



ALONZO ABERNETHY  
At the Age of Twenty-six Years

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3D SERIES

## INCIDENTS OF AN IOWA SOLDIER'S LIFE, OR FOUR YEARS IN DIXIE

BY ALONZO ABERNETHY<sup>1</sup>

Who can portray, after so many years, the exciting events that foreshadowed and inaugurated the War of the Rebellion? The bombardment of Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, and its precipitate surrender next day to rebel soldiers under Beauregard, sent a thrill of excitement throughout the land. This defiant act of open war at once aroused the nation to intense feeling and activity.

Who has forgotten that electric shock, even at this distance? Long years have come and gone since the heart of the whole North was convulsed by the attack and capture of Fort Sumter, but the sorrow and wrath of that day have never been forgotten and never can be. The conviction of danger and the impulse to self-preservation were alike universal.

The call of President Lincoln, on the day following the surrender, for 75,000 volunteers to defend the old flag seemed only the reflection of a greater call from every hearthstone in the broad land. When that memorable proclamation said: "I appeal to all loyal citizens to favor, facilitate and aid this effort to maintain the honor, the integrity and the existence of our National Union and the perpetuity of popular government, and to redress the wrongs already long enough endured," it found the country already in arms. Forty-eight hours later, regiments were en route for Washington, and in two days more, a hundred thousand men had offered and were being rapidly organized for instant service.

Intense excitement burst over the country. Both North and South rushed to arms. I need not recount the manner in which the call was everywhere responded to. How from all ranks, con-

<sup>1</sup>Col. Abernathy died February 21, 1915. He was born in Sandusky, Ohio, April 14, 1836, and came to Iowa in 1854. He enlisted as a private in Company F, Ninth Iowa Infantry, and rose to be lieutenant colonel. He was a representative in the Eleventh General Assembly in 1866. He was state superintendent of public instruction from 1872 to 1876. For a more complete sketch of his life, see ANNALS OF IOWA, Vol. XII, No. 2, p. 152.

ditions and classes they came, "Came at their country's call," and went forth—the young men, the old men and the boys from school; the single men and those who had families to support; the men of all parties, of all religions and all nationalities; giving up their employments, giving up their attachments, giving up their homes. Gathering into companies and regiments, they rose up in one mighty throng in this hour of common danger. Such was the common impulse that impelled a nation of freemen to arms.

Our first winter in the Sunny South under canvas might well have served to cool the ardor of patriotic fervor. For three months it was a humdrum life in the woods, in a miserably unattractive and unhealthy region of southeastern Missouri, at a little railroad station near Pacific Junction, where the people appeared sickly, sallow and cadaverous; where malarial fever prevailed nine months in the year and worse forms of disease the remaining three. Camped there to protect important railroad bridges and constantly on guard duty day and night by turns; with no adequate facilities for maintaining cleanliness; exposed to cold, wind and storm; sleeping on rude bunks or on the frozen ground in our crowded tents at night, with only a pair of coarse blankets apiece for bedding; with little variety or change of food; with few of the comforts and delicacies of the average home, and with none of the cheerfulness and affection of either wife, mother, sister or daughter, is there any wonder that sickness soon entered the camp and carried away numbers to the post hospital, and even so soon, some down into the narrow house. Even that early in the service many a soldier began to absorb from the sickening miasma of that section the seeds of malarial disease that subsequent years of change, waste and repair never eradicated.

It would be both ungenerous and unjust, in any account of our first winter of camp life, not to mention the name and services of one noble woman, Mrs. Terrell<sup>2</sup>, the widowed mother of one of our boys, who spent nearly the whole of our first winter in the camp and camp hospital of our regiment, in alleviating the pains, in relieving the distress and softening the pillows of our sick and suffering. They said, when she came, it was no place for a woman. She soon proved how sadly they were mistaken. So

<sup>2</sup>The name Terrell is not found in Roster of the Ninth Iowa. It shows a D. W. Tyrell from West Union and an Edward Tyrell from Waverly.



far as I know, Mrs. Terrell was the first army nurse of the war, the harbinger of that noble army of heaven-appointed nurses that later went out as angels of mercy in the midst of all the sickness and carnage and death.

Iowa sent out her full quota of Mrs. Terrells, Aunt Beckys and Annie Wittenmeyers, furnished as they always were with every possible supply of sanitary stores and supported by the willing hands and loving hearts of the noble women at home.

During three months' service here, in an unhealthy region and an inclement winter, the regiment passed through one of the severest ordeals of all its four years of active service in the South. Inexperienced in camp life and ignorant of its real perils, it was attacked simultaneously by the scourge of that country, bilious fever, and by the measles and the mumps. Few were so fortunate as to escape the hospital for one or more of these complaints. On December 31, 1861, at the end of the first four months of service, the regiment had lost by death 17, by discharge 7, total, 24; and had gained by additional enlistments and transfer 42, leaving an aggregate of 995.

A month later found us among the Ozark mountains, in southwestern Missouri in pursuit of the rebel general Price; and after a march of 250 miles in less than a month, having made our way alternately through mud and snow,<sup>3</sup> the Army of the Southwest, under the gallant Curtis, halted at Cross Hollows. From this point a detachment of 300 men under Colonel Vandever was sent to Huntsville, Arkansas, forty miles away, to destroy commissary stores, and capture or drive away a detachment of rebel soldiers.

Our advance guard found the camp deserted, and learned from a straggler, a rebel soldier, that the combined Confederate army, under Van Dorn, McCullough, Price and McIntosh was even then marching to meet and attack our force. At four o'clock on the morning of March 6, the bugle sounded the order to "fall into line," and we started to rejoin our command, every hour bringing us some new evidence that not a moment was to be lost if we would save ourselves from capture by the large force pressing forward in advance of us, on a parallel road. Accordingly, after an extraordinary march of forty-two miles, our little band of 300

<sup>3</sup>January weather in southwest Missouri was not greatly unlike some of our March weather in northern Iowa—one day four or five inches of snow; the next, eight or ten inches of mud.

sore-footed infantry rejoined our comrades at eight o'clock the same evening. It was the longest and hardest march we ever made, forty-two miles in one day.

The phases of camp life were like the ever-changing sands of the seashore. Whoever would understand a soldier's life must put himself in his place, and imagine himself on a mild winter morning, strapped to his back a knapsack containing, besides the extra shirt, pair of trousers and stockings, the single blanket which has been his sole protection in sleep from the frozen bed beneath and the frost and wind above. He should not forget the usual plug of tobacco and pack of cards, even if they must lie beside mother's Bible.<sup>4</sup> Over his right shoulder hangs his haversack, with its last day's scanty rations; from the left, his canteen and coffee. The belt around his waist supports the cartridge box and forty rounds, with cap box in front and glistening bayonet at the left. Last but not least, he will not forget to "shoulder arms" with the eleven-pound Dresden rifle, as bright a piece and true a shot as ever soldier bore. Thus equipped, the distant bugle sounds the order "March" and for sixteen hours, he plods his way along, up hill and down, over gravelly and stony roads, made doubly hard and sharp by the mere remnants of his shoe soles, with never so much as a halt and rest of fifteen minutes during the livelong day. As the muscles begin to stiffen and the bones begin to ache he may fear, as some did fear on that tiresome day, that he is planting seeds that may perchance bear fruit of pain<sup>5</sup> even to the end of the journey of life.

At last we reached camp where our rations of hard-tack and rusty bacon made us a sumptuous supper. There occurred, on the following day, March 7, 1862, the memorable battle of Pea Ridge. It was for many an Iowa regiment a hard-fought battle. Such was it to the Ninth Iowa above all others. The fighting began at 10 A. M. by a fierce attack of the enemy, who was driven back. Our line advanced in turn. We, too, were driven back before the grape and canister of their batteries. Again they came and again were repulsed. From this time, the battle raged incessantly, growing hotter as the day advanced. Only an occasional lull

<sup>4</sup>One member of the Ninth Iowa, at least, can testify that he neither carried his pack of cards nor played its games during all those years.

<sup>5</sup>It is no great wonder that many a gallant soldier who has stoutly braved it out, lo! these many years, has at last been compelled to ask the government for a pension to buy bread he no longer has the strength to earn.



gave opportunity to refill the cartridge boxes. This, our first fight, raged with a fury which exceeded our worst apprehensions. Lieutenant Colonel Herron, our commander, had said in the morning to his regiment in line of battle: "We have come a long way, boys, to fight them, and by the Eternal, we will fight them right here." And we did fight them there. At nightfall we held our ground, and lay upon our arms near the spot where the fighting began in the morning and were satisfied that we had triumphed, but were not confident that we could long continue such fighting against such odds. It was only when the enemy vanished at sunrise with the mists of the morning, that we realized how complete had been this our first victory.

This victory, though, was dearly bought. Of 560 men who went out in the morning, 237, or nearly every other man in the ranks had been killed or wounded. In this day's engagement seventy-four men had been either killed or mortally wounded, and nearly as many more permanently disabled out of our single regiment. Among the killed were the brave Captains Andrew W. Drips and Alva Bevins, and Lieutenants Abner G. M. Neff<sup>3</sup> and Nathan Rice. Here the gallant Herron, then commanding the regiment, was severely wounded and fell into the hands of the enemy while at the head of his regiment. He was soon after promoted to brigadier general, and Colonel Vandever, also in command of our brigade, received a like recognition of his distinguished bravery.

It was during the thickest of the fight on the afternoon of this day, that I had my first experience of rebel lead and how it feels. Standing partly protected by a fallen tree, I had raised my rifle to take steady aim, when I felt a dull thud upon the inside of my right leg, near the ankle, as if struck by a club.

In the midst of a first battle, the human mind often manifests powers transcending all experience, as in the case of a man drowning. I would not express it as some have, as an instantaneous review of the experiences of a lifetime, but rather as a preternatural power of recollection and association by which the mind seems able to recall instantly and vividly, every related idea in all past experience.

<sup>3</sup>Lieutenant Neff died of his wounds, March 12.—Iowa Soldier's Roster.

Daniel Webster, when afterwards describing his mental state while making that great speech in the United States Senate in reply to Hayne of South Carolina, portrayed the condition of the mind in the highest state of controlled activity, when he said: "All that I had ever read, or thought, or acted in literature, in history, in law, in politics, seemed to unravel before me in glowing panorama; and then it was easy, if I wanted a thunder-bolt, to reach out and take it as it went smoking by."

The instant I felt the stroke, there came to me, probably for the first time since early boyhood, the recollection of stories to which I had listened, related by returned soldiers of the Mexican war, that a cannon ball might take off a leg or a foot, with no more pain at the instant, than of a limb benumbed by a blow or bruise. I looked down and found the foot still there. I stepped and found that no bones were broken, and returned to the thought of my rifle. A few minutes later, Captain Towner asked me the cause of my limping. I replied, "A slight bruise only," though my trousers were considerably riddled. Some time later I found blood in my shoe, and then first learned that I was really wounded, but I still considered it unimportant and kept my place in the ranks. In another half hour I could not walk, and did not again step upon that foot for four months; nor was I able to walk without the aid of a cane for more than a year. But to many a soldier in that day's struggle, nightfall brought neither pain nor anxiety, for

He lay like a warrior taking his rest,  
With his martial cloak around him.

Of the eight thousand who went out to battle in the morning, thirteen hundred were that night *hors de combat*. They were out of the battle. Those who rested upon their arms, where nightfall had ended the battle, were ready to re-form their lines at a moment's warning. Though their ranks had been frightfully decimated; though it was apparent to everybody that they had been fighting against great odds; though heavy draughts had already been made upon the reserve ammunition, and though no one could claim more than a drawn battle; yet they were determined and resolute, and for the most part hopeful, and after the exhaustion and excitement of the day, they generally slept.



Quite another scene was presented at the Division Hospital. The shifting fortunes of the preceding day had twice compelled the removal of the large hospital tent, in and around which were huddled the hundreds of wounded men, who had either hobbled back or had been borne thither on stretchers from the front. I will not attempt a description of the scene at this hospital during that weary, anxious night. My own unimportant wound remained undressed till nearly morning. What could five or six surgeons do among 500 or 600 men who lay there, scores of them writhing in agony? Besides the pain that every man had to bear for himself—I might well say men and boys—for half of them seemed but striplings who ought to have been under their mother's care—besides their own pains, they must, perforce, listen to the groans and shrieks, the complaints and criminations, the curses and prayers, on every side. Add to this the uncertainty, and to these helpless men the gloomy anxiety of the morrow, and you have the material for your own picture.

When the shot and shell, the grape and canister, begin to whiz about the ears of a regiment of armed soldiers, they can usually "hit back" and return the fire. When it becomes too hot, they know they can "retreat in good order"; that as a last resort, they can adopt the famous cry of Napoleon's Old Guard at Waterloo, "*Sauve qui peut*,"—"Save himself who can." But what shall a regiment of wounded men do, in like circumstances? Add yet to this number a small horde of worthless camp followers and cowards, who always infest that part of an army which is farthest from danger, with their doleful fears and their more doleful rumors from the front, and you have some conception of a night in a field hospital after a drawn battle.

Army life afforded frequent illustration of some singular anticipations of coming danger. A similar illustration was that of the case of the gifted and charming Margaret Fuller, whose tragic fate on Fire Island Rock, near New York Harbor, sent such a thrill of horror throughout the country in the year 1850. She had been abroad four years, most of the time at Rome. When about to embark from her home abroad to the land of her birth, she found herself under a cloud of apprehension which no effort of her strong will could dispel. To a friend she wrote: "Various omens have combined to give me a dark feeling. In



case of mishap, however, I shall perish with husband and child." Again she wrote: "It seems to me that my future on earth will soon close. Have a vague expectation of some crisis, I know not what. Yet my life proceeds as regularly as a Greek tragedy, and I can but accept the pages as they turn." On the day of sailing, she "lingered for a final hour on shore, almost unable to force herself to embark." During all the long homeward voyage across the Atlantic the same shadow hung over her. They were not long out when the captain of the vessel sickened and died of smallpox. Two days later her own little boy was attacked with the same fell disease, and came near death's door, but recovered. After two weary months of anxiety and when almost in sight of the harbor, the vessel suddenly went to pieces on Fire Island Rock, less than 100 yards from the Long Island shore, and completed the tragedy so strongly foreshadowed in her own mind, by engulfing together husband, wife and child.

Every one is familiar with the shadows that would continue to flit over and darken the rugged pathway of the lamented President Lincoln with their portents of impending personal disaster, which at the very zenith of his lofty career came so undeservedly, so suddenly and so tragically. The most marked case of morbid presentiments, however, that has come under my own observation, was in connection with the Pea Ridge battle. Just one month to a day prior to that event, Lieutenant Neff, of my company, was seized with a foreboding that he could not throw off.

On the night of February 7, at Lebanon, Missouri, where the regiment camped on its march, Lieutenant Neff spent the whole night in sleepless vigilance, and when at last morning came, he revealed to me the cause of his deep emotion. He had been my companion daily and almost hourly for the last five months. I knew every mood and phase of his usually sunny life. He was a man of genial life and high social qualities, dwelling habitually upon the sunny side of life and possessing a large fund of anecdotes, with which it was his custom to beguile the monotony of camp life. But from that fell hour the whole current of his mental activity was changed. The clear limpid stream, suddenly and without apparent cause, became dark and turbid. He had

a conviction that his time had come. He made every preparation for it. His mind dwelt continually upon it and time did not serve to efface this conviction. It did not, however, affect his performance of duty. When one week later we came upon the enemy, he was in his place and never shrank once in the face of danger. So far as I know, he was the first man shot on the morning at Pea Ridge, and that, too, by a stray ball, some time before we got into action.

He died in the heat of that terrible day,  
A day that shall live in story;  
In the rocky land they placed his clay,  
And left him alone in his glory.

There was one phase of this class of phenomena very common in the army and often very baleful. It came to be known as homesickness. Sometimes sickness, which was not readily cured, brought first discontent, and then despondency; a conviction that they would not recover without better treatment and better care, followed by the longing for the comforts of home. This too often settled into a despair that greatly lessened the chances of recovery, and carried many a brave soldier to an untimely grave. But if some lives were lost by despondency and homesickness, many, many more were saved by "clear grit," by the force of will alone, stimulated by a conviction of duty. The man whose cot lay next to mine in the hospital at Cassville, after Pea Ridge, had been shot through the lungs. Whenever the wound in his breast was unbandaged, the air bubbled out at every expired breath. His surgeons told him he could not live. But he bravely said he would live, and sure enough he did live, got well, and served out his time in the ranks. The world has yet to learn the real value of courage, based upon devotion to the truth. "As a man thinketh, so is he."

My first view of the rebel dead strewn upon the field was at the battle of Arkansas Post, January 10, 1863; a spirited affair in which the army and navy united to compass an easy victory. Aside from two days and nights of wading and standing around in the mud, with clothing drenched with rain; with what came near being a forty-eight hours' fast—Arkansas Post was a large victory at a small cost. We had captured an important military post at a time in the war when victories were the exception and not the rule. It



served to reassure the army and prepare it for the splendid victories that awaited us under Generals Grant, Sherman and McPherson, from Vicksburg to Chattanooga during the year 1863. But after the first flush of excitement and joy was over, as we traversed the lines of the Arkansas Post intrenchments, the savage execution of our arms was apparent enough. Everywhere were the torn and mangled bodies of the rebel dead, scattered over the ground where the death-dealing weapons had left them. In ordinary death we see only the lifeless form, white hands, pallid face and sunken cheek. In the "grim visage of war" we saw more. We saw the gaping mouth and glaring eye over which the dull color of the butternut uniform cast its sickly hue. But here a still worse picture met the eye in face contortions; in brainless skulls; in limbless and headless bodies; here an arm, there a leg and close by, two booted and stockinged feet, still standing in their place but from which had crawled away the mangled body, leaving the red stains as the life blood gushed out.

Arkansas or Arkansasaw, as their own people mostly pronounce it, though a state of great fertility and rich in undeveloped resources, contained at that time a wretched population. The people were, as a class, ignorant and lazy. It was decidedly a land of corn dodgers and poor fiddlers. I wish I could render a little of the "Arkansas Traveler," a ridiculous song so popular in Missouri and elsewhere south, in those days:

Way daun in Aukinsaw, daun b'low, daun b'low;  
Whar they eat the bar meat raw, daun b'low, daun b'low,  
And the taters skin and a', daun b'low, daun b'low.

Referring to the kind of fare the Arkansas people liked best, they used to say that a true Arkansas breakfast consisted of "Three whiskey cocktails and a chew of tobacco."

From Arkansas Post we returned to Youngs Point, Louisiana, just above Vicksburg, where we remained during February and March, 1863. During the two months after our arrival there, we suffered greater loss than can ever be told. Amidst the incessant rains and the constant overflowing of the river banks, we were driven hither and thither in search of a dry spot upon which to pitch our tents; or in the expressive words of our leader, Sherman, "were compelled to roost on the levees when no

other dry spot could be found." The history of the regiment for these two months of February and March is a tale of sorrow. The health of many of the men was already undermined by a six months' sojourn in the malarial regions of the lower Mississippi and it seemed that but few could withstand the debilitating and enervating influences of this insalubrious climate.

The smallpox came now for the first time into our ranks. Scores of our boys hitherto stout and rugged, were prostrated past recovery and now lie buried in the narrow graves near where the hospitals once dotted that region, while others only recovered long afterwards, in the mountains of Tennessee and Georgia or on the sandy plains of the Carolinas. The ordeal of these unpropitious months was the more grievous because it had all the evils of the battlefield with none of its honors. A historian of the war says of this period:

Death was holding high carnival in every encampment. Acres of graveyards were soon visible in these most dismal swamps. The dying increased as the flood increased, till at length the dead were buried on the levee, whither the army had been driven. There they continued to be buried till, it is not too much to say, the levee was formed near its outer surface with dead men's bones, like the layers of stones in a work of masonry. When, after more than two months' stay in this vicinity the army moved away, it left the scene of its encampment the Golgotha of America.<sup>7</sup>

The army was a good place to study character. The men were thrown constantly together, and thus compelled to reveal to their comrades almost every act and thought of their lives. Any peculiarities soon became manifest, and sooner or later, the "true inwardness" of every man revealed itself. Whether selfish or unselfish; good-natured or ill-natured; peaceable or quarrelsome; hopeful or despondent; pious or profane, (in fact, mostly the latter); industrious or indolent; brave or cowardly. A great many people in this world are moody. Most civilized people have at least two suits of clothes, one for every day and one for Sunday. They seldom wear their Sunday suit at home.

I think it was Madame De Stael, that most brilliant and witty of all brilliant French women, who said: "The more I know of men, the better I like dogs." It is a common proverb, I believe, among women, that all husbands treat their second wives better

<sup>7</sup>Ingersoll—Iowa and the Rebellion. p. 159.



than their first, and all other women better than their own. Personally I do not believe it is true, but I do believe that a great many people make themselves unnecessarily disagreeable at certain times and in certain moods. This was especially true in army life. The men were huddled so closely together, had so many real causes of grievance, and so many more imaginary ones, that they often jostled each other without cause. What wonder if they became selfish and quarrelsome and troublesome when their rations were lean, their raiment thin, their comforts small and their duties hard. It was often difficult to harmonize conflicting interests. A boy in my old company, whose name was Orlando Searles, took it into his head for some reason, I know not what, for he was only sixteen years old, to call himself "Old Hackett" and very soon he was known as "Old Hackett" and always called "Old Hackett." "Old Hackett" was brimful of good nature and broad humor. He was the self-appointed peacemaker of the company. He was sure to find enough absurd, ridiculous or funny points in every quarrel and against every complainant to laugh both parties out of it. It was impossible to get mad at him or resist his sallies of wit. Though a "high private in the rear ranks," and not quite like Dickens' Mrs. Fezziwig, "one vast, substantial smile," yet "Old Hackett" as a peacemaker, God bless him, was worth his weight in gold.

Since the time when Charles Sumner made his masterly speech in the United States Senate in 1860, choosing as his subject, "The Barbarism of Slavery," denouncing its influence on character, society and civilization, the barbarism of slavery has been illustrated in a thousand forms. One instance that came home to me with great force occurred at the first capture of Jackson, the capital of Mississippi, just prior to the siege of Vicksburg. Having a leisure hour, I walked out to the State Penitentiary, whose doors that morning had been thrown open, all the convicts being pressed into the rebel ranks. One old white-haired man alone remained. Suddenly set free, and left there alone, after thirty years of continuous imprisonment, he seemed at a loss where to go or what to do. His intelligent and kindly face was attractive, and, approaching, I ventured some inquiries. This led to a brief history of the old man's checkered life from his own lips.

He told me that he was born and educated in Fall River, Massachusetts, and learned the trade of carpenter and joiner. In the year 1832, he went south to seek his fortune, working at his trade. Landing at Mississippi City, he soon found employment and boarded in a private family. Six months later he was caught in that invisible cord whose silver strands bind together kindred hearts, and became enamored of a young woman employed at needlework in the house. This woman, he said, was endowed with rare beauty and intelligence. Unfortunately, her otherwise aristocratic southern blood was tinctured with one-sixteenth African. In other words, she was a semi-octoroon, and a slave, though her complexion was as fair and pure as that of any woman in the town. To this woman he was plighted in marriage, and they started on their way north, through Alabama, making their way rapidly and successfully until he was suddenly prostrated by sickness. He urged her to go on and he would follow, but she resolutely refused. The delay proved terribly fatal to their plans and hopes. The trail had been found and followed, until as they were about escaping into the mountain ranges of East Tennessee where friendly hands would surely have helped them forward, they were overtaken. She was carried back into slavery, he never knew where, and he was thrown into jail, whence he was sent to the Alabama State Prison, for the crime of "Abducting a slave from her master." At the expiration of a twenty year term of imprisonment, instead of being released, he was turned over to the state authorities of Mississippi on a now twenty year old indictment, for the further crime of "Attempting to marry a slave"; and though he had the sympathy of both judge and jury, and was given the lightest sentence allowed under the laws of Mississippi, he was "sent up" for another ten years.

He completed his remarkable story in these touching words: "In three months more I should have completed thirty years imprisonment in these two penitentiaries for two offences, neither one of which would have been even so much as indictable in my own native state of Massachusetts."

Seeing that I had become deeply interested in his story, he requested me to go with him to a neighboring cell, where he took the half of a pair of broken handcuffs, which had encased



his own wrists, and asked me to keep it in remembrance of a heartbroken, homeless and now helpless old man. This little memento of that old man's sorrowful story I took from his hand, and shall keep as long as I live. As I looked into the face of the white-haired, but broken-spirited and penniless man, my blood boiled with indignation and I realized as never before the barbarism of slavery. And I shall never cease to reverently bless the Most High for the Emancipation Proclamation, which Theodore Tilton said "Bound the Nation and unbound the Slave" and of which President Lincoln himself afterwards said: "It is the central act of my administration and the great event of the Nineteenth Century."<sup>8</sup>

I shall not soon forget the dismay of 300 factory girls in a large cotton mill on the banks of the Pearl River in Jackson at General Sherman's order to "clear the building and set it on fire." The factory contained looms enough to employ 300 girls, weaving a heavy-bodied, light-colored cotton jean. General Sherman had good evidence that they were manufacturing cloth for rebel uniforms, and hence the order to burn that sent such consternation among these poor girls, many of whom ran back and forth in wild excitement at being so suddenly thrown out of employment. All too many of them no doubt were thus left both penniless and homeless—one might almost say of girls in their situation, hopeless. The order was probably necessary, and yet to these 300 factory girls it seemed only harsh. It was harsh. And, indeed, such must ever be nearly all the concomitants of cruel war, especially of civil war.

That night we left the Capital to march upon Vicksburg, but before starting I found time to go over to the Confederate Hotel for supper. At the head of the table stood the good-natured landlord, a fat, old man, known as "Old McMackin," who, they said, had kept the same hotel under different names for near thirty years. He followed the odd habit of standing at the head of the table and calling out in a singsong, lazy tone the bill of fare, set to rhyme in some doggerel verses:

Here's yer jellies and yer jam,  
Yer veal cutlets and yer ham,  
Yer petatoes mashed, and yer squashes squashed,  
Yer peach pie and yer bread made o' rye.

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<sup>8</sup>Carpenter—*Six Years in the White House*. p. 90.

When asked why he continued such an absurd custom, he replied that it was purely from the force of habit; that when he first opened the house many years ago, it being the principal hotel in the capital city, he had at his table a good many members of the legislature, and that he found it necessary to call out the bill of fare because so many of his boarders could not read. The price charged for my supper was \$1.50, which I paid by giving the clerk a ten dollar Confederate bill handed me by one of my boys during the day, and received in change \$8.50 in United States currency.

The same landlord went to General Sherman for protection, as a "law-abiding Union man," which fact, the General quietly remarked, was manifest from the sign of his hotel, which was the Confederate Hotel, the sign "United States" being faintly painted out and "Confederate" painted over it. In the dusk of the evening, as we marched away, this "Confederate Hotel" also was seen to be in flames and by its lurid light illumined the whole city for miles around.

Forty-eight hours after leaving Jackson, we took position in the outer works which environed Vicksburg, having in seventeen days marched a distance of 225 miles, on about six days' rations. May 19, after severe skirmishing and a final assault, the regiment succeeded in getting a good position about seventy-five yards from the enemy's line of works, protected in front and flank by a semi-circular ridge the crest of which was immediately converted into a line of earthworks, supported on the right by the Twenty-sixth Iowa and on the left by the Thirtieth Iowa. Some difficulty was at first experienced in getting up supplies of ammunition and food, as no one could leave our position in daylight without exposing himself to the rebel sharpshooters, constantly on the watch. In a few days covered ways were constructed, which made the passage sufficiently safe.

On May 22, in line with the whole Army of the Tennessee, we went up to the assault. Our colors went down a few feet from the rebel works, after the last one of the color guard had fallen, either killed or wounded, and its dripping folds were drawn from under the bleeding body of its prostrate bearer. In the few terrible moments of this assault our regiment lost seventy-nine killed and wounded, or nearly one-third the number in action.



But this was not all. The assault failed; and we found ourselves lying in ravines, behind logs, close up to and partly under the protection of the rebel works. There we lay and were compelled to lie, till darkness gave us a cover under which to escape. Here again I pay tribute to those who fell: to Captain F. M. Kelsey, and Lieutenants Jacob Jones, Henry P. Wilbur and Edward Tyrell who fell while leading their companies to the assault; and to Captain F. S. Washburn who was mortally wounded at the head of the regiment. Our loss on May 19 was sixteen men; and when on the morning of Independence Day, the enemy came out and stacked his arms and colors on the works, our total loss in the siege was 121. "They slept an iron sleep—slain for their country." The same evening, July 4, found us marching away again toward the State Capital, where we took part in the siege of Jackson, now fortified and defended by the rebel Joe Johnston, who was soon put to rout.

The Fifteenth Army Corps to which we belonged almost from the date of its organization, always had faith in "Billy Sherman," or "Crazy Billy," as General William T. Sherman was often familiarly called in those days.

The "Stay-at-home Rangers" in the North might say what they would of "our Billy," but the boys of the Fifteenth Corps had faith in him. They believed he would fight—believed he would look after his men—believed he knew what he was doing—believed he could lead them to victory if anybody could. In other words, they believed him a man of brains, a man of heart, and above all else, a man of action. But they were also ready to do battle under any other fighting man. And at last our Fourth Division of the Fifteenth Corps did serve for two days and two nights under "Fighting Joe Hooker."

I must pass over a long and ever-radiant page of our history, from Vicksburg to Chattanooga, where we found ourselves on the night of November 23, 1863, at the foot of Lookout Mountain, cut off from the rest of Sherman's Corps by a broken pontoon bridge stretched over the Tennessee River, and were temporarily attached to the command of General Joe Hooker.

The first and only written order we had from Hooker was received that night: "Be ready next morning to move at six, and fight at seven." We were ready as ordered; but did no fighting

till the afternoon of the 24th. It was a misty, cloudy, murky day, and we were drawn up in line at one o'clock at the foot of Lookout Mountain, the sides of which, at this point, were exceedingly steep and rugged. We were ordered to advance. A more appropriate order would have been to ascend, as it was a feat of climbing rather than of marching. We obeyed orders as best we could, climbing up the steep sides and clambering over the huge rocks as they lay piled one upon the other.

It was a wild weird way that we went. It was a dark and dismal afternoon. The thunders of battle were rolling and reverberating about and above us. Away in the distance to our left, Sherman was deploying his troops and planting his batteries along the foot of Missionary Ridge. The closed ranks and heavy guns of Thomas were in the center; close up to which, on Pilot Knob stood General Grant, turning wistfully from right to left, in the vain effort to follow the movements of the two armies in the gathering mists. But we were crowding up the mountain side into the very muzzles of the enemy's cannon as they belched forth with flame and smoke their fiery missiles over our heads. The hoarse voice of command ordered "Halt." But the intoxication of battle carried our line steadily forward. On we climbed, still up the rocky heights, over fallen trees, through tangled thickets, into unexplored ravines, until we were beyond and behind a large part of the rebel host as they stood shivering with fear behind their breastworks, hastily constructed of cordwood, and sowing the unoccupied hillsides below thick with their harmless minie balls. There was nothing left for them to do but to surrender, stack their arms and march down where we had just come up.

At length as we neared the summit of this mighty "Bulwark of everlasting hills," the darkness of cloud and mist was made intense by the darkness of night, and we halted, resting upon our arms and sending a detail down for hard tack and coffee.

This battle has been immortalized by the genius of Benjamin F. Taylor, whose poetical and beautiful description is as follows:

Night was closing in and the scene was growing sublime. The battery at Moccasin Point was sweeping the road to the mountain. The brave little fort at its left was playing like a heart in a fever. The rebel cannons at the top of Lookout were pounding away at their lowest



depression. The flash of the guns fairly burned through the clouds; there was an instant of silence, here, there, yonder, and the tardy thunder leaped out after the swift light. For the first time, perhaps, since that mountain began to burn beneath the gold and crimson sandals of the sun, it was in eclipse. The cloud of the summit and the smoke of the battle had met half way and mingled. Here was Chattanooga, but Lookout had vanished!

It was Sinai over again, with its thunderings and lightnings and thick darkness—and the Lord was on our side. Then the storm ceased, and occasional dropping shots tolled off the evening till half-past nine—then a crashing volley, a rebel yell, and a desperate charge. It was their goodnight to our loyal boys; goodnight to the mountain.<sup>9</sup>

On the morrow as we again shouldered arms at early dawn to complete the ascent, we missed the music of the rebel shot and shell. The glittering sunlight, leaping from the crest of Missionary Ridge, away in the east, fell upon the Stars and Stripes again floating upon the summit of Pulpit Rock. We enjoyed a sublime view of the wonderful panorama spread out before us; a scene of varied hue and grandeur; of city and plain; of winding river and mountain range; a bird's-eye view of surpassing beauty of nature's own scenery from six different states. Our part of the great battle of Missionary Ridge on November 25 was a contest of legs rather than of arms; the rebels running to get away from us; we running to catch them. Having descended from Lookout Mountain early in the day, we were marched away over the plain to Ross's Gap, a fissure and roadway through Missionary Ridge, guarded by a detachment of infantry and artillery, which we easily put to flight.

Having been ordered to stack arms, our boys were strolling about when suddenly came dashing down into our midst a gay young officer in butternut uniform, riding one of Kentucky's fleetest thoroughbred horses. Before he could realize his situation, he was surrounded by a half-dozen bluecoats, with pointing revolvers, and ordered to dismount. He proved to be a son and aid-de-camp of the rebel General Breckenridge, sent down to reconnoitre. At this moment the signal officer on Lookout Mountain, four miles away in the rear, signalled General Hooker that a strong rebel column was starting along the crest of Missionary Ridge, with the evident purpose of driving us back. Our bugleman sounded the "assembly" and we were hastily formed

<sup>9</sup>Ingersoll—*Iowa and the Rebellion*. p. 530.

into line, over the crest of the Ridge, and ordered "forward, double quick."

From that time till dark we maintained a running fight, repeatedly striking and doubling back the head of the rebel column, and never once giving them a chance to form a sufficient line seriously to check our advance. That night was cold and bleak, and we were compelled to huddle about our scanty camp fires without either blanket or food until four o'clock next morning, when our previous day's combined dinner and supper at last reached us. I can this moment see all about me, as when I stood there years ago on that bleak November night, on the brow of that historic Ridge, those thickly-studded knots of shivering, hungry soldiers, good-naturedly recounting the incidents of the day. It was indeed a rough, bleak night but little we cared; for another great battle was done and victory won, and our lives were yet spared by the God of Battles, while the enemy was utterly routed and in full retreat. Our year's work mainly ended with this great battle. And to us who survived, it had been a glorious year; a year of great marches and great battles, a year of great victories; and crowned, at last, with the greatest victory of all. It began to give some promise and hope of a successful and speedy termination of this unholy war. And for this most of all, our hearts rejoiced.

Time utterly fails me even to make mention of the still later marches and countermarches, battles and victories, of this eventful year; of the soldierly celebration of New Year's Day in northern Georgia wherein every able-bodied man of my regiment attested his patriotism by promptly re-enlisting for another "three years or during the war"; of the consequent twenty days' furlough at home; of the honors received by the way, notably those bestowed by the patriotic citizens of Dubuque; of our prompt return, bringing 125 three year recruits; and I plunge headlong into the middle of the immortal Atlanta Campaign.

At Dallas, Georgia, on May 27, 1864, having lain upon our arms during the night, the regiment was attacked at daybreak simultaneously in front and flank, by a strong force, but handsomely repelled the charge and drove the enemy back. Next day, the 28th, we were again attacked, and this time with great force and fury. For two years we had been digging intrench-



ments; for the last twelve months almost continually, and since the beginning of the present campaign, incessantly day and night. As yet, not the first opportunity had been afforded to use them. So far we had only dug to go forward and leave our works in the rear. Now, suddenly, we had our reward for all this labor. At 4 p. m. without warning and as the rush of an avalanche, came the excited, confident, yelling thousands of the rebel Hardie's corps. They swept our skirmishers to the ground. Our men in the trenches waited to see their comrades come in from the front before firing, but they came not; and in their stead was the advance of the rebel line. That moment they were met by such a volley as scattered them from the spot. They tried to rally, once, twice and even a third time, but to no avail. All who could, betook themselves to places of safety, and as our skirmishers followed them out over the ground where so short a time since their lines were advancing, they found it strewn with the killed and wounded. That few moments' experience behind breastworks had taught us, and the whole Fifteenth Army Corps, such a lesson as was never forgotten; the lesson that no number of men could have driven them that day, nor ever afterwards, from behind a line of earthworks.

It was the boldest and fiercest attack that Johnston ever made upon us, and it miserably failed. From this place, we went to New Hope church, thence to Big Shanty. And from June 19 to July 3, we remained close up under the frowning brow of Kenesaw Mountain and within easy range of the line of batteries that bristled from its crest and belched forth upon our unprotected heads its periodical discharge of iron hail. Several of our men were fearfully mangled by shot and shell from their batteries.

This Atlanta campaign was prosecuted with the most wonderful energy. General Sherman was a man of extreme nervous temperament, and pushed forward every part of his army with the utmost vigor. The Confederate army was crowded back at every point, and followed up day and night. All our supplies were kept close up to the front, and even railroad bridges, burned by the rebels as they retreated, were sometimes replaced in a night.

Sherman tells a good story on a Confederate soldier who was on Kenesaw Mountain during our advance, regarding the railroad tunnel at Dalton, through which all our supply trains had to pass:

A group of rebels lay in the shade of a tree one hot day, overlooking our camps at Big Shanty. One soldier remarked to his fellows: "Well, the Yanks will have to git up and git now, for I heard General Johnston himself say that Wheeler had blown up the tunnel at Dalton and that the Yanks would have to retreat, because they could get no more rations." "Oh, hell!" said a listener, "don't you know that Old Sherman carries a duplicate tunnel along?"

From Kenesaw Mountain we went to Marietta, the Chattahooche River, Roswell Factory and Decatur, and were in front of Atlanta in time to take part on July 22 in handsomely driving back a strong rebel column and retaking a battery of Parrott guns that had just been lost on our left. We could but take honest pride in having the honor of helping turn the first success of the new rebel leader, General Hood, into a withering defeat before night, and of avenging the death of our own beloved McPherson.

I had been almost three years in active service in the army, and had taken part in some of the most hotly-contested battles of the war, before I ever really saw two hostile armies in the midst of battle. Soldiers as a rule had poor opportunities of witnessing those grand views of contending armies, pictures of which are everywhere so common. These views came not to those who stood at their posts in the front line, but to that other army of camp followers, newspaper correspondents, and the like, who always did their fighting at long range and who were able to send home glowing accounts of battle scenes because they were not in the fights. I tried that method of fighting for a part of one day, and had the usual reward, getting a splendid view of one of the great battles of the war, that of Atlanta, July 22, 1864.

It was the greatest battle of the Atlanta campaign and indeed the last great battle of Sherman's army. At daybreak on the twenty-second our army found the rebel earthworks in their front deserted. And many hoped it was a final retreat—that our Atlanta campaign was ended. It soon enough proved otherwise. It was only a sudden change of front, for a final struggle



to drive us thence. It was an adroit flank movement to strike us hard at a weak point. At first they met with real success. Our lines did, for the time, waver. Some gaps were made, through one of which the gallant McPherson rode hastily to his death at 11 A. M. as he was bravely trying to direct his army to resist the assault.

From that hour, the battle raged with the greatest fury in front of the Fifteenth and Seventeenth Army Corps. Line after line was formed along our whole front and hurled desperately forward. They were shattered and scattered and slain, and the staggering survivors could only retreat to again rally, with the reinforcements rapidly led forward. They, too, in turn, went down before the livid lightning of our steady lines. Yet other lines were formed, came wavering on, in great serpentine columns, only to meet the fate of those who had before been sacrificed in the insane hope of breaking our solid and serried ranks. It was an awful sight. Fifty thousand armed men confronting each other, counting not their lives dear unto themselves, if they could but stand, and withstand the terrible ordeal. The din of artillery, the roar of musketry, uninterrupted and increasing as the day sped was like pent-up peals of rolling thunder. It was a grand and awful scene. A sublime day in the history of the Republic, though in it many a brave man fell, to rise no more.

Will I be blamed if I linger a moment, even at this distance, to drop a tear over the sacred memory of a long-lost, but not forgotten brother? I know I may claim many in the great brotherhood of humanity and patriotism, and doubtless may even join hands with many an one whose heart chords are often made tremulous over the evergreen memory of a slain brother, father or affectionate son.

It was in the heat of one of those two terrible days at Atlanta, in the second one of which the noble McPherson with so many of his gallant men received their final discharge. Among them my own younger brother was ruthlessly slain, at the head of the old veteran Third Iowa, in a charge made by a part of the Seventeenth Corps. I sought the privilege of taking his remains away from this bloody field and to our old home for Christian burial. The hard fortunes of war denied me even this poor privilege. His body lies buried near the scene of his last struggle

and final sacrifice upon the holy altar of his country; near the spot where his spirit—the spirit of a loving brother, an affectionate son and a patriot soldier—took its flight.

I would not if I could, forget the last brave words that passed his whitening lips. He said calmly, but with bated breath: "My time has come at last, and I must go. But tell Mother I have done my duty and am ready."

And when the sun in all his state  
Illumed the western skies,  
He passed through glory's morning gate  
And walked in Paradise.

A soldier's grave he was not denied. A soldier's burial he was not refused; for we laid him away gently, "With his martial cloak around him." His grave yonder upon the stony hillside, under the tropical rays of the sun in central Georgia, may go ever undecorated until the echo of the final trumpet shall proclaim the general assembly of all the earth. And yet I do not forget that he was only one of the many, many thousand brothers and sons of Iowa, whose lives must needs have been laid upon the bloody altar.

On September 22, 1864, while our army was lying for a few days in and around Atlanta, it was my fortune to witness the return of some of our Union soldiers from the Andersonville prison pens. In that Atlanta campaign prisoners were being constantly captured on both sides. The men taken from our army had been for months hurried away to Andersonville. At last an exchange of prisoners was arranged for, and it was announced that the first trainload was approaching our lines. As the iron horse moved slowly along past our picket outposts and approached within the Union lines, the banks of the railway were lined with our soldiers to witness and welcome a trainload of their old comrades direct from the horrors of Andersonville.

And who shall depict the scene that met their eyes? Strong, stalwart, sun-browned men already inured to the hardest of hardships, in two short months reduced to literal skeletons, haggard, nerveless, spiritless, almost naked. Of hats and shoes next to nothing was left. Of coats, I need not speak, for they had none. Of the trousers and shirts that alone remained, and with which they vainly sought to cover their bodies from midnight chill and



midday sun, scarcely a garment that was not either measurably legless or armless. It was indeed an affecting sight, that long line of standing skeletons, almost naked. And yet when cheer after cheer from the ranks that lined either side of the slowly moving train aroused them to the fact that they were, at last, back again among their old comrades, the joy that shone from their eyes, beamed forth from their white faces, and otherwise manifested itself from their feeble actions, was a sight never to be forgotten. Some tried to hurrah, others to sing; some laughed, some cried; while in many more, the emotions were too deep for any utterance. And yet in every attitude and look were unmistakable evidences of the joy of deliverance from a living death; of an escape from loathsome tombs; of a resurrection to new life.

On October 4 we were again hurried off at "double quick" after the rebel General Hood, whom Jefferson Davis had recently placed in command of Joe Johnston's army with the hope of resisting and checking Sherman's further progress into the heart of the Confederacy. Hood had failed to keep us out of Atlanta. He now tried a bold scheme to force us back, by a flank movement intended to attack our lines of communication and cut off our supplies. We followed him rapidly back nearly 200 miles, through Marietta, Rome and Resaca, and across into Alabama and then again "about faced" and retraced our steps to Atlanta, Sherman telegraphing to General Grant, November 2, "I want to prepare for my big raid; I regard the further pursuit of Hood as useless. The best results will follow my contemplated movement through Georgia."

To which Grant's laconic answer was: "Go on!"

Before starting on his "big raid," Sherman issued a general order in which he said: "The army will forage liberally on the country during the march."<sup>10</sup> The General, himself, tells a story illustrating how well this order was understood and executed. Standing by the roadside a few days after the orders were issued, while his army was marching through Covington, Georgia, a soldier passed him with a ham on his musket, a jug of sorghum molasses under his arm and a big piece of honey in his hand, from which he was eating. Catching Sherman's eye, he

<sup>10</sup>Sherman—*Memoirs*. V. II, p. 175.

remarked *sotto voce* and carelessly to a comrade: "Forage liberally on the country," quoting from the general orders.

November 15 we started with Sherman's army on its famous "March to the Sea." In describing this remarkable trip and the manner in which we lived off the country as we traveled, often leaving more provisions in camp as we left it in the morning than the whole army had consumed, there only remains to copy from my daily journal, kept at the time, a few days' record:

*Sunday, November 13.* At daybreak we received orders to be ready to march at seven o'clock. We started promptly on time and marched through Atlanta and two miles east, a distance of sixteen miles. Saw Atlanta today for the first time, and it looks sorry enough in all conscience; but probably not half so bad as it will tomorrow. It still contains, after all the destruction of property, many fine buildings and even whole brick blocks.

It will be seen that we commenced this great march, as we did so many marches and battles in the war, on Sunday. Of the destruction of Atlanta, here foreshadowed, General Sherman's own record is as follows:

About 7 A. M., November 16, we rode out of Atlanta by the Decatur road, filled by the marching troops and wagons of the Fourteenth Corps; and reaching the hill, just outside of the old rebel works, we naturally paused to look back upon the scenes of our past battles. We stood upon the very ground whereon was fought the bloody battle of July 22, and could see the copse of wood where McPherson fell. Behind us lay Atlanta, smouldering and in ruins, the black smoke rising high in air, and hanging like a pall over the ruined city.<sup>11</sup>

I must omit the record of the intervening days, and quote the records of two Sundays more, only.

*Sunday, November 20.* Started at 6 A. M. our division and brigade in advance. Got a mile or two before daylight. Passed through Hillsboro, and marched direct for Macon, stopping at Clinton, twelve miles from Macon. Reached camp at 8:30 P. M. in the rain, having come twenty miles.

Pretty good Sabbath day's journey, twenty miles, beginning an hour before daylight, and ending two hours after dark, and in the rain!

It should not be forgotten that all arrangements for cooking and eating supper, preparing beds upon which to stretch the

<sup>11</sup>Sherman—*Memoirs*. Vol. II, p. 178.



weary limbs, details for guard duty and other precautions for the night's defense had to be made after we reached camp. And many a night the bed, made simply of rails, over which one-half the single blanket was spread, formed a most grateful protection from the damp, wet or muddy ground. There is a limit to physical and nervous endurance. Is it any wonder that many a soldier, under the terrible strain to which he was so often subjected, finally gave up in despair and fell out by the way, never to return?

Again I pass over six days' record, for a last quotation.

*Sunday, November 27.* At 7 A. M. were ordered out to tear up railroad. Went four miles, worked till one o'clock, when we were ordered to rejoin the regiment—marched till nine o'clock, twenty-two miles.

So the days, even the Sundays, came and went, filled with work, tearing up railroads till one o'clock in the afternoon and then marching twenty-two miles and reaching camp at 9 P. M. tired, hungry, sleepy men.

It was in the closing days of this march and during the actual siege of Savannah, Georgia, that our boys were permitted to enjoy their well remembered rations of rice in three courses. The first course consisted of rice taken from the immense rice mills of that region, all hulled and nicely prepared for our camp kettles; for we were in the midst of the finest rice-growing plantations of America. When this supply of hulled rice gave out, the boys resorted to the bins of unhulled rice as it came from the threshing machines, which was about equal to so much unhulled barley or oats. And again when this delicacy had all been served up, a lively skirmish line deployed out over the fields for a vigorous attack upon the little stacks and bunches of cut and gathered, but unthreshed rice, which still dotted most of those broad, level rice fields of southern Georgia.

I scarcely need so much as even to mention the three days on parched corn that filled in the necessary gap between the last of the rice and the first boxes of hard tack that finally reached us from the Atlantic coast.

Having found Savannah a comfortable place to spend the Christmas and New Year's holidays, we embarked on January 13 of the new year, for a short ride out over the broad Atlantic,

landing at Beaufort, South Carolina. Plunging thence into the interior of the state, it was not many weeks till we built our camp fires, and lay down to sleep at night beneath the domes of another proud rebel capital. Columbia lay upon the hillside beyond us. Her haughty citizens could look down upon us at night, and we could now come beneath their very windows, and almost upon their thresholds.

The next night after our arrival was spent in being ferried across the Broad River, two miles above the city, and by daylight of the seventeenth, the Ninth Iowa, together with the Thirtieth and Thirty-first, charged through a bayou, sometimes up to their waists in the mud and water, upon a force of rebels opposed to us, and drove them from their position. This sealed at last the fate of Columbia, and gave us the pleasure of marching, an hour later, at the head of Sherman's army, into this hotbed of treason and the foul nest where secession was first hatched.

That night our boys pitched their tents, taken from the rebel storehouses around the capitol, and from thence furnished guards for the night, to the southwest quarter of the city, until driven away by that terrible night of fire and flame, wherein a city of 30,000 souls was instantly consumed. Does any one yet ask how Columbia was burned to the ground? Echo will ever answer, "How?" to every soldier who witnessed the awful sheet of red flame that canopied the whole wide expanse of heaven, as far as eye could reach, and which is so vividly photographed, to this day, upon the imagination of every surviving witness of that awful scene, and the causes of which, when rightly read between the lines, give color and ground for the bold comparison of Sherman, the statesman-soldier, vs. Wade Hampton, the political poltroon.

A few more weary stages up through the Carolinas brought us to Bentonville, North Carolina, and Raleigh, its beautiful capital, where we well remember the one day of gloomy suspense, succeeding the first vague report of President Lincoln's assassination. Thence in a triumphal march we went up through the proud old state of Virginia, via Petersburg, Richmond, Fredericksburg, Mount Vernon and Alexandria, to Washington, where we took part in the great military pageant of May 24, in the streets of the National Capital. Thence, westward, over the



mountains, down the Ohio river, to Louisville, Kentucky, whence at last the fortunate survivors of our oft-thinned ranks, with their final discharge, came "Marching Home."

And thus we left the conquered South. We left it neither in hate nor in anger. Any truthful picture of the great war, from whatever standpoint we view it, must needs present a sombre hue. And yet, even this great cloud of defeat and destruction and death; of wasted energies and ruined hopes, wherein all had been staked and all lost; even this dark cloud has to me its silver lining. After its night of defeat, is there not arising in the South, a new civilization whose bow of promise already spans the whole arch of heaven? This "Sunny South," this "Dixie Land," the fairest upon which the sun ever shone, is even now giving assurance of a great and glorious future. If the close of our first century of national life testified to the blessed inheritance we have received through the Revolutionary War, may not the close of a second century testify to the still greater benefits of the war for the suppression of rebellion, in the existence, on this continent, of a nation of a hundred million freemen, controlled by the supremacy of an enlightened public sentiment, and built on the immovable pillars of a free church, free schools and a free ballot?

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