given and the writer had an understanding, and that was the reason why we had never met in battle. But that is all bosh, for a word had never passed between us, either spoken or written, until after he was appointed to receive our surrender. Peace be to the colonel's memory.

As we passed through the streets of Huntsville after we were paroled, all kinds of rumors were floating in the air. Among others, it was said that the home-made Yankees had gathered on the other side of the mountain, and were going to shoot us into doll-rags as we went home. Old Uncle Ben Jolly having heard this, and meeting Colonel Horner on the street, told him the rumor. Horner said but little, but told us to go on. But Horner's conduct did not suit Uncle Ben, and he exclaimed, "Major, take your men and go on, and if those fellows interrupt you, come back here and you shall have your guns to kill every rascal of them!"

So on we went. But when we reached the foot of the mountain, we found a good many Union soldiers, and also a good sprinkling of the home-made fellows. The Union men remained perfectly quiet, but the home-mades pricked up their ears and looked as if they would bark, if they dared to. One "Big Ike," fierce-like, came bristling up to the road close to the major, and began to bark quite fiercely. We found out directly that he was the only man who escaped when we captured the barn, where they hoisted the sheepskin for a flag of truce.

A good many of our boys thought he was going to bite, whether or not. All his spite seemed pitched at the major. He fairly foamed at the mouth! Ever and anon, placing his hand upon his pistol, he would lift it up and let it drop back in its scabbard. Seeing this, some of our boys became uneasy. Ira Cobb said, "Look out, major!"

The major was ready, for his hand rested upon a pistol that would not fail to fire, while his eye was fixed steadily upon the fellow who was ranting. At the same time, every officer in our command had his hand on his pistol, and if that

man had lifted his pistol out of his resting place, he would never have known what struck him, thunder or lightning. But finally, he calmed down, and we passed across the mountain to our homes and loved ones.

As Ben Jolly's name has been mentioned in these pages, we wish to add a few words about that noble old man. He was a citizen of Huntsville, and had a family and an extensive relationship, the most of whom were respected and honorable people. He had a plenty of this world's goods, and when the South was preparing to fight the North, he helped us equip several regiments for the fray. But when the Federals came in, he being advanced in life and otherwise incumbered, remained within the Federal lines. Being inside the lines, he was compelled to take the oath to support the Union. He was therefore styled a Union man. But in our judgment, his Union sentiments were but skin deep, and only to save his head and his property.[3] He never failed to assist a Confederate when he had an opportunity, and he went to our surrender in order to help his bushwhacker friends. Ben Jolly was one of those open, frank whole-souled men, who said what he pleased. And because of his sincerity and candor, he was quite popular. As a friend, he was strong in his attachments, and never forsook a friend under any circumstances. To all of which the writer can gratefully testify.

When the men of our command arrived at their respective homes, taking their horses with them, we settled down to make a living, and to accept the situation as best we could. And although the Reconstruction period that followed proved something harassing, we tried to be loyal to our oath and make good citizens of the restored union.

It is true that as a consequence of war, bitter feelings were stirred up in the minds and hearts of the opposing parties. But we were willing to forgive and to ask forgiveness; and after more than thirty-six years have passed by, we have not seen fit to change our mind. We believe that the Judge of all the earth, in dealing with both sides, will do right, and we are willing to submit to His decision.

With this prayer we close these sketches:

May the blessings of God rest upon all the boys who followed us through the bloody struggle; if they have passed from this stage of action, to an unknown world to us, may similar blessings rest upon all their living posterity!

Amen.

The End

Notes

[1]*Mrs. M.R. Stone of New Market, Alabama, still had her husband William C. Stone's parole when the 1907 Confederate Veteran Census was taken. It reads as follows: "I certify that the bearer, W. C. Stone of Co. C, 25th Battalion, Alabama Cavalry, C. S. A., was this day surrendered by me to Brig. Gen. R. S. Granger, commanding District of North Alabama, U. S. Forces, upon the same terms that Gen. Lee surrendered to Gen. Grant, and that he has permission to go to his home and remain there undisturbed so long as he observes." It is signed "D. S. Richmond, 3-Lt Comd. Comp., 25th Ala."*

[2]*Colonel Given had been awarded the brevet (honorary) rank of brigadier general on March 13, 1865. However, he was mustered out as colonel on June 30, 1865. Given lived only a year after the war, dying on October 1, 1866. Francis B. Heitman,* Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army *(Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), vol. 1, p. 459.*

[3]*Ben Jolley's alleged pro-Union sentiments were not always sufficient protection. When the Union army returned Huntsville on December 21, 1864, wrote Mrs. Chadick in her diary, "they broke open stores, rifled private houses and cut up generally. At Mr. Jolley's, who has always been a good Union man, they took everything they could lay hands upon. Children's clothes, jewelry, hoop skirts, going into the rooms where the young ladies were not yet out of bed." It is not surprising Ben Jolley had "the best Rebel gal in all Dixie." Jolley had considerable property to worry about. The 1860 Census valued his land at $8,000 and his personal possessions at $61,000. Jolley's name appears in contemporary records both with and without the "e".*

APPENDIX I

As he was writing his memoirs in 1902, Milus Johnston's thoughts suddenly turned to race relations. Since these reflections interrupt the chronological course of his narrative, "The Negro" has been placed here as an appendix. It originally appeared as Chapter 28 of *The Sword of Bushwhacker Johnston*. Although Johnston was not a slaveowner, his views are probably representitive of those of the average antebellum Southerner.

The Negro

As we have mentioned the second scrape with the Negro,[1] we are going to pen a few thoughts about the Negro.

Some eye from the North may fall upon these lines, and the reader may conclude that the writer is full of prejudice against the Negro. If so, we hurl the charge back upon him, and proclaim it an untruth. To the best of our recollection, we never struck a Negro in our life; except when a boy we had a fisticuff with a colored boy, and may have pounded his wooly head a little. Again, we never hire or trade with a Negro without being more punctual in settling with him than with a white man, because we think we know his peculiar disposition, in being suspicious, in his ignorance, of some kind of imposition.

Where did the Negro come from? Every one will answer, "From darkest Africa, of course."

But how did he get here? This may be a mooted question, but Who first moved in the premises, the North or the South? If the North did not go after him it furnished the means to bring him here and place him in servitude.[2] After testing Negroes to their satisfaction, they found that it did not suit their country in climate or otherwise; therefore they were sent down South as so many goods and chattels. From that day to this the Southern people have been struggling with this perplexing problem.

In ante bellum days, the Negro question was a matter of moral influence and popular opinion. It was an era of statute and custom. Then the better class tried to govern by moral suasion, precept, and example. But says one: "Where was the lash?" Yes, the lash was used as a last resort by all persons who had a proper thought about the matter. It is admitted that in isolated cases the rod was used beyond reason. But as the white people believed they had property rights in their slaves, self-interest would prompt them not to abuse them beyond measure.

Well does the writer remember the great effort the South was making before the war to elevate her slaves to a higher plane of life. Missionaries by the hundreds were sent out to instruct them in the Scriptures and persuade them to become religious. Men of the brightest brain and of the purest heart lived, labored, and died, trying to accomplish this work. Then the work of the master and mistress was added to that of the missionary. Let us give you an example. The writer, in his preaching tours, has witnessed time and again the work of this kind at home in the family. There were the master and the mistress with a number of grown Negro men and women, with perhaps a dozen children of various sizes. Night comes on, the bell rings, and the darkies, old and young, come flocking into the "big house", and take their places on benches prepared for the purpose. The master then reads the Scriptures, sings a hymn, accompanied by the voices of the slaves, and then they kneel and pray. After prayer the older slaves go their way; while the master with the children enters a side room and leads them in their evening prayer. The prayer being concluded, the children all rise and say, "Good-night, Massa," and away they go to their cabins. The same thing is repeated the next morning, and it goes on day and night as regular as clock-work.

At church the whites and blacks would often meet in the same house, but separate from each other. And during a revival of religion, we have seen the penitent at the altar from both departments; the master going among the colored men and the mistress among the colored women, exhorting, praying, and weeping over their slaves, as if they loved them and wanted them to meet them in heaven. And who is prejudiced enough to say they did not feel what they expressed?

Then in the sick-room, and around the dying-pillow, the master and mistress would often be found ministering to their suffering slaves, both in physical alleviation and the comforts of religion. The writer has frequently entered such a room, at the request of the mistress, and heard her say as she stood by the sick-bed of one of her slaves, "She was my nurse when I was a baby. She hauled me in my little wagon from place to place. She gave me water when I was thirsty, and bread when I was hungry; and when I fell and hurt myself, she took me up and caressed me until I was comforted." And then

turning away with tears in her eyes, she would exclaim, "Oh, if I could, I would keep her with me for her faithfulness toward me!"

Do not ridicule and misjudge the "Old South", reader, for we know what we are talking about when we say that some good things can come out of Nazareth.

After writing the above we pause to acknowledge that there was wrong-doing in the South. Yes, there were even devils at the South. But the question is were there more devils at the South than at the North. It is said that people in glass houses should not throw stones. But it remains as of a plain remark that fell from the lips of an old farmer. We were on our way to a certain point; and on coming to the forks of the road, both leading to the same place, we asked the farmer which was the better way. He answered: "It is pull Dick, pull Devil." By this we understood him to say that in his judgment there was but little difference in the ways. It has been "pull Dick, pull Devil" too long already with the North and South, and we guess the better way would be to leave it to Him, who is the Judge of all things, to decide which party has the most devil.

While the South was making such laudible efforts for the betterment of her slaves referred to above, "Uncle Tom's Cabin" tumbled down from the North, the book written by Harriet Beecher Stowe.[3] And while the thing was very small in size, when it tumbled the fragments and splinters went flying all over America, piercing, wounding and bruising more human minds and hearts than any other thing of its size ever did before. The intention of the book may have been good; but how different was the effect! In our humble judgment that book created more prejudice between the North and the South than any volume ever published upon the continent of America. But leaving all the worst things done North and South, we come to the beginning of the war and take a look at the condition of the Negro.

Somehow, the Negro has been trained until he has become more content, happy, and trustworthy than any other race in like condition that then dwelt upon the face of the earth.

That the slave loved his master was proven during the Civil War, the times that tried men's souls. While the master went to war the slave remained home and took care of the wife

and children of the man who held him in bondage. Hence the true Southern white man has the proper respect and kindliness toward the Negro until this day. If Southern white people are not friends to the Negro, then they have no friends upon the American continent, and they had better get ready to emigrate.

After the war there were developed two strong political parties which placed the Negro between the upper and nether millstone of an outraged aristocracy on the one hand and the venal and treacherous friendship of the carpet bagger on the other. Here they were turned loose and continually incited to insult, outrage and rob their former masters, one of the haughtiest races the world has ever seen.

[1]*See Chapter 27.*

[2]*Johnston is apparently referring to the active and profitable New England slave trade of colonial times.*

[3]Uncle Tom's Cabin *appeared in 1852. Many Southerners denounced its brutal depiction of slavery as both inaccurate and insulting. Nevertheless, the novel greatly increased abolitionist sentiment in the North.*

Appendix II

Muster Rolls, Mead's Cavalry Battalion

The following roster has been reconstructed from the Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers, Roll 38, Microfilm copy 258, Mead's Confederate Cavalry, preserved in the National Archives in Washington. The names of the soldiers were copied from the original muster rolls by government clerks in the late 19th century. Thus errors in spelling are undoubtedly present. The rolls also do not indicate any changes of rank which might have occurred after the company was mustered in. The names of a few later recruits have been added from the Alabama Confederate Veteran Censuses of 1907 and 1921. Known casualities have been indicated, though there were obviously many more than these.

Lemuel G. Mead began recruiting his partisan battalion late in the summer of 1862. However, his efforts apparently met with limited success until the Union forces reoccupied North Alabama in the fall of 1863. Then volunteers began to come to him in large numbers.

Mead's command was very active in 1864, especially during the latter months of the year. By early 1865, Mead had obtained permission to reorganize his companies into a regiment of three battalions with himself as colonel. Milus Johnston was made lieutenant colonel and given command of the new 25th Alabama Cavalry Battalion, which consisted of Mead's Companies A, C, E, F, and G, plus a company apparently being raised by Captain John B. Corn of Hazel Green. Companies B, D, H, I, K, and L became the 27th Tennessee Cavalry Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel James E. Daniel. Six incomplete companies were to form a third undesignated battalion under Major Thomas G. Jones, formerly aide-de-camp to General John B. Gordon. The muster rolls of these incomplete companies are missing. Only the names of the captains are known: J. Newby, John

Blanton, James Whitmond, Robert Rushing, Morgan Money, and George Butler.

Company A

Enlisted in Jackson County, Alabama, January 18, 1864

Captain D. C. Nelson
1st Lieutenant K. T. Daniel, Jr.[1] (captured Mar. 30, 1864)
2nd Lieutenant J. W. Lindsay[2]
3rd Lieutenant Ira B. Derrick

1st Sergeant J. J. Tipton[3]
2nd Sergeant George W. St. Clair
3rd Sergeant James Howk
4th Sergeant G. W. Berry
5th Sergeant David Bishop
1st Corporal John N. Lilly
2nd Corporal John W. Berry
3rd Corporal J. B. Stephens
4th Corporal William J. Berry

Private Jared Anderson (captured Mar. 30, 1864)
Private John Ardis
Private James G. Austin
Private S. B. Austin
Private A. J. Berry
Private J. M. Berry
Private Ernsley Bingham
Private Benjamin Bishop
Private Asburry Bostick
Private F. M. Bostick
Private W. M. Bradshaw
Private Nelson Brit
Private Henry Burks
Private A. M. Bussy
Private Busy Campbell
Private Richard Campbell
Private William J. Campbell
Private William Carlin
Private George Caster
Private Charles Cox
Private Jesse Crawley
Private John B. Derrick
Private George Gifford

Private Allen Grant (wounded)
Private Hiram Grant
Private Richard Guthrey
Private William C. Hickman
Private James Higgins
Private W. M. Howk[4]
Private M. Joseph Jones
Private George W. Lee
Private Lemuel Lee
Private John Miller
Private George W. Morning
Private James Nelson
Private Richard Nelson
Private James Peeters
Private Uriah Peeters
Private W. M. Peeters
Private James Porcrus
Private W. V. Porcrus
Private John Pugh
Private William Ragsdale
Private T. B. Refroe [Renfroe?]
Private Andy Robins
Private J. P. M. Rucker
Private D. T. Russeau
Private J. B. Scott
Private Live Shook
Private James Simmons
Private J .S. Smith (captured Mar. 30, 1864)
Private J. A. St. Clair
Private Joseph Stephens
Private William Sublet
Private Allen Vaughn
Private Calvin Vaughn
Private John Walker
Private James Webb
Private Wiley Wright

Company B

Enlisted in Lincoln County, Tennessee, January 18, 1864

Captain Joel Cunningham
1st Lieutenant William J. Brittain
2nd Lieutenant James Boles
3rd Lieutenant Y. P. Taylor

1st Sergeant T. H. F. Boles
2nd Sergeant William P. Bevel
3rd Sergeant John Litrel
4th Sergeant Benjamin Bragg
1st Corporal John R. Pearson
2nd Corporal J. W. Cooper
3rd Corporal R. H. Hill
4th Corporal W. H. Echols

Private A. G. Adkinson
Private John Berry
Private G. H. Brittain
Private J. H. Brittain
Private D. F. Brown
Private J. M. Brown
Private James Browning
Private Samuel Browning
Private Dan Cannady
Private Thomas J. Chambless
Private Abraham Cox
Private Calvin Cox
Private Peter Cunningham
Private G. W. Davis
Private Ned Douglas
Private James Etheridge
Private D. R. Floyd
Private George Floyd
Private Craven Foster
Private Hollis Foster
Private Joel Foster
Private John Greene
Private S. J. Greene
Private J. A. Grills

Private W. W. Hall
Private Alonzo Hamilton
Private J. R. Howard
Private W. B. Ivey
Private J. J. Kelly
Private Joseph Kelly
Private Thomas Kelly
Private Charles King
Private W. Lee
Private Henly Mahew
Private J. W. McDougal
Private John Munks
Private A. J. Patterson
Private James Pearson
Private Joseph Pearson
Private W. H. Pickett
Private James Pilent
Private William A. Pryor
Private William Pullum
Private Marshall Rich
Private Fletcher Shepherd
Private Newton Shepherd
Private R. H. Shepherd
Private N. A. Sims
Private E. Sisk
Private Andrew Stephenson
Private Felix Stephenson
Private J. J. Stephenson
Private Richard Stephenson
Private H. C. Stovall
Private A. J. Taylor
Private David Taylor
Private George Taylor
Private J. K. P. White
Private William Williams

Company C

Enlisted in Jackson County, Alabama, December 15, 1864

Captain Frank E. Cotton
1st Lieutenant L. B. Jones (captured Jan. 25, 1865)
2nd Lieutenant John A. Brown
2nd Lieutenant John W. Watts (on detached duty)
3rd Lieutenant Thomas B. Maples

1st Sergeant John T. Hodges
2nd Sergeant Marion Bowers[5]
3rd Sergeant Jordan Fletcher
4th Sergeant M. B. Cameron
5th Sergeant James H. Stephens (captured Jan. 25, 1865)
1st Corporal Marion Stephens
2nd Corporal Samuel Keel
3rd Corporal P. W. Hodges
4th Corporal J. A. Robertson

Private Peter Abbet
Private W. J. Bartclay
Private Alexander Branum
Private Anderson Branum
Private C. P. Campbell
Private George W. Campbell
Private Richard C. Campbell
Private W. T. Campbell
Private William Cockeran
Private Brown Duckett
Private Thomas Duckett
Private James Eslinger
Private N. Evans
Private S. Evans
Private James Finley
Private Newton J. Fletcher (captured Jan. 25, 1865)
Private Minor Gainer
Private George Gerron
Private Joseph Gwathney
Private A. W. Hazelwood (captured Jan. 25, 1865)
Private Beverly Haynes
Private William Hickman

Private Doctor M. Hodges
Private Francis Hodges
Private Robert Hodges
Private Willis Hodges
Private Charles I. Jones
Private Isaac Jones
Private Levi Jones
Private Jesse Keel (captured Jan. 25, 1865)
Private Moses Keel
Private Seaborn Keel
Private John Kennamore
Private Claiborn Kirkpatrick
Private John Lee
Private William P. Morris (captured Jan. 25, 1865)
Private William Mullins
Private J. B. Parkill[6] (captured Jan. 25, 1865)
Private Marion Price
Private Michael Price
Private Elhanen Pruitt
Private Isaac S. Renfroe[7] (captured March 2, 1865)
Private Thomas Renfroe
Private J. R. Sartin
Private Thomas Smith
Private Bradford Tipton
Private Bridger Tipton
Private H. B. Tipton
Private J. H. Tipton
Private Hiram Whitecotton
Private Albert L. Whitely
Private James Wilborn
Private Johnson A. Woolsey[8]
Private John Wright

Company D

Enlisted in Franklin County, Tennessee, September 1, 1864[9]

Captain Jasper E. McColum
1st Lieutenant John L. Keith

1st Sergeant Richard Arnold
Sergeant Daniel Brewer
Sergeant Mitchel Custer
Sergeant H. L. Ervin
Corporal Stephen J. Green
Corporal George T. Jones
Corporal S. H. Keith
Corporal Daniel T. Kennady

Private Daniel Allen
Private W. Allread
Private Daniel Brewer
Private C. C. Bush
Private James Counts
Private P. R. Curtis
Private L. M. Donaldson
Private James Gattis
Private George Gifford
Private H. H. Hill
Private W. D. Kennady
Private William Killpatrick
Private J. C. Lambuson
Private Joseph Larkin
Private Thomas J. Larkin
Private James Litteral
Private Carter Mahatha
Private J. C. Martin
Private John Mathis
Private W. R. Mathis
Private Pink May
Private George W. McColum
Private Joseph Miller
Private John Parker
Private James C. Paston
Private Nuton Preston

Private William Preston
Private George Reed
Private M. H. Rich
Private Jerre Riddle
Private William Rives
Private Leroy Shook
Private H. C. Stovall
Private David Taylor
Private Harrison Timmons
Private J. P. Timmons
Private Scott Timmons
Private John Warfield
Private J. A. Williams
Private Alexander Wright

COMPANY E

Enlisted in Madison County, Alabama, January 25, 1864

Captain Milus E. Johnston	(promoted to Lieutenant Colonel)
1st Lieutenant Nathaniel Millard	(killed Dec. 18, 1864)
2nd Lieutenant John C. Drake	(promoted to Captain)
3rd Lieutenant Robert L. Welch	(transferred to Co. F)
1st Sergeant James D. Lewis	
2nd Sergeant Tyree S. Drake	
3rd Sergeant J. M. Leadbetter	
4th Sergeant John H. Vann	
1st Corporal George W. Vann	
2nd Corporal Joseph W. Peevy	
3rd Corporal James B. Isham	
4th Corporal Isaac D. W. Cobb[10]	
Private Zack Balew	
Private William T. Bennett[11]	
Private W. H. Case	
Private Thomas Chambless	(killed in action)
Private James W. Cloud	
Private William J. Cloud	
Private Adam Cobb	
Private John S. Cobb	
Private J. S. Cobb	
Private S. M. Cobb	
Private A. J. Cooper	(wounded Aug. 11, 1864)
Private A. V. Cooper	
Private Jeff Cruse	
Private B. G. Derrick	
Private John Ditto	(surrendered May 15, 1865)
Private T. A. Drake	(2d LT at surrender)
Private James Echols	
Private James Gibson	
Private William Gibson	
Private W. W. Gibson	
Private J. Gwathney	
Private J. P. Haimer	
Private William Haimer	

Private Richard Hamlet
Private John P. Harland
Private H. B. Herron
Private William Isham
Private Burr Johnston
Private John Keetan
Private John Kennebrough
Private John Lanier
Private William Lanier
Private Peyton Law (wounded)
Private Stephen Lee
Private W. S. Lock
Private Henry Mahew
Private William M. Mann
Private Lee May
Private John Middleton
Private John Morris (surrendered May 15, 1865)
Private M. Myres
Private Anderson Redford
Private Richard Richmond
Private W. G. Robertson
Private Henry Russell
Private A. J. Schrimpsher
Private J. D. Schrimpsher
Private Nathan Sims
Private Dock Spivey
Private M. R. Stone[12]
Private J. R. Sutton
Private Henry B. Turner
Private W. H. Turner
Private James Watson[13]
Private D. Whitecotton

COMPANY F

Enlisted in Madison County, Alabama, September 1, 1864

Captain Robert L. Welch (formerly lieutenant, Co. E)
1st Lieutenant George M. Poore
2nd Lieutenant Rufus Jones
3rd Lieutenant Charles A. Grayson

1st Sergeant T. A. Hannah
2nd Sergeant William Burnard
3rd Sergeant Samuel Kennemore
4th Sergeant T. K. Clark
5th Sergeant S. C. Branning
1st Corporal B. F. Walker
2nd Corporal Nat Moon
3rd Corporal N. D. Lanier
4th Corporal C. C. Carpenter

Private A. M. Baker
Private T. L. Baker
Private William J. Barclay[14]
Private Timothy Barnard
Private N. C. Baxter
Private Smith Black
Private Henry Boyd
Private John Branum
Private A. J. Clark
Private B. C. Clark
Private S. M. Clark
Private J. J. Cobb
Private J. B. Collier
Private M. B. Cook
Private A. B. Derrick
Private W. L. Dikes
Private G. W. Edmonds
Private F. H. Glover
Private Johnson Glover
Private J. W. Glover
Private A. J. Grayson
Private Joseph Grayson
Private Samuel Hollingsworth[15]

Private G. W. Honey
Private H. C. Hooten
Private George Hornbuckle
Private G. W. Hunt
Private James Hunt
Private Albert Lafasette (sp.?)
Private T. Robert Law
Private H. Leadbetter
Private J. J. Lee
Private J. E. Maples
Private Lafayette McDuff
Private J. H. McMilan
Private Frank Mitchel
Private D. W. Moon
Private G. W. Moon
Private Joseph M. Moon[16]
Private Samuel Moon
Private John W. Perkins (wounded Sept. 1864)
Private J. R. Potts
Private W. J. Potts[17]
Private John Reynolds
Private B. T. Reagan
Private William Sandridge
Private J. B. Sanford
Private M. Shubert
Private Rush Simpson
Private W. L. Sutton
Private T. C. Walker
Private A. Webster
Private J. J. Webster
Private W. H. Webster[18]
Private D. B. T. Whiteacre
Private J. W. Whitecotton
Private A. C. Wilson
Private J. S. Wood

COMPANY G

Enlisted in Madison County, Alabama, September 1, 1864[19]

Captain W. M. Campbell
1st Lieutenant J. M. Campbell

1st Sergeant J. W. Council

Private Robert Barksdale
Private Thomas Bragg
Private J. A. Brown
Private J. M. Brown
Private Green Campbell
Private William Cauley
Private R. F. Conley
Private C. C. Cox
Private James Daniel
Private James Darrell
Private Y. T. Flynt
Private J. C. Fowler
Private Abner Freeman
Private C. D. Freeman
Private Thomas Grimmit
Private T. A. Guy
Private Reuben Hall
Private John Harmony
Private Nelson Heathcock
Private Marion Hill
Private William Hill
Private Stephen Jones
Private Wiley Jones
Private W. R. Killpatrick
Private James Lamb
Private Josiah Lamb
Private Thomas Lindsay
Private Polk Manly
Private John McElyea
Private Joseph Mooney
Private John Morris
Private Thomas Phillips
Private A. J. Ragsdale

Private James Ragsdale
Private Columbus Russey
Private Elijah Shelton
Private William Shelton
Private Jesse Webb
Private J. M Webb
Private W. M. Williams
Private Thomas Wilson
Private Daniel Yarbrough
Private Jeptha Yarbrough
Private Nathan Yarbrough
Private William Yarbrough
Private James Yates

COMPANY H

Enlisted in Lincoln County, Tennessee, October 8, 1864

Captain James L. Baxter (killed in action)
1st Lieutenant Alexander Hunt
2nd Lieutenant John H. Walker
3rd Lieutenant B. W. Roseborough

1st Sergeant N. A. Steele
2nd Sergeant G. W. Paine
3rd Sergeant J. W. Towers
4th Sergeant G. W. Williams
5th Sergeant W. P. Campbell
1st Corporal Calvin Green
2nd Corporal J. W. Gattis
3rd Corporal T. W. Walker
4th Corporal W. C. Dotson

Private Zack Arnold
Private James Baker
Private John Bostick
Private A. M. Campbell
Private T. S. Campbell
Private George Carter
Private G. W. Couch
Private James Couch
Private D. M. Dickey
Private M. C. H. Dickey
Private H. M. Faukler
Private W. V. Fitch
Private Anthony Foster
Private David Gattis
Private J. P. Gattis
Private Fleming Green
Private Dunsen Haile
Private George Haile
Private Thomas Holman
Private R. C. Hudson
Private George Hunt
Private Marion Hutman
Private Thomas Johnson

Private D. W. Jones
Private J. H. Jones
Private William Leathe
Private F. M. Litteral
Private J. M. Little
Private S. B. Map
Private J. M. Mathis
Private Edward McBey
Private Nat McCramy
Private William McElyea
Priavate F. M. Mitchel
Private J. W. Moore
Private R. J. Moore
Private G. W. Oldfield
Private John Oldfield
Private W. M. Oldfield
Private G. W. Pane
Private Daniel Pettie
Private A. J. Pickett
Private Morgan Pitcock
Private A. J. Ratecan
Private Sanford Renegar
Private M. S. Rolen
Private W. B. Shelton
Private Louis Smith
Private P. M. Snow
Private Henry Street
Private E. T. Trip
Private Bud Walker
Private G. W. White
Private Anderson Williams
Private Marion Williams
Private R. H. Yarbrough

COMPANY I

Enlisted in Grundy County, Tennessee, October 18, 1864[20]

Captain John P. Henley
1st Lieutenant Alec H. Sanders
2nd Lieutenant L. W. Rose
3rd Lieutenant John Winton

1st Sergeant James K. P. Pearson
2nd Sergeant Elbert Redwine
3rd Sergeant A. B. Crownover
4th Sergeant Wesley Sanders
5th Sergeant George W. Loveless
1st Corporal G. S. Goodman
2nd Corporal John Rose
3rd Corporal J. C. Rust
4th Corporal J. C. Henley

Private Robert Adams
Private John Bartee
Private J. F. Bell
Private John Bradshaw
Private E. M. Brawley
Private R. W. Childress
Private Robert Countis
Private L. D. Crabtree
Private E. M. Croutch
Private John Croutch
Private Chesley Duton
Private Smith Fulks
Private Henderson Goodman
Private Benny Green
Private Henry Gunn
Private Alexander Henly
Private James Henly
Private Richard Hobbs
Private L. R. Ichard
Private M. K. Kilgore
Private Daniel Lane
Private Isaac Lane
Private Preston Lane

Private James Lavan
Private S. K. Lavan
Private L. Layton
Private Henry Lust
Private James Lust
Private William Lynch
Private Nat McBride
Private David Meeks
Private E. L. G. Meeks
Private George Meeks
Private James J. Meeks
Private William T. Meeks
Private Silas Nevels
Private John Parks
Private Oliver Parks
Private John Patterson
Private R. C. Pearson
Private S. R. M. Rust
Private Anderson Sanders
Private James Sanders
Private Joseph Sanders
Private Matthew Sanders
Private Mitchell Sanders
Private William Sanders
Private H. C. Sartin
Private Miles Stephens
Private A. J. Warren
Private Anderson Winton
Private Jesse Winton

COMPANY K

Enlisted in Davidson County, Tennessee
September 15, 1864[21]

Captain J. C. Jenkins

1st Sergeant B. G. Alexander
2nd Sergeant C. D. Bishop
3rd Sergeant J. C. Blake
4th Sergeant L. A. Brooks
1st Corporal William Daniel
2nd Corporal W. Gaston
3rd Corporal B. H. Hill
4th Corporal Walker Keeble

Private J. L. Bleckley
Private J. Campbell
Private L. P. Carter
Private J. T. Cawley
Private J. Crowsan
Private William Davis
Private Thomas Durrah
Private Richard Eason
Private Joseph Easton
Private William Evans
Private A. J. Farmer
Private R. S. Force
Private Thomas Fulton
Private Louis Garner
Private W. H. G. Gucthins (sp. ?)
Private Benjamin Harvey
Private John H. Hayes
Private F. J. Hedgepeth
Private Walker Henderson
Private John Holdbrook
Private A. J. Howard
Private A. J. Irons
Private Andrew Johnson
Private Maral Johnson
Private A. King
Private G. V. Laxton

Private Bluford Lowry
Private Morse Lowry
Private J. A. Malone
Private William Martin
Private B. McClendon
Private John McCutchen
Private Baily Montgomery
Private Virgil Murkson
Private William Neely
Private Walker Page
Private H. H. Perkins
Private Alick Perry
Private Jasper Phillips
Private Walker Pickens
Private Charles Pruett
Private James Runnels
Private Thomas Scroggins
Private E. A. Simpson
Private Edgar Smith
Private J. A. Spruelle
Private Moses Verman
Private J. Voluntine
Private John Walton
Private Joshua Walton
Private Cisera White
Private W. J. Wilkins
Private James Wilson

COMPANY L

Enlisted in Lincoln County, Tennessee, April 14, 1864[22]

Captain Jerome Root
1st Lieutenant A. B. Stephens

1st Sergeant T. M. Putnam
2nd Sergeant William Bunn
3rd Sergeant J. C. Fowler
4th Sergeant J. C. Holbut
1st Corporal Joseph Hawks
2nd Corporal Leroy May
3rd Corporaal William Picket
4th Corporal John Stinson

Private E. Alexander
Private A. D. Arnold
Private D. C. Baldin
Private J. Bearfield
Private B. Beverley
Private J. Blevins
Private J. Buchannan
Private John Bunn
Private J. Campbell
Private J. Conner
Private A. M. Cress
Private Jack Deavenport
Private W. George
Private A. Gibson
Private F. Glauch
Private B. Gray
Private D. Gray
Private Press Griffin
Private F. Gry
Private Thomas Gubley
Private W. Gurly
Private J. Haden
Private D. Haley
Private Thomas Harris
Private C. Hashel
Private M. Hays

Private T. W. Heath
Private J. Hughs
Private W. Jennings
Private L. Layton
Private William McElray
Private J. Norwaith
Private D. Norman
Private William Paston
Private William Pearce
Private John Pilent
Private Charles Porter
Private Brice Potelle
Private Young Riley (sp.?)
Private John Roundtree
Private William Smedley
Private Dan Smith
Private James Smith
Private W. P. Smith
Privatae William Snodgrass
Private George Street
Private Thornton Sustrell
Private T. Warmick
Private W. White
Private John Williams
Private William Williams
Private W. Wyatt

Notes

[1]*1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Morgan County, Alabama: Kibble Terah Daniel, born in Jackson County, Alabama. Entered service as a private Aug. 27, 1862 at Paint Rock, Alabama "in Co. C, 1st Battalion of Cavalry, P[artisan] R[anger] and continued until October 27, 1862. Re-enlisted as a First Lieutenant in August, 1863 at Paint Rock, Alabama in Co. A, 25th Alabama Battalion of Cavalry and continued until captured March 30, 1864. Acted as adjutant until captured; paroled in April, 1864." 1907 residence was New Decatur, Alabama.*

[2]*1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Jackson County Alabama: John W. Lindsey, born Aug. 15, 1840 at Larkinsville. Enlisted at Mobile on March 28, 1861 as private in Co. K, 2nd Alabama Regiment. Discharged at Fort Morgan in August 1861. Re-enlisted about October 10, 1861 at Iuka, Mississippi in Co. C, 26th Alabama Infantry [later renumbered the 50th Alabama]. Served until "some time in July 1862. Re-enlisted in September 1862 [1863?] as private in 25th Alabama Battalion. Surrendered at Huntsville, Alabama 11th day of May 1865." 1907 residence was Larkinsville.*

[3]*1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Jackson County, Alabama: James J. Tipton, born January 20, 1840 at Killingsworth [Cove?], Madison County, Alabama. Entered service as a private in "January 1862" [1864] in Jackson County, Alabama "in the 25th Alabama Cavalry Regiment Captain Nelson's Company." "Surrendered at New Hope, Alabama. Paroled at Huntsville, Alabama May 5th 1865."*

[4]*1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Jackson County, Alabama: William Houk, born July 12, 1845 at Limrock, Alabama. Entered service at Limrock in the fall of 1864 "in the 25th Alabama Cavalry, Co. A . . . was paroled at Huntsville, Alabama in May 1865."*

[5]1921 Confederate Veteran Census, Jackson County, Alabama: Francis Marion Bowers, born March 15, 1840 at Woodville. Enlisted at Larkinsville in 1862 as sergeant in Co. A, 4th Alabama Infantry. Later joined Mead's Battalion and fought at Laverne, Tennessee and Paint Rock Bridge. Was captured at Laverne, but "got away before they got to prison." Paroled in 1865 at Nashville.

[6]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Jackson County, Alabama: J.B. Parkhill, born October 27, 1846 at Woodville. Entered service at New Hope, Alabama in December 1864 in "Capt Johns[t]on Home Guard Co." "Taken prisoner and paroled in June 1865 at Camp Chase Ohio.

[7]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: Isaac S. Renfroe, born October 17, 1842 in Madison County. Enlisted at Paint Rock in May, 1861, in Company G, 12th Alabama Infantry. Served in Virginia until February, 1865, "when he went home and joined Captain Nelson's company. Was captured soon after and sent to Camp Chase Prison and remained there until the close of the war." His postwar residence was Gurley."

[8]1921 Confederate Veteran Census, Jackson County, Alabama: Johnson A. Woolsey, born October 4, 1843 at Larkinsville. Enlisted at Larkinsville January 1, 1863 in Company A, 12th Alabama ("he thinks"). He transferred, "serving under Capt. Frank Cotten and Col. Lem G. Meade, as Pickets on Tenn. River. . . . He was discharged in Huntsville under General Granger, U. S. "

[9]Captain McColum's company was evidently incomplete at the time this muster roll was made and the officers had not all been elected.

[10]Misread as J. D. N. Cobb in the Compiled Service Records. 1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: I. D. W. Cobb, born October 1846 at Owen's Cross Roads. Enlisted as a private "about 1863 at Gurley in Company G, Milus E. Johns[t]on's Battalion and continued until he surrendered at Huntsville in 1865 at the end of the war."

[11]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: William Taylor Bennett, born February 1, 1847 in Madison County. "Entered service in January, 1865 at Gurley, Alabama in Company G [C], Milus E. Johns[t]on's Battalion and continued until the surrender on May 11, 1865 at Huntsville, Alabama." His 1907 residence was Gurley.

[12]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: W. C. Stone, born in Madison County. "Entered service in Company C, 25th Battalion, Alabama Cavalry and continued until May 11, 1865." Although Stone was deceased by 1907, the census listed his wife. She still had Stone's original parole.

[13]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: James Watson, born September 1, 1839, in Grainger County, Tennessee. Enlisted August 1861 at Huntsville in Company B, 2nd Confederate Regiment. Captured at Baker's Creek, Mississippi, in May 1863, and sent to Fort Delaware. "Re-enlisted in the fall of 1863 in Captain Milus E. Johns[t]on's company, General Mead's Command, and continued until the surrender." (Although Mead's promotion to brigadier general was recommended, the war ended before it was confirmed.)

[14]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Jackson County, Alabama: William Jones Barklay born July 29, 1845 at "Huntstore," Jackson County. Entered service at Maysville, Alabama in the fall of 1864 in the "25th Ala Cav Regt Co. F." His 1907 residence was Woodville.

[15]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: Samuel B. Hollingsworth, born April 2, 1845, in Madison County. "Entered service as a private in April, 1864, at New Hope, Ala. in Milus E. Johns[t]on's Company and continued until the surrender in 1865." His 1907 residence was Gurley.

[16]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: Joseph Middleton Moon, born August 7, 1848 in Madison County, Alabama. "Entered service as a private at Owens Cross Roads, Ala. in Co. F, 25th Ala. Cavalry and continued until surrender May 11, 1865 at Huntsville, Ala." His 1907 residence was Owens Cross Roads.

[17]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: William Jonathan Potts, born March 16, 1846 in Madison County, Alabama. "Entered service as a private in October, 1864 at New Hope, Ala. in Co F, 25th Ala. Cavalry and continued until April 15, 1865." His 1907 residence was Meridianville.

[18]1907 Confederate Veteran Census, Madison County, Alabama: William Henderson Webster, born November 22, 1842, in Madison County. Enlisted January 1862 at Huntsville in Company K, 49th Alabama Infantry. Captured at Port Hudson and paroled. "Re-enlisted in the fall of 1864 near Huntsville, Ala., in the Milus E. Johns[t]on Scouts and continued until the surrender." Residence in 1907 was Brownsboro, Alabama.

[19]With only 49 men, Company G was obviously incomplete when this muster roll was made. Additional commissioned and noncommissioned officers must have been chosen at a later date.

[20]This company of Mead's battalion was assigned to the 27th Tennessee Cavalry. However, it surrendered as part of the 28th Tennessee Cavalry, with John P. Henley listed as lieutenant colonel and Alex H. Sanders as captain. It was Henley's company that tracked down and wiped out the outlaw gang of the notorious Calvin Brixey, a deserter from both sides in the Civil War.

[21]With 56 men this company was only slightly understrength. However, no other commissioned officers are named on the original muster roll.

[22]Captain Root's company was also understrength in this

muster roll. Additional officers must have been chosen later.

Another member of Mead's Battalion appears on the 1907 Confederate Veteran Census for Marshall County: Walter Bill Click, born April 29, 1846, at New Hope, Madison County, Alabama. Click "entered service as a private in September, 1864 at New Hope, Alabama in Johns[t]on's Battalion and continued until paroled in April, 1865." Click probably served in Company F.

COMPANY UNKNOWN

In addition, the following men are known to have served under Mead, although the company they served in is not certain:

Private Theophilus Cobb
Private Henry B. Derrick
Private George B. Derrick
Private John Dillard
Private Bradford Houk
Private Presley Kennemer
Private Isaac Perkins
Private Jabez Perkins
Private John Peters
Private Lewis Turner

Private Jabez Perkins was killed January 9, 1865, in the skirmish at the depot in Stevenson.

Index

D

H

I

J

K

L

M

R

S

What readers said about the first edition:

"As anyone who has tried to research local Civil War partisan activity knows, it's tough to find information. Rice has wisely decided simply to reprint an apparently forgotten series of informative, first person accounts of a Confederate officer's exploits. The end result is a valuable, well-documented book that offers the historian, student or casual reader a personal account of the Civil War that rivals The Life of Johnny Reb, *in its ability to bring the reader into a soldier's world."*

David Swann, *The Huntsville Times,*
December 6, 1992

"I constantly have people call and ask me if there was any part of the Civil War fought in this area. This book is your answer. When you read Milus Eddings Johnston's own account of the part he and his contingency played in it, you will have your answer first hand. When the Union Army stopped him from preaching the gospel, he took more than preaching to them."

Carlus Page, *The Daily Sentinel,* Scottsboro, Alabama
October 16, 1992

"I have just completed The Sword of 'Bushwhacker' Johnston. *It is a great contribution to the recorded history of the War Between the States in our area and should be in the library of every school in Alabama."*

Dr. Norman R. Dassinger, Jr.,
former National Commander of
the Sons of Confederate Veterans