GLAZIER WILLARD W.

THREE YEARS IN THE FEDERAL CAVALRY

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Содержание

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PREFACE

I have for a long time intended the publication of this book, for I thought that such a work would not only be found interesting to the public, but would do justice to the brave men with whom it was my fortune to be associated during the dark hours of the rebellion. To serve them is and ever will be my greatest pleasure.

The remarkable features and events of our late Cavalry movements in Virginia and elsewhere, visible to me during the campaigns of the Army of the Potomac, were noted daily in my journal. From that diary this story of our raids, expeditions, and fights is compiled.

My descriptions of battles and skirmishes, in some cases, may seem too brief and unsatisfactory; to which I can only say that scores of engagements, which to the participants appear to be of vast importance, have very little general interest. On the other hand, however, it is to be regretted that where our gallant horsemen have done the most brilliant things, it has been impossible for me, in many instances, to secure reliable and detailed accounts with which to do them full justice.

Willard Glazier.

New York, *October 8th, 1870*.

CHAPTER I.
THE WAR FOR THE UNION. – CONTEST BEGUN

1861. – Enthusiasm of the North. – Washington Threatened. – Bull Run, and Its Lessons. – General Scott and the Cavalry. – Enlistment under Captain Buel. – Harris Light Cavalry. – Leaving Troy, New York. – Captain A. N. Duffié. – Drilling and Fencing at Scarsdale, New York. – Bound for the Seat of War. – Philadelphia. – Baltimore. – Washington. – Camp Oregon.

The eleventh of April, 1861, revealed the real intention of the Southern people in their dastardly assault upon Fort Sumter. The thunder of Rebel cannon shook the air not only around Charleston, but sent its thrilling vibrations to the remotest sections of the country, and was the precursor of a storm whose wrath no one anticipated. This shock of arms was like a fire-alarm in our great cities, and the North arose in its might with a grand unanimity which the South did not expect. The spirit and principle of Rebellion were so uncaused and unprovoked, that scarcely could any one be found at home or abroad to justify them.

President Lincoln thereupon issued a call for seventy-five thousand men to uphold and vindicate the authority of the Government, and to prove, if possible, that secession was not only a heresy in doctrine, but an impracticability in the American Republic. The response to this call was much more general than the most sanguine had any reason to look for. The enthusiasm of the people was quite unbounded. Individuals encouraged individuals; families aroused families; communities vied with communities, and States strove with States. Who could be the first and do the most, was the noble contention which everywhere prevailed. All political party lines seemed to be obliterated. Under this renovating and inspiring spirit the work of raising the nucleus of the grandest army that ever swept a continent went bravely on. Regiments were rapidly organized and as rapidly as possible sent forward to the seat of Government; and so vast was the number that presented themselves for their country's defence, that the original call was soon more than filled, and the authorities found themselves unable to accept many organizations which were eager to press into the fray.

Meanwhile the great leaders of the Rebellion were marshalling the hordes of treason, and assembling them on the plains of Manassas, with the undoubted intention of moving upon the national capital. This point determined the principal theatre of the opening contest, and around it on every side, and particularly southward, was to be the aceldama of America, – the dreadful "field of blood."

The first great impulse of the authorities was in the direction of self-defence (and what could be more natural and proper?), and Washington was fortified and garrisoned. This done, it was believed that the accumulating forces of the Union, which had become thoroughly equipped and somewhat disciplined, ought to advance into the revolted territory, scatter the defiant hosts of the enemy, and put a speedy end to the slaveholders' Rebellion. But the hesitation and indecision which prevailed in our military circles were becoming oppressive and unendurable, and hence the cry of "On to Richmond!" was heard from the Border States to the St. Lawrence, precipitating the first general engagement of the war. Our defeat at Bull Run was a totally unexpected disaster, which, for a time, it was feared, would chill the enthusiasm and greatly weaken the energy of the North. But though the South was much strengthened and emboldened by their victory, our defeat had its own curative elements: it taught us that the enemy was determined and powerful, and that to overcome him the ranks of the Union army must be filled with something besides three months' men, or men on any very limited term of enlistment. Other lessons were also gained: our men had formed some acquaintance with the citizens and the country; they had learned the importance of a more thorough discipline and organization; and those who had gone forth as to a picnic or a holiday, sat down "to count the cost" of

"enduring hardness as good soldiers." The nation discovered that this struggle for life was desperate and even dubious, and it was thoroughly aroused.

Under the military régime of General Winfield Scott, the cavalry-arm of the service had been almost entirely overlooked. His previous campaigns in Mexico, which consisted mainly of the investments of walled cities, and of assaults on fortresses, had not been favorable to extensive cavalry operations, and he was not disposed at so advanced an age in life materially to change his tactics of war. What few regiments of cavalry we had in the regular army were mostly broken up into small detachments for the purpose of ranging our Western frontiers, while a few squads were patrolling between the outposts of our new army, carrying messages from camp to camp, and pompously escorting the commanding generals in their grand reviews and parades.

But the Black Horse Cavalry of Virginia, at Bull Run, unmatched by any similar force on our side, had demonstrated the efficiency and importance of this branch of the service, and our authorities began to change their views. The sentiment of the people at large seemed to turn in the same channel, and a peculiar enthusiasm in this direction was perceptible everywhere. It was as though the spirit of the old knight-errantry had suddenly fallen upon us.

I was in Troy, New York, when the sad intelligence of the reverse to our arms at Bull Run, was received. This was followed quickly by another call for volunteers, and I decided without hesitation to enter the army. In accordance with my resolve I enlisted as a private soldier at Troy, on the sixth day of August, 1861, in a company raised by Captain Clarence Buel, for the cavalry service. To encounter the chivalrous Black Horse Cavalry, of Bull Run fame, it was proposed to raise a force in the North, and as Senator Ira Harris, of New York, was giving this organization his patronage and influence, a brigade was formed, whose banners should bear his name.

Originally the regiment to which my company was assigned was intended for the regular army, and was for some time known as the Seventh United States Cavalry; but the Government having decided to have but six regiments of regular cavalry, and as New York had contributed the majority of the men to the organization, we were denominated the Second Regiment of New York Cavalry, "Harris Light." This regiment was organized by J. Mansfield Davies, of New York, as colonel, assisted by Judson Kilpatrick, of New Jersey, as lieutenant-colonel. The men were mostly from the States of New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, and Indiana.

August 13.– To-day Captain Buel's company of Trojans was summoned together for the purpose of leaving for the South. Under a severe, drenching rain we were drawn up in line fronting the residence of General John E. Wool, when the old veteran delivered a most heroic address, which led us quite to forget the pelting rain, and prepared us for our departure. The boys then found a very pleasant shelter on board the Vanderbilt, bound for New York City. The day following all the New York State men rendezvoused at 648 Broadway, and were mustered into the service of the United States by Lieutenant-colonel D. B. Sackett, of the regular army. At four o'clock P. M. we were ordered aboard a train of cars, and told that our destination was Camp Howe, near Scarsdale, twenty-four miles north of the city, between the Harlem and East rivers. We reached the place just in time to pitch our tents for the night – an operation which was not only new and strange, but performed in any thing but a workman-like manner. We had every thing to learn, and this was our first lesson in soldiering.

Captain A. N. Duffié, of Co. A, a Frenchman and graduate of the military school of St. Cyr, France, is in command of the camp, and is to be the superintendent of our discipline and drill. He is undoubtedly well qualified for this position.

August 16.– This morning we commenced the inevitable drill on foot, as we are still without horses. We find this exercise very severe, and yet, in view of its great importance, we accept it with a good degree of relish. Our drill-master is thorough and rigidly strict, after the fashion of the French schools. We cannot avoid learning under his tuition. In the afternoon we were set to policing camp. This comprises the cleaning of one of the roughest farms in the country of stone. And as a remuneration to the owners for the use of this most unsightly of God's forsaken ground, we are

compelled to build stone fences – a very unpleasant introduction to military life, and an occupation which by no means accords with our ideas of a soldier's duties. But our hands toil with a protest in our hearts, and with a certain resolve that this kind of fencing must not long continue.

After a week spent in drill and the stone-wall enterprise, we were all surprised one morning with an order to fall into line to receive a Napoleonic harangue from Captain Duffié. So many and even loud had been our protests, and so glaringly manifest our rebellious spirit on the subject of fortifying a farm in the State of New York, that the captain undoubtedly feared that he might not be very zealously supported by us in his future movements, and so, like Napoleon, on assuming command of the army of Italy, he sought to test the devotion of his men. After amusing us awhile in his broken English, and arousing us by his touching appeals to our patriotism and honor, at length he shouted, "Now as many of you as are ready to follow me to the cannon's month, take one step to the front." This *dernier resort* to pride was perfectly successful, and the whole line took the desired step. We were then ordered to be ready to leave camp at eleven o'clock that morning, which was on the twentieth of August, assured that Washington, D. C., was our destination.

Our ranks were quickly broken, and all due preparation made for our departure. After marching to Scarsdale we took cars and were soon landed in the metropolis, through the principal streets of which our command passed to the Jersey City ferry. Without much delay we reached Philadelphia in the evening, where we were bountifully supplied with rations by her proverbially generous and patriotic people. True to the instinct of "Brotherly Love," the citizens are making arrangements such as would indicate that millions of Union soldiers might be fed at their tables. Here we spent the night. The next morning at 6.30 we were on our way southward. A brief halt was made in Baltimore, whose streets still seem to be speaking of the blood of the brave Massachusetts men. And as we march along, we can but recall the poet's prophesy:

> "And the Eagle, never dying, still is trying, still is trying,
> With its wings upon the map to hide a city with its gore;
> But the name is there forever, and it shall be hidden never,
> While the awful brand of murder points the Avenger to its shore;
> While the blood of peaceful brothers God's dread vengeance doth implore,
> Thou art doomed, O Baltimore!"

At 4 o'clock P. M. we beheld the dome of the nation's capitol, and, after landing, we were marched to the eastern part of the city, and pitched tents near Camp Oregon – named thus in honor of Colonel Edward D. Baker, who represented that Territory in the Senate of the United States, previous to his acceptance of a military commission, and who is now in command of the famous California regiment which occupies this camp.

CHAPTER II.
CAMP-LIFE AND ITS INFLUENCES

1861. – Our unmilitary Appearance. – First Equipage. – My Black Mare. – Good and Evil Influences. – News-Boys. – Mail-Bag. – Letter-Writing. – The Bugle Corps. – Camp Guard. – Guerillas under Turner Ashby. – Mounted Drill. – Laughable Experiences with Horses. – Southern Egotism. – Northern Fancies.

Drill! drill! and camp-police are the order of the day. Indeed we have nothing else to do, and to do nothing at all is the hardest kind of work. We expect soon to have some accoutrements to enable us to drill something besides our feet. Our preparations for war have commenced at the extremities; for thus far nothing but our heads and feet have been instructed. However, as we become better acquainted with this part of our duty we enjoy it better than at first, and we think we are making no very mean progress.

For some time after our arrival here, the Government was unable to supply us with uniforms, or weapons of war, and our appearance was far from being *à la militaire*, as Captain Duffié would have it. Coming as we did from colleges and schools, from offices and counting-rooms, from shops and farms, and some from no occupation at all, each with the peculiar dress he wore when he enlisted, and already pretty well worn out by our labors at Camp Howe and extensive travelling, we were a most unsightly, heterogeneous mass of humanity, and were a subject of no little sport to our better-clad fellow-soldiers. Especially was this the case when on a certain day General B. F. Butler reviewed the troops of this department, and we were made to appear before him and the multitude with our hats and caps, our coats and jackets, in nearly all colors, and many of them in rags and shags. We certainly had nothing to recommend us to the consideration of military men, except the courageous spirit that throbbed in our generally robust frames. But we were hopeful of better days, when we might have the appearance and equipage as well as the internal qualities of soldiers.

But the Government was so wholly unprepared for war, that our supplies were received very slowly. First came our uniforms, which every man donned gladly, and yet with a feeling that the last link to civil life, for the present, was severed, and that henceforth in a very peculiar sense we belonged to our common country.

A few days after our arrival at Camp Oregon, we were joined by the men who belonged to our regiment from other States. This added fresh enthusiasm, as well as new strength, to our ranks. However, there is as yet nothing in our *tout ensemble* to distinguish us from infantry or artillery, except the yellow trimming of our blue uniforms, whereas the infantry has the light-blue trimming, and the artillery bright red.

August 23.– To-day I am happy to make the following entry in my diary, namely: the regiment was furnished with sabres, Colt's revolvers and all the necessary appendages, consisting of belts and ammunition-boxes. Every man has now a new care and pride – to keep his sabre bright, and his entire outfit clean, that he may wear them with pleasure to himself and honor to his comrades. The morning and evening of the 24th were spent in sabre exercise, with which we were all delighted. This is the first development in us of the cavalry element as such, and we begin to feel our individuality. We desire to have this growth continue uninterruptedly, and in aid of it, in the early part of September, came quite a large installment of horses and equipments. This occurred while the regiment occupied a camp about three miles from Washington, on the Bladensburg road, which we named Sussex, in honor of Sussex county, New York, our colonel's native county. As the number of horses furnished us at this time was not sufficient to mount the whole command, the number received by each company was proportioned to the maximum roll of its men. After the non-commissioned officers of each company,

including all the sergeants and corporals, had drawn their horses according to rank, the privates were made to draw lots for the remainder – a performance which produced no little amount of excitement.

Several of our comrades were of course unfortunately compelled for several days to march on foot, though much against their wishes; for nothing could be more humiliating to a dragoon than to be trudging through the mud and dust, while his companions were gliding past him with their neighing steeds, on their way to the drill-grounds, or to any other post of duty. It was my good fortune to be the recipient of a beautiful black mare, only five years old, full of life and fiery metal, fourteen hands high, and weighing ten hundred pounds. She was a gem for the cavalry service, or any thing else, and a friendship was to grow up between us worthy of historic mention.

We are now fairly out upon the ocean of our new life, and are beginning to feel its influence. It does not take the careful observer long to notice the effects which outward changes and circumstances have upon the characters of most men. Indeed, no man remains unaffected by them; he either advances or retrogrades, and it is very apparent already among us that while soldiering does make some men, it *un* makes many. The very lowest stratum of life among us, such as represents the loungers in the streets and lanes of our cities, – those who have neither occupation nor culture, is amazingly influenced for the better by military discipline. These men now find themselves with something to do, and with somebody to make them do it. The progress is very slow, it is true, and in some cases exceptional, but this is evidently the general tendency.

But on the other hand, our regiment is made up partly of young men from respectable families, reared under the influences of a pure morality; but they find that the highest standard of morality presented here is much lower than they were wont to have at home, and they soon begin to waver. Thus having lost their first moorings of character, they start downward, and in many instances are precipitated to horrible depths.

"When once a shaking monarchy declines,
Each thing grows bold and to its fall combines."

Only a very few have sufficient force in themselves to effectually resist these evils. It must be remembered that the wholesome and normal restraints of virtuous female society are wholly removed from us. And from what we daily see around us we are convinced that a colony of men only, however virtuous or moral, would in a short time run into utter barbarism. No candid observer can doubt the teaching of the old scripture, that "it is not good for man to be alone."

Moreover, the friends and associates of our childhood's innocence, whose presence always calls forth the purest memories, are not with us; nor do we feel the almost omnipotent influences of the old school-house gatherings, of the church-going bell, and of the home-fireside. When you sever all these ties and helps to a moral life, and throw a man in the immediate association of the vicious, he must be only a little less than an angel not to fall. Here we are all dressed alike, live alike, and are all subject to like laws and discipline. The very man who shares our blanket and tent-cover, who draws rations from the same kettle, who drinks from the same canteen, and with whom we are compelled to come in contact daily, may be the veriest poltroon, whose diploma shows graduation at the Five Points, and whose presence alone is morally miasmatic. Consequently our camp is infested more or less with gambling, drunkenness, and profanity, and all their train of attending evils, and at times we long for campaigning in the field, where it seems to us we may rid ourselves of this demoralization. Hannibal's toilsome marches across the Alps and through Upper Italy only gave hardihood and courage to his legions, who came thundering at the very gates of Rome, and threatening its immediate overthrow; but a winter's camp-life at Capua left them shorn of their strength.

But then we have remedial influences even in camp, and we hail them with no little delight. Daily the news-boys make their appearance, calling out: "Washington Chronicle and New York papers!" They enjoy an extensive patronage. With these sheets many moments are pleasantly spent,

as their columns are eagerly perused. Then, following hard on the track of the news-boys, comes our adjutant's orderly or courier with a mail-bag full of letters, precious mementos from the loved ones at home. These messages are the best reminders we have of our home-life, especially when they are brim-full, as is usually the case, with patriotic sparkling, and with affection's purest libations. These letters have a double influence; while they keep the memories of home more or less bright within us, and at times so bright that as we read we can almost see our mothers, wives, and sisters in their tender Christian solicitude for us, they also stimulate us to greater improvements in the epistolary art. Men who never wrote a letter in their lives before, are at it now; those who cannot write at all, are either learning, or engage their comrades to write for them, and the command is doing more writing in one day than, I should judge, we used to do in a month, and, perhaps, a year.

No sooner are the contents of the mail-bag distributed, and devoured by the eager newsmongers, than active preparations are made for responding. Some men carry pocket-inkstands and write with pens, but the majority use pencils. Here you see one seated on a stump or fence, addressing his "sweet-heart" or somebody else; another writes standing up against a tree, while a third is lying flat on the ground. Thus either in the tents or in the open air, scribbling is going on, and the return mail will carry many sweet words to those who cannot be wholly forgotten. I suppose in this way we are not only making, but writing history. Camp-life then is not entirely monotonous.

THE BUGLE-CORPS

Sights and sounds of interest may be seen and heard at almost every hour of the day. The morning is ushered in with the shrill reveille, which means awake and arise. This is well executed by our bugle-corps, which Captain Duffié has organized, and is drilling thoroughly. All our movements are now ordered by the bugle. By its blast we are called to our breakfast, dinner and supper. Roll-call is sounded twice a day, and the companies fall into line, when the first sergeants easily ascertain whether every man is at his post of duty. The bugle calls the sick, and sometimes those who feign to be, to the surgeon's quarters, and their wants and woes are attended to. By the bugle we are summoned to inspections, to camp-guard, to the feeding and watering of our horses and to drill. A peculiarly shrill call is that which brings all the first or orderly sergeants to the adjutant's quarters to receive any special order he may have to communicate.

Thus call after call is sounded at intervals throughout the day, ending with "taps," which is the signal for blowing out the lights, and seeking the rest which night demands.

CAMP GUARD

Our principal duties now are camp guard and drill, which we perform by turns. Every morning quite a large force is detailed, with a commissioned officer in command, for guard duty. These form a line of dismounted pickets, or vedettes, around the entire camp. They are stationed within sight and hailing distance of each other, enabling them to prevent any one from leaving or entering camp without a written pass in the day-time, or the countersign at night. The rule is to have each man stand post for two hours, when he is relieved. This is the maximum time, and is sometimes made less at the discretion of the commandant.

We are told, as we perform this duty, that it is not very unlike the picketing that will be required of us if we are ever permitted to take the field which confronts the enemy. Indeed, this is picketing on a small scale. And our enthusiasm in this branch of our work increases, as we are almost daily in receipt of accounts of attacks on our pickets along the line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and the Cumberland Canal. It appears that a certain Colonel Turner Ashby, with a force of cavaliers (?) acting as guerillas, singly and in squads, is nightly endeavoring to sever our telegraph wires, to burn our railroad-bridges, and to destroy the canal, or fire at our men on the passing boats; and

not unfrequently we read of skirmishes in which several of our pickets have been either captured, wounded, or killed. Of course, we expect before long to face Mr. Ashby and his confederates, and we are preparing ourselves for it.

MOUNTED DRILL

But this we do specially in the drill. Recently the balance of our men were gladdened with a full supply of horses. Mounted drill is now the general order, and nearly all our time not otherwise occupied is devoted to this exercise. At first we had some exciting times with our young and untrained horses. One of our men received a kick from his horse which proved fatal to his life. Several of our wildest and seemingly incorrigible ones we have been compelled to run up the steepest hills in the vicinity, under the wholesome discipline of sharp spurs, until the evil has been sweated out of them. We find, however, that the trouble is not only with the horses, but frequently with the men, many of whom have never bridled a horse nor touched a saddle. And then, too, these curbed bits in the mouths of animals that had been trained with the common bridle, produced a most rebellious temper, causing many of them to rear up in the air as though they had suddenly been transformed into monstrous kangaroos, while the riders showed signs of having taken lessons in somersets. Some of the scenes are more than ludicrous. Horses and men are acting very awkwardly, also, with the guiding of the animal by the rein against the neck, and not by the bit, as we were accustomed to do at home.

We do not wonder much that the chivalrous Black Horse gentry have expressed their contempt of Northern "mudsills and greasy mechanics," and have made their brags that we could never match them. But then it is said that these Southrons were born in a saddle, and were always trained in horsemanship. They generally perform their pleasure excursions, go on their business journeys, and even to church, on horseback. They were therefore prepared for the cavalry service, before we had so much as *thought* of it. But let them beware of what they think or say, for *we can learn*, and it does frequently occur that somewhere in the experience of contending parties, "the first is last, and the last first."

We are improving rapidly. There is so much exhilaration in the shrill bugle-notes which order the movements of the drill, and so much life in its swift evolutions, that the men and horses seem to dance rather than walk on their way to the drill grounds, and both are readily learning the certain sounds of the trumpet, and becoming masters of motions and dispositions required of them. Like all other apprentices, of course, we occasionally indulge in the reveries of imagination, and we think we are laying the foundation of a career which is destined to be important and glorious. Be this as it may, we do not mean to be outstripped by any one in our knowledge and practice of cavalry tactics, and of the general manœuvrings of war.

CHAPTER III.
PREPARATIONS FOR ACTIVE SERVICE

1861. – First Advance. – "Contrabands," their Hopes and Treatment. – Union Ranks Filling Up. – Promotion. – Foraging and its Obstacles. – Scouting and its Aim. – Senator Harris visits the Command. – Ball's Bluff. – Recruiting Service. – Interesting Incidents. – Camp Palmer. – "Contrabands" at Work. – Drilling near Arlington Heights. – Colonel George D. Bayard. – Fight at Drainesville.

October 15, 1861. – The Harris Light broke camp at eight o'clock, A. M., and marched proudly through Washington, crossed the famous Long Bridge over the Potomac, and moved forward to Munson's Hill, in full view of our infantry outposts, where we established a new camp, calling it "Advance." For the first time our horses remained saddled through the night, and the men slept on their arms. To us this was a new and exciting phase of life.

Since our retreat from Bull Run, the Rebel army has made itself formidable on this line, and though no active movements have been attempted on Washington, we are, nevertheless, apprehensive of such a measure on their part. Hence our picket lines are doubly strong and vigilant, while every means is resorted to to ascertain the position, strength, and intention of our wily foe.

Frequently "contrabands" feel their way through the enemy's pickets under cover of the night, and through the tangled brushwood which abounds, and reach our lines safely. From them we gain much valuable information of the state of things in "Dixie." Some of them, we learn, were employed by Rebel leaders in constructing forts and earthworks, and in various ways were made to contribute muscle to the Southern Confederacy. They have strange and exciting stories to tell us, and yet it seems as though they might be of great service to us, if we saw fit to employ them, as guides in our movements. Their heart is with us in this conflict. They hail us as friends, and entertain wild notions about a jubilee of liberty, for which they are ever praying and singing, and look upon us as their deliverers. How they have formed such opinions is somewhat difficult to conjecture, especially when we consider the anomalous treatment they have received from our hands. The authorities have seemed to be puzzled with regard to them; and there are cases where they have even been returned to their former owners. And yet there seems to be an instinctive prophecy in their natures, which leads them to look to Northmen for freedom. Their presence in our camps becomes a sort of inspiration to most of us, and we only wish that their prayers may be answered, and that every chain of servitude may be broken. This sentiment at times breaks out in such as the following poetic strain:

"In the beauty of the lily Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make them free."

And as slavery was the cause, and not, as some say, the pretext, of the war, if the Union arms succeed, this "irrepressible conflict" and villanous wrong must come to an end.

Our confidence in the ultimate success of our arms is daily increasing. Since the first of August our ranks have been wonderfully swelled; and now regiment after regiment, battery after battery, is pouring in from the North, filling the camps of instruction, and manning the fortifications around Washington. Meanwhile, earthworks are being constructed on all the high hills and commanding positions; strong abatis are made of the forest-trees, and every thing done that can give the city an air of security, and the country round about the appearance of a bristling porcupine. Should this influx of troops continue, we shall be compelled to advance our lines for very room on which to station them. We have some intimations that our advance to this point to-day is preparatory to such a movement.

The day following our advance I was promoted to the rank of corporal, on the recommendation of Captain Buel, my appointment to date from the fifteenth. On the sixteenth our lines were advanced to Vienna, a station on the Leesburg Railroad, and on the seventeenth as far as Fairfax Court House, the Confederates falling back toward Centreville and Manassas without offering the least resistance.

FORAGING AND SCOUTING

We are spending our time mostly in foraging, scouting, and patrolling. In consequence of imperfect transportation, the cavalry especially is compelled to seek its own forage, with which, however, the country abounds. Corn is found in "right smart heaps," as the natives say, either in the fields or barns, and hayricks dot the country on every side. But there is a certain degree of scrupulousness on the part of some of our commanders with regard to appropriating the produce of the "sacred soil" to our own use, which greatly embarrasses our foraging expeditions, and exasperates not a little those of us who are needy of the things we are at times ordered not to take. It is no uncommon thing to find one of our men stationed as safeguard over the property of a most bitter Rebel – property which, in our judgment, ought to be confiscated to the use of the Union, or utterly destroyed. We do not believe in handling Rebels with kid gloves, and especially when we know that the very men whom we protect are constantly giving information to the enemy of all our movements, and using their property whenever they can to aid and comfort the cause of treason. We are too forcibly reminded of the fable we used to read in our schoolboy days, of the Farmer and the Viper. We are only warming into new life and strength this virus of Rebellion, to have it recoil upon ourselves. We hope our authorities will soon discover their error, and change their tactics.

Our scouting is on a limited scale, though it affords considerable exercise and excitement. Thereby we are learning the topography of the country, and making small maps of the same. We are traversing the forests, through the wood-roads and by-paths which run in every direction; strolling by the streams and ravines, and gaining all the information which can be of use to us in future manœuvrings. We scout in small squads over the entire area occupied by our forces, and often beyond; and, now and then, more frequently in the night, we patrol between our picket posts, to ascertain that all is well at the points most exposed to danger. The principal object of scouting is to learn the strength and position of the enemy, while the object of patrolling is to learn our own.

October 20.– To-day the regiment was honored by a visit from its patron, Senator Ira Harris. After witnessing a mounted drill and parade, which pleased him much, he presented us a beautiful stand of colors, accompanied by an appropriate and eloquent address. He made especial reference to the object of the organization, the hopes of its friends, and their earnest prayers for its future usefulness and success. He dwelt enthusiastically upon the work before us. At the close of the speech the command responded with a rousing round of cheers, expressive of their thankfulness for the banner and of their determination to keep it, to stand by it, and to defend it even with their lives. The occasion was one to be remembered.

BALL'S BLUFF

Another great pall of sadness has fallen upon our soldiers. The papers bring intelligence of our terrible disaster at Ball's Bluff, and the promising Colonel E. D. Baker has fallen, while gallantly leading his noble Californians. Discussions as to the cause or causes of that fatal advance and bloody retreat are going on throughout our camps. It does seem to many as though gross incompetency or treachery must have influenced the authorities having immediate oversight of the affair, and that our fallen braves have been needlessly immolated upon their country's altar.

"Big Bethel, Bull Run, and Ball's Bluff,

Oh, alliteration of blunders!
Of blunders more than enough,
In a time full of blunders and wonders."

But the boys are enthusiastic over the bravery of our nineteen hundred, who fought against a force more than twice their number, with all the advantage of position and knowledge of the country. All our battles have proven that our men can fight, and, though Providence seems to have been against us thus far, for reasons most inscrutable, we will not waver in our determination to dare or die in the contest. Our chief difficulties are not in the rank and file of the army, but in the general management of the forces, and we trust that ere long right men will be found to take the places of incompetent ones.

RECRUITING SERVICE

October 28.– To-day I was detailed by Colonel Davies to proceed to New York with Lieutenant Morton, on recruiting service. We went on to Newburgh, near the lieutenant's native home, where we spent a few days together, but on the first of November I was ordered to Troy, to act independently. I spent several weeks in this peculiar work, and with good success.

Though recruiting offices could be found on all the principal streets of our cities and villages, yet a good business was done by them all, such was the enthusiasm which prevailed among the people. War-meetings were frequently held, and addressed by our best orators. The press, with few exceptions, poured forth its eloquent appeals to the strong-bodied men of the country to range themselves on the side of right against wrong. Violence would be done to truth did we not mention, also, that the pulpits of the land were potent helpers in this work, by their religious patriotism and persistent efforts to keep the great issue distinctly before the people. Thus the mind and heart of the North were kept alive to the great problem of the nation's existence, and men were rallying to our standard. It was no uncommon thing to receive applications to enter our lists from young men or boys too young and slender to be admitted, who left our offices in tears of disappointment, unless we could find for them a position as drummers and buglers.

A single instance of enlistment under my observation might be mentioned, as it gives a specimen of the manner in which our work went on. Having taken passage on the cars one day from one point of my labors to another, I fell in with a young man who was on his way to college, where he expected to be matriculated the following day. His valise was full of books and other students' requisites, and his heart full of literary ambition. Attracted to me by my uniform, he soon learned my business, and, after a few moments of pensiveness, to my surprise, he told me to inscribe his name among my recruits. Then turning to a friend on board the car, he said, "Take this trunk to my home, and tell my mother I have enlisted in a cavalry regiment."

December 4.– To-day I returned from recruiting service, bringing with me our enlisted men who had not been sent previously to the regiment. I found the Harris Light occupying Camp Palmer, on Arlington Heights, the confiscated property of the Rebel General Robert E. Lee. On arriving in camp I found that the papers from Washington contained a letter of Secretary Seward, directing General McClellan not to return to their former owners contrabands in our lines. This order, when fully understood by our colored friends, will undoubtedly increase their exit "from Egypt," as many of them style their escape from bondage. The government will probably adopt measures to give these fugitives systematic assistance and labor, that they may be of use to us. Already I find that a goodly number of our officers have adopted them for cooks and hostlers, in which positions they certainly excel; and there is no good reason why we may not employ them as teamsters on our trains and helpers in our trenches. They are generally very powerful, and show signs of great endurance. Nor do we find them unwilling to labor, as we have been so often told they were. However, we do not wonder much that they have acquired the "reputation" of being lazy, for what but a thing or an animal could take

pleasure in unrequited toil? Now they have a personal interest, and take a peculiar delight in what they do for us. Their great willingness and ability to work for Uncle Sam or any of his boys, would indicate that they will become eminently useful in the service of their country.

From Camp Palmer the regiment had gone out to drill for some time; and here we continued through the month, generally occupying the large plain which lies between the Arlington House and the Potomac, and in full view of Washington. On this field Kilpatrick, Davies, Duffié, and others, began to develop their soldierly qualities, infusing them into their commands, and imparting that knowledge of cavalry tactics which would prepare us for the stern duties of war. We have recently been greatly encouraged by the movements of Colonel George Dashiel Bayard, of the First Pennsylvania Cavalry, who, on the 27th of November, while on a scout on the road to Leesburg, Loudon county, met a band of the Chivalry near Drainesville, with whom he had a spirited skirmish. The whole affair would indicate that Colonel Bayard is destined to be no mean cavalry leader. Cavalry regiments from most of the loyal States have been organized, and are now in camps of instruction. Occasionally they go out scouting, picketing, etc., and are thus preparing for the coming campaigns.

December 20.– To-day a brigade of Pennsylvanians, including two squadrons of Colonel Bayard's cavalry regiment, the whole force under command of General E. O. C. Ord, while foraging in the vicinity of Drainesville, were attacked by a Rebel force nearly equal in numbers, with General J. E. B. Stuart commanding in person. A lively contest followed, in which the Rebels were thoroughly beaten and driven from the field, losing, according to their own accounts, about two hundred and fifty in killed, wounded, and captured. They left twenty-five dead horses on the field, with the débris of two caissons, disabled and exploded by the well-directed fire of Easton's battery, which accompanied the expedition. The Rebels, who had undoubtedly come out for the purpose of forage as well as ourselves, having a long wagon train, retreated toward Fairfax Court House, with their wagons laden with their wounded. Our loss includes only nine killed and sixty wounded. Unimportant as this victory might seem, it caused an immense rejoicing in the Union ranks. It was a fitting answer to the calumny heaped upon us from both North and South, that our soldiers could not fight, and were no match for their boastful enemy.

CHAPTER IV.
THE ADVANCE TO THE RAPPAHANNOCK

1862. – "All quiet along the Potomac." – Preparations. – Army of the Potomac Moves! – Capture of the "Quaker Guns" at Centreville. – Return to Defences. – Guerillas. – Their Attacks and Stratagems. – The Bovine Foe. – Picketing; how it is done. – Sufferings. – McClellan to the Peninsula. – Virginia Weather and the People. – General Augur's Advance to the Rappahannock. – Lieutenant Decker's Bravery and Death. – Night Charge on Falmouth Heights. – Fredericksburg Surrenders. – How Citizens regard us. – Guarding a Train to Thoroughfare Gap. – Fight and Captures at Flipper's Orchard. – Shenandoah Valley. – The Fifth New York Cavalry, First Ira Harris' Guard. – Death of Turner Ashby. – Strange Cavalry Tactics. – Personal Bravery of Captain Hammond. – End of the Peninsular Campaign.

The winter was one of preparation, not of operation. Why we were kept "all quiet along the Potomac," until the announcement, reiterated through the press, elicited only disdainful merriment among our friends, was never satisfactorily explained. The month of December had been beautiful, the roads in excellent condition, the army well supplied and disciplined, so that nothing but hesitancy in our leaders stood in the way of army movements. The North and West, which had supplied myriads of men and millions of money, were becoming very impatient with such a state of things. This feeling was intensified by the fact that it was known that the enemy was tireless in his efforts to increase his army and to fortify his strongholds, while he was also gaining the sympathy of foreign powers, and, by means of blockade-running, was adding not a little to his munitions of war. The army shared largely this general discontent. "Why do we not advance?" was every where the interrogation of eager officers and men.

However, we were not wholly unemployed; for while we waited for reinforcements and cannon, as demanded by the general in command, and for the leaves to fall from the trees to facilitate movements in a country so thickly wooded as is Virginia, we were kept busy with the camp curriculum, namely, the drill, the guard, the inspection, and parade. General Lee's plantation, on Arlington Heights, and the surrounding country, was thoroughly trodden by loyal feet, as men and horses were acquiring the form and power of military life.

THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

But our quiet was to be broken by our grand advance, which commenced on the 3d of March. The Harris Light broke camp at three o'clock in the morning, and, with several regiments of cavalry, under the command of Colonel W. W. Averill, led the advance, the Harris Light having the position of honor as vanguard. We were ordered to move slowly and cautiously, which we did, on the main thoroughfare known as the Little River Turnpike, and, at four o'clock, P. M., we arrived at Fairfax Court House, having marched only about fourteen miles.

What was our surprise to find the place entirely deserted by the enemy, who had left the day previous with the design of retiring beyond the Rappahannock. This change of affairs seemed so sudden as to be full of mystery, and was wholly unknown even to our secret corps. We could not doubt but that this movement was performed in anticipation of some of our contemplated manœuvrings, of which the Rebel leaders are generally informed by their spies in Washington and all through our lines, even before they are known to our army.

Our march was resumed the following day at ten o'clock A. M., and early in the afternoon we captured the "Quaker Guns" at Centreville. The enemy had actually placed in the earthworks or forts which commanded the road, large trunks of trees, resembling cannon of heavy calibre, which frowned down upon us from the heights. Had it not been for the information we had received from contrabands on the march, that the enemy had evacuated, a report confirmed by the curling smoke which rose from various parts of the field, this formidable array of threatening cannon would have terrified us all, and greatly retarded our progress. Indeed, it was not till after the suspicious works had been thoroughly scanned with field-glasses that we were ordered to advance, when the strong position was carried without the snapping of a cap, or a sabre stroke. Chagrin was written upon every face. Not a sign of the enemy was visible, save the deserted remains of their winter-quarters, which fell into our hands.

A very brief halt was here made, and, hurrying our steps, we soon crossed the memorable Bull Run, and came up with the rearguard of the retiring army at Manassas Junction. Here we pitched into them, and kicked up a little dust on the road to Bristoe. This expedition, or wild-goose chase, was continued to Warrenton Junction, where General George D. Stoneman found the enemy in force, but returned without attacking them. Having loitered about these historic fields a few days, our whole force began to fall back towards its old position on the Potomac, establishing our advanced picket-lines, however, as far forward as Centreville, with Fairfax Court House as headquarters. Our line of pickets intercepts the Leesburg turnpike at Drainesville and extends to the Potomac, a distance of about twenty miles.

GUERILLAS AND BUSHWHACKERS

As guerillas and their brethren, the bushwhackers, infest the country more or less, picketing is dangerous as well as difficult. Between the Rappahannock and the Potomac lies a vast territory which abounds in creeks, marshes, deep, dark forests, with only here and there a village or settlement. A little to the west of this plain extend the Bull Run Mountains, with their ravines and caverns. This is a very fit hiding-place for mischief-makers. The guerillas consist mostly of farmers and mechanics, residents of this region, who, by some means, are exempt from the Rebel conscription. Most of them follow their usual avocations daring the day, and have their rendezvous at night, where they congregate to lay their plans of attack on the pickets.

They resort to every stratagem which a vile and savage spirit could inspire. Sometimes a picket is approached by the stealthiest creeping through the dark thickets, when the unfortunate sentinel is seized and quickly despatched by a bowie-knife, or other like weapon, which a Southron can always use most dexterously. When mere stealth cannot accomplish the task, other methods are used. For instance, on a dark night, a vedette, stationed by a thick underbrush, heard a cow-bell approaching him, and supposing that the accompanying rustle of leaves and crackling of dry limbs was occasioned by a bovine friend, unwittingly suffered himself to be captured by a bushwhacker. But the boys soon learned to be suspicious of every noise they heard; so much so, that one night a picket, hearing footsteps approaching him, cried out, "Halt! Who comes there?" His carbine was instantly brought to a ready, and as no halt occurred nor answer was made, a second challenge was given; but failing to effect any thing, he fired in the direction of the noise, when he distinctly heard a heavy fall, and then groans, as of somebody dying. The sergeant of the post, running up to ascertain the cause of the alarm, found that an unfortunate ox, that had been grazing his way through the forest, lay dying, with his forehead perforated by the faithful sentry's bullet. The incident caused considerable merriment, and the pickets were supplied with poor Confederate beef during the remainder of their term of duty.

But the attacks are frequently of a more disastrous character, resulting in the killing of men and horses, in wounds and in captures. The utmost care and strictest vigilance cannot secure us perfectly from depredations. Our general plan is as follows: The major part of the regiment or picket detail

establishes what we denominate the "main reserve" within a mile or two in rear of the centre of the line of vedettes, or at a point where their assistance, in case of an attack, can be secured at any place in the line, at the shortest possible notice. About midway between the main reserve and the picket line are stationed two, three, or four picket reliefs, so situated as to form, with the line of vedettes for a base, a pyramid, with its apex at the main reserve.

PICKET DUTY

The boys will not soon forget the long, dreary, dangerous hours they spent along this line. Here we find ourselves shivering around a miserable fire among the sighing pines (though in times of special danger we are not permitted to have even this slight comfort, for fear of detection), often compelled to sit or lie down in snow or mud, or to walk about smartly to prevent freezing to death. Sometimes, when much exhausted, we have laid ourselves down on the damp and muddy ground, which was frozen stiffly all around us when we awoke. Frozen fingers and toes are no uncommon things.

In this wretched plight we hear the summons to get ready to stand post. We go out upon our shivering horses, to sit in the saddle for two hours or more, facing the biting wind, and peering through the storm of sleet, snow, or rain, which unmercifully pelts us in its fury. But it were well for us if this was our worst enemy, and we consider ourselves happy if the guerilla does not creep through bushes impenetrable to the sight, to inflict his mortal blows. The two hours expire, relief comes, and the vedette returns to spend his four, six, or eight hours off post, as best he may.

Once, at least, during the night, we are visited by the grand guard, which consists of the officer of the day, accompanied by others, whose duty it is to make a thorough, though usually swift, inspection of the picket line. Most of our time is spent in this duty.

March 29.– Considerable excitement prevailed among us to-day, as Colonel Bayard was dispatched with a detachment of his regiment to repulse a dastardly raid made by some of General J. E. B. Stuart's men, on the house of a Mrs. Tenant, a Union lady, residing near Difficult Run, about six miles from Chain Bridge. Colonel Bayard reached the place a few moments too late, and the raiders succeeded in taking Mrs. Tenant as a prisoner, and making off with their prey.

For several weeks the main portion of our grand army has been sent by transports to the Peninsula, with the evident intention of moving upon Richmond by shorter land routes than by way of Manassas. This change in our plans of attack was probably known by the Rebels before they were matured at Washington, and we now understand why they so quietly evacuated their positions on our front.

General McDowell remains in command of the defences of Washington, with a force sufficient, it is believed, to give safety to the Capital, and to harass the Rebels who continue before us. With the departure of General McClellan to the Peninsula, our picket lines were withdrawn to Annandale and Falls Church, within a few miles of the fortifications of Washington.

THE ATMOSPHERE AND THE PEOPLE

April 4.– The Harris Light and the First Pennsylvania Cavalry were recalled from the picket lines and sent out on a reconnoissance in force, with a division in command of General McDowell. Our march led us through Fairfax Court House and Centreville, near which we bivouacked for the night.

Already, at this early spring time, a luxurious vegetable growth of green is beautifully carpeting the fields through which we pass and in which we halt. Flowers of great beauty and variety of hues and sweetness of perfume greet us on every hand. It would seem as though Nature were struggling to hide the desolations which war has made, and were weaving her chaplets of honor around the

graves of our fallen brothers. And it really seems as though Destruction himself had contributed to this lavish growth. Thus,

"Life evermore is fed by death,
In earth, or sea, or sky;
And, that a rose may breathe its breath,
Something must die."

On the fifth we continued on our march to Bristoe Station, on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, where we encountered one of the most furious snow storms ever known in this region of country. The wind which bore the snow was cold and cutting. It was a season never to be forgotten by those who were quartered in mere shelter tents, or had no tents at all.

So sudden are the changes of the atmosphere here that "no man knoweth what a moment may bring forth." Yesterday we sought shelter from the sun's heat under the budding trees, while grass and flowers and singing birds indicated settled weather. To-day the storm howls music through the bending pines, and snow several inches deep covers the earth.

We are thoroughly convinced that the character of the people here greatly partakes of the nature of these surroundings. Is not this the case everywhere? But we see it here more plainly than we ever did before. The people are fitful, and their spasms are terrible; and yet we find them at times to be as kind and hospitable as any we have ever found elsewhere. After one has witnessed their beautiful days, cooled with a gentle sea-breeze, which generally blows from about nine o'clock in the morning till six at night, and then their cool, calm evenings, he can see why there are so many lovely traits in the nature of the people. But if he experience some of their sudden and terrific snow storms and showers, when the thunder and the lightning are such that a Northerner feels that all the storms he has ever witnessed are only infantile attempts, he is inclined to extenuate, on mere climactic principles, the outbursts of wrath, and "fire-eating" propensities of the people. He who is gendered of fire and brimstone must have some vim in his composition. We believe this study is not unworthy the Christian philosopher and philanthropist.

The day following the storm, the sun came out warmly, and the snow suddenly disappeared, but left us in a bed of mud. The soil, naturally rich and tender, consisting of a reddish loam, trodden by many feet, and cut by the wheels of heavy vehicles, became almost impassable. But it has this advantage, that it soon dries. So the soil, as well as the atmosphere and the people, is suddenly changeable.

April 7.– To-day our expedition continued its march to Catlett's Station, a few miles south of Bristoe. General Augur commands the advance, which consists of a brigade of infantry and two regiments of cavalry.

On the eighth of the month a detachment of the Harris Light was ordered out on picket at six o'clock P. M., and we enjoyed a quiet, pleasant trip on this usually unpleasant duty. Here we spent a few days picketing, scouting and patrolling, and on the seventeenth we advanced from Catlett's in the direction of Falmouth, on the Rappahannock.

DEATH OF LIEUTENANT DECKER

Our march was rapid and lay through a country altogether new to us, which, however, presented no very interesting features. The Harris Light had the advance, and was followed by the Fourteenth Brooklyn. As our infantry comrades became foot-sore and weary, we exchanged positions with them, for mutual relief, until at last one half of the regiments were bearing one another's burdens. This incident paved the way for a strong friendship to grow up between us.

Seventeen miles were travelled quietly, when a sudden fire on our advance-guard brought every cavalry man to his horse and infantry man to his musket. Every thing assumed the signs of a fight. Kilpatrick, who was in command of the regiment, ordered his band to the rear. This precaution of the commander was no sooner taken than the vanguard, in command of Lieutenant George Decker, was making a furious charge upon Field's Cavalry, which was doing outpost duty ten miles from Falmouth. On the very first assault Lieutenant Decker fell from his horse, pierced through the heart with a fatal bullet. He was a daring young man, well formed, light complexion, blue eyes, and about twenty-three years of age. He was much lamented by his many friends. His fall, shocking as it was to the command, being our first fatal casualty, only seemed to nerve the men for bold revenge. And we had it. Like chaff before the whirlwind the outpost was quickly scattered, and the whole regiment entered upon its first charge with a will, a charge which continued for several miles with wild excitement. Picket reliefs and reserves were swept away like forest trees before the avalanche, and we fell upon their encampment before time had been afforded them for escape. Here we captured several men and horses, with large quantities of stores, and then rested our tired steeds and fed them with confederate forage. The men enjoyed the captured rations. It was near night, and as the sun disappeared the infantry force came up to our newly-possessed territory.

The cavalry was ordered to "stand to horse," and a strong picket was thrown out to prevent any surprise attack or flanking movement of the enemy. In the early part of the evening one of our pickets was surprised by the friendly approach of a citizen of Falmouth, who had come, as he said, "to hail once more the 'old star-spangled banner,' and to greet his loyal brethren of the North."

Such a patriotic and fearless individual among the white population of that section of country was a great rarity, and his protestations of friendship were at first received with some suspicion. He was, however, brought to General Augur's headquarters, where he gave satisfactory proof of his kind intentions, and then gave the General a full description of the position and strength of the enemy.

NIGHT ATTACK ON FALMOUTH HEIGHTS

A plan for a night attack was thereupon laid and committed to Bayard and Kilpatrick. Our instructions were conveyed to us in a whisper. A beautiful moonlight fell upon the scene, which was as still as death; and with a proud determination the two young cavalry chieftains moved forward to the night's fray. Bayard was to attack on the main road in front, but not until Kilpatrick had commenced operations on their right flank by a detour through a neglected and narrow wood-path. As the Heights were considered well nigh impregnable, it was necessary to resort to some stratagem, for which Kilpatrick showed a becoming aptness.

Having approached to within hearing distance of the Rebel pickets, but before we were challenged, Kilpatrick shouted with his clear voice which sounded like a trumpet on the still night air.

"Bring up your artillery in the centre, and infantry on the left."

"Well, but, Colonel," replied an honest, though rather obtuse captain, "we haven't got any inf – "

"Silence in the ranks!" commanded the leader. "Artillery in the centre, infantry on the left."

The pickets caught and spread the alarm, and thus greatly facilitated our hazardous enterprise.

"Charge!" was the order which then thrilled the ranks and echoed through the dark, dismal woods, and the column swept up the rugged Heights in the midst of blazing cannon and rattling musketry. So steep was the ascent that not a few saddles slipped off the horses, precipitating their riders into a creek which flowed lazily at the base of the hill; while others fell dead and dying, struck by the missiles of destruction which at times filled the air. But the red field was won; and the enemy, driven at the point of the sabre fled unceremoniously down the Heights, through Falmouth, and over the bridge which spanned the Rappahannock, burning the beautiful structure behind them to prevent pursuit. Quite a number of prisoners and various materials of war fell into our hands. Kilpatrick and Bayard were both highly complimented for their personal bravery on the occasion.

April 18.– This morning, at eight o'clock, General Augur took peaceful possession of Falmouth; and here, with military honors, the remains of Lieutenant Decker and about fifteen others, who fell in the late struggle, were interred. Later in the day, and after considerable hesitation, the mayor of Fredericksburg formally surrendered the city to the Yankee General, whose guns on Falmouth Heights commanded obedience.

A bridge of canal boats, similar to a pontoon, was constructed across the river, and we took possession of this beautiful, proud city. This was the first appearance of Yankees in this Rebel locality, and we were the subject of no little curiosity. Many of the people, who, by the misrepresentations of their licentious press and flaming orators, had been led to believe that Yankees were a species of one-eyed cyclops, or long-clawed harpies, or horned and hoofed devils; who had been deceived into the notion that President Lincoln was a deformed mulatto, degenerated into a hideous monkey, and that all his followers were of that sort, on seeing us, expressed great surprise and wished to know "if we were specimens of the Lincoln army." They had forgotten that our fathers fought side by side in our common country's early struggles, and that now we, their children, as brothers, ought all to sit unitedly under the tree of liberty which they had planted in tears and nourished with blood.

But it is painful to observe how the spirit of secession has blotted out the memories of past days and deeds, and filled their hearts with bitterness toward us. A few Union families in these parts, whose acquaintance we have made, assure us that their neighbors, who were formerly most hospitable and humane, have become, through this Rebel virus, incarnate fiends. To secede from the Union was evidently to secede from the God of virtue and charity.

April 25.– After spending a few days of tolerable quietness on the banks of the Rappahannock, with our camp near the Phillips House, Falmouth, a most lovely spot, we were to-day ordered out as escort or guard to a train destined for the Shenandoah Valley. Such a job is generally any thing but pleasant to a cavalry force, for the movement is altogether too slow, especially when bad roads are encountered. And in case a team becomes balky or gives out, or a wagon breaks down (incidents which occur frequently), the whole column is in *statu quo* until the difficulty or disability is removed. And so we are halting, advancing, halting and advancing again, with this monotonous variety repeated *ad libitum*, while the halts are often longer than the advances. But our slow motion gives us some opportunity to scout the country through which we pass, and to obtain any quantity of rations and forage for man and beast. By this means we are not compelled to consume much, if any, of the contents of our train.

On the twenty-eighth we reached Thoroughfare Gap, through which the Manassas Gap railroad finds its way over the Bull Run mountains. Here we met a force from General Nathaniel P. Banks' army, to whose care we delivered the train. We remained a few days to scout through the country.

On the first of May we started back toward Falmouth, but stopped several days at Bristersburg, a small town, where we spent our time very pleasantly, scouting through the country and living upon its rich products. Here we are very much isolated from the rest of our army. We seldom get a mail or receive any papers, except from rebel sources, and these are so meagre of literary taste and especially of reliable army news, that we dare not put much trust in their representations. However, we are satisfied from what we read, that our grand Peninsular army is making some telling demonstrations toward Richmond, and that the Rebel General Thomas J. Jackson, surnamed "Stonewall," since his famous defeat by General James Shields at Kernstown, near Winchester, is still in the valley.

May 25th.– We reached Falmouth to-day and took possession of our old camping ground in front of the Phillips House. We have but little to do except to graze our horses in the surrounding fields, and to recruit our strength. We also have the usual camp work, namely, policing, drilling, etc. This department is very quiet, though we hear of active movements elsewhere.

On the thirtieth we had a severe rain storm, with thunder and lightning, *à la Virginie*. The streams were greatly swollen, and mud was abundant, so as to retard movements before Richmond.

June 6.– The Harris Light crossed the Rappahannock and advanced six miles beyond Fredericksburg, where we got only a glimpse of some of Field's cavalry, who had not forgotten us. They kept themselves at a very respectful distance from us, and made themselves "scarce" whenever we made signs of an attack. For several days we bivouacked on that side of the river, and on the twelfth we returned to our old camp at Falmouth Heights. On the sixteenth we were again thrown across the river, and made a reconnoissance several miles south, without finding any force of the enemy.

Nothing of importance occurred until the Fourth of July, when the Troy company of the Harris Light, commanded by Lieutenant Robert Loudon, was sent out to celebrate this national holiday by a reconnoissance on the Telegraph Road, south of Fredericksburg. We left camp at eight o'clock in the morning, and soon came in sight of a detachment of Bath Cavalry, doing patrol duty. After following them for some time, though not rapidly, we halted a few moments, and they lost sight of us, concluding doubtless that we had retired. This was just what we wanted.

ATTACK AT FLIPPER'S ORCHARD

On the south bank of the Po river, about twenty miles from Fredericksburg, was a beautiful orchard, owned by a Dr. Flipper. This lovely spot had been chosen by our Bath friends for their outpost, their main reserve being a few miles farther south. On arriving at the orchard, with its luscious fruit and inviting shade, the squad we were still pursuing unsuspectingly unsaddled their horses, began to arrange preparations for their dinner, and to make themselves generally comfortable. Of this state of things we were informed by a contraband we chanced to meet. We then resolved either to share or spoil their coffee; so, moving forward at a trot until in sight of them, we swooped down upon the orchard like eagles. The surprised and frightened cavaliers fired but a few shots, and we captured twelve men and nine horses, and escaped with our lawful prey without having received a scratch. It was my good fortune to take prisoner Lieutenant Powell, the officer in command, and to receive as my own a fine silver-mounted revolver, which he reluctantly placed in my hand. It will be a fine souvenir of the war and of this Fourth of July.

SHENANDOAH VALLEY

Sometime in May Colonel Bayard with his regiment and a large portion of General McDowell's division were sent to the Shenandoah Valley to share in the shifting military panorama which was there displayed. With the removal of the Army of the Potomac to the Peninsula the Confederate authorities despatched General Jackson to the Valley, to threaten the upper Potomac and Maryland, thus making it necessary for a large Federal force to remain in these parts. General Banks was in command of that department.

After the battle of Kernstown, in which Jackson received the sobriquet of "Stonewall" and a sound thrashing, General Banks, who had set out for Warrenton, returned to the Valley, and pursued Jackson, but was unable to bring him to bay. The enemy's cavalry under Colonel Turner Ashby was frequently attacked by the Union Cavalry under General John P. Hatch. On the sixth of May, the Fifth New York Cavalry, First Ira Harris Guard, had a hand to hand encounter with Ashby's men near Harrisonburg, where Yankee sabres and pluck had established a reputation. A portion of the same regiment under Colonel John R. Kenly, at Front Royal, added new lustre to their fame, on the twenty-third of the same month, during "Stonewall's" flank movement on General Banks at Strasburg, and fought bravely during that memorable retreat to Maryland.

At this juncture of affairs, a division of General McDowell's forces, under General Shields, was dispatched to the valley to intercept Jackson, while General John C. Fremont was ordered by telegraph to the same scene from the Mountain Department. But unavoidably detained by almost impassable mountain roads and streams enormously swollen by recent rains, Fremont reached Strasburg just in

time to see Jackson's last stragglers retreating through the town. His pursuit was very rapid, though no engagement was brought about until the fifth of June, at Harrisonburg. Here Colonel Percy Wyndham, on our side, and Turner Ashby, now a general, on the Rebel side, distinguished themselves in the cavalry. Ashby was killed. His loss was greatly lamented by his comrades. He always fought at the head of his men, with the most reckless self-exposure, and for outpost duty and the skirmish line he left scarcely an equal behind him in either army. His humaneness to our men who had fallen into his hands caused many of them to shed tears at the intelligence of his death. Men of valor and kindness are always worthy of a better cause than that in which the Rebels are engaged; but their merit is always appreciated.

Upon the heel of this fight followed the battles of Cross Keys, and Port Republic, where Jackson eluded the combined Union forces which had been directed against him.

During this memorable campaign, a curious military *modus operandi* had been resorted to in the Luray Valley, in which the cavalry had made itself doubly useful. A small force of our infantry and cavalry were surrounded by the enemy on the south bank of the Shenandoah River, which was so high as to be unfordable. As a last resort the cavalrymen plunged into the stream, swimming their horses, and towing across the infantrymen, who clung to the animals' tails!

A striking case of personal daring in this Valley campaign, is worthy of record here. During Banks' retreat from Winchester, on the twenty-fourth of May, four companies of the Fifth New York Cavalry, under command of Captain Wheeler, were moving on the left flank of our retreating columns, to protect them from any attacks by the Rebel cavalry, which infested the wooded hills that lay along our route. Emerging from a thick wood, Captain John Hammond, who had the advance with eight or ten men, suddenly came upon a squad of mounted Rebels, and immediately called on them to surrender. However, they fled, firing as they went, but were closely pursued. Captain Hammond was riding a powerful horse, which he had taken from his home, and as his blood was up, he determined to capture one of the party at least, at all hazard. He soon came up to the hindmost, a strong man, with whom he exchanged several shots at close quarters, but without effect on either side, owing to their fearful gait through the timber and down a hill. Hammond's pistol became fouled by a cap, and the cylinder would not revolve. The Rebel had two charges left. Quick work was now necessary. Another spurring of his horse brought him within arm's length of the flying Rebel, whereupon he seized his coat collar with both his hands, and dragged him backward from his saddle. Holding firmly his grasp, both horses went from under them, and they fell pell-mell to the ground. Luckily Hammond was uppermost, with one hand at the enemy's throat and the other holding the band of the pistol with which the Rebel was trying to shoot him. As the two men were powerful, a fearful struggle ensued for the mastery of the pistol. Meantime up rode one of Hammond's boys, who, by his order, fired at the upturned face of the obstinate foe, the ball grazing his scalp and causing him to relinquish his hold of the revolver, when he was forced to surrender. Thus ended one of the roughest yet amusing contests of the war.

The prisoner proved to be one of Ashby's scouts, and the remainder of the party were all captured. But notwithstanding the personal bravery of our men, disaster and defeat had attended our operations in the Valley. Nor was this the only field of disastrous changes. On the Peninsula sieges had been laid and raised, terrible battles fought, won, and lost, and thousands of our brave comrades had succumbed to the impure water and miasmatic condition of the country. The rebel General J. E. B. Stuart had astounded every body by a raid around our entire army, cutting off communications, destroying stores, and capturing not a few prisoners. On the second of July this jaded army found a resting place at Harrison's Landing on the James River.

CHAPTER V.
POPE'S CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

1862. – Kilpatrick at Beaver Dam. – Captain John S. Mosby. – Return of the Raiders. – Complimentary Orders. – The Harris Light at Anderson's Turnout. – Rebel Account of the Scare. – General John P. Hatch, his Misfortunes and Justification. – Reconnoissances. – Battle of Cedar Mountain. – Hospital at Culpepper. – General Stuart in Close Quarters. – His Adjutant-General Captured. – Death of Captain Charles Walters. – Pope driven back and waiting for Reinforcements. – Kilpatrick's Fight at Brandy Station. – Waterloo Bridge. – Bristoe Station. – Manassas Junction. – Battle of Groveton. – Second Bull Run. – Chantilly and Death of Kearny. – General Pope resigns.

Our prospects as a nation were any thing but promising about the fourth of July, 1862. Our operations in the Shenandoah Valley had been very expensive and fruitless. The Peninsular campaign, which promised so much at its beginning, which had proceeded at so fearful a cost of treasure and blood, was pronounced a failure at last, and the great armies, depleted and worn, were well nigh discouraged. The celebration of the anniversary of our national birthday was observed throughout the loyal North in the midst of gloomy forebodings, and only the pure patriotism of governors of States, and of the President of the United States, gave the people any ground of hope for success. In the army changes of leaders were occurring, which produced no little amount of jealousy among the "stars," and upon which the opinion of the rank and file was divided.

On the fourteenth of July, General John Pope, having been called from a glorious career in the West, took command of the Army of Virginia, which was a consolidation of the commands of Fremont, Banks, and McDowell.

Before General Pope left Washington, he ordered General Rufus King, who was in command at Fredericksburg, to make a raid on the Virginia Central Railroad, for the purpose of destroying it at as many points as possible, and thus impede communications between Richmond and the Valley. This work was committed to our regiment.

July 19.– About six o'clock this evening the Harris Light was set in rapid motion almost directly south. By means of a forced march of forty miles through the night, at the gray dawn of the morning we descended upon Beaver Dam dépôt, on the Virginia Central, like so many ravenous wolves upon a broken fold. Here we had some lively work. The command was divided in several squads, and each party was assigned its peculiar and definite duty. So while some were destroying culverts and bridges, others were playing mischief with the telegraph wires; others still were burning the dépôt, which was nearly full of stores, and a fourth party was on the lookout. During our affray we captured a young Confederate officer, who gave his name as Captain John S. Mosby. By his sprightly appearance and conversation he attracted considerable attention. He is slight, yet well formed; has a keen blue eye, and florid complexion; and displays no small amount of Southern bravado in his dress and manners. His gray plush hat is surmounted by a waving plume, which he tosses as he speaks in real Prussian style. He had a letter in his possession from General Stuart, recommending him to the kind regards of General Lee.

After making general havoc of railroad stock and Rebel stores, we started in the direction of Gordonsville, but having ascertained that a force of Rebels much larger than our own occupied the place, we turned northward, and reached our old camp at midnight, having marched upward of eighty miles in thirty hours.

Some of us will not soon forget the ludicrous scenes which were acted out, especially in the latter portion of the raid. In consequence of the jaded condition of our horses it was necessary to

make frequent halts. To relieve themselves and animals, when a halt was ordered, some men would dismount, and, sinking to the ground through exhaustion, would quickly fall asleep. With the utmost difficulty they were aroused by their comrades when the column advanced. Calling them by their names, though we did it with mouth to ear, and with all our might, made no impression upon them. In many instances we were compelled to take hold of them, roll them over, tumble them about, and pound them, before we could make them realize that the proper time for rest and sleep had not yet come.

Others slept in their saddles, either leaning forward on the pommel of the saddle, or on the roll of coat and blanket, or sitting quite erect, with an occasional bow forward or to the right or left, like the swaying of a flag on a signal station, or like the careerings of a drunken man. The horse of such a sleeping man will seldom leave his place in the column, though this will sometimes occur, and the man awakes at last to find himself alone with his horse which is grazing along some unknown field or woods. Some men, having lost the column in this way, have fallen into the enemy's hands. Sometimes a fast-walking horse in one of the rear companies will bear his sleeping lord quickly along, forcing his way through the ranks ahead of him, until the poor fellow is awakened, and finds himself just passing by the colonel and his staff at the head of the column! Of course, he falls back to his old place somewhat confused and ashamed, and the occurrence lends him just excitement enough to keep him awake for a few minutes.

It is seldom that men under these somnambulic circumstances fall from their horses, yet sometimes it does happen, and headlong goes the cavalier upon the hard ground, or into a splashing mud-puddle, while general merriment is produced among the lookers-on. But as no one is seriously injured, the "fallen brave" retakes his position in the ranks and the column proceeds as though nothing had happened. We had all these experiences in one form or another in our raid, and on reaching camp we found that several men had lost their caps by the way.

The day following our arrival at camp the general in command issued his complimentary message, namely:

> *Headquarters Army of Virginia,*
> *Washington, July 21.*
>
> *To Hon. E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War*:
>
> Sir: The cavalry expedition I directed General King to send out on the nineteenth instant has returned.
>
> They left Fredericksburg at seven P. M., on the nineteenth, and after a forced march during the night made a descent at daylight in the morning upon the Virginia Central Railroad at Beaver Dam Creek, twenty-five miles north of Hanover Junction and thirty-five miles from Richmond. They destroyed the railroad and telegraph line for several miles, burned the dépôt, which contained forty thousand rounds of other musket ammunition, one hundred barrels of flour, and much valuable property, and brought in the Captain in charge as a prisoner.
>
> The whole country round was thrown into a great state of alarm. One private was wounded on our side. The cavalry marched eighty miles in thirty hours. The affair was most successful, and reflects high credit upon the commanding officer and his troops.
>
> As soon as full particulars are received I will transmit to you the name of the commanding officer of the troops engaged.
> *I am, Sir, very respectfully,*
> *Your obedient servant,*
> *John Pope,*
> *Major-General Commanding.*

The above order was received with great gladness by the boys of the Harris Light, and Kilpatrick had just reasons to feel proud of his brave boys and their noble deeds. As we had done so well in this branch of business, it was natural for the commanding general to be looking out for more similar jobs for us, and, indeed, they came.

July 24.– Kilpatrick was again launched out with his men on another raid upon the Virginia Central Railroad, which, this time, we struck at Anderson Turnout. However, we did not reach the railroad before we had surprised a camp of Rebel cavalry, with which we had a sharp skirmish on the south bank of the North Anna River. But having the advantage of the enemy, we defeated them, captured their camp, with several prisoners and horses. A large quantity of camp and garrison equipage fell into our hands, which we burned. Unfortunately for us we did not come just in time to take the cars, but we created an alarm quite as extensive as that which prevailed at Beaver Dam, on our former visit. The *Richmond Examiner*, commenting upon the affair, gave the following truthful rendering:

ANOTHER SCARE ON THE CENTRAL ROAD

"When the train from the west on the Central Railroad reached Frederick's Hall, a station fifty miles from this, it was met by a rumor that the Yankee cavalry had made another raid from Fredericksburg, and had possession of the track at Anderson Turnout, ten miles below Beaver Dam, and thirty miles from Richmond. The telegraph wire not being in working order, there was no means at hand of ascertaining the truth of this report. Under the circumstances the conductor, not choosing to risk the passengers and train, took an extra locomotive and ran down to Anderson's on a reconnoissance. When he reached this place he found the report of the Yankees at that point correct, but they had left several hours previous to his arrival. He learned the following particulars:

"At a quarter past nine A. M., just a quarter of an hour after the passage of train from Richmond, the Yankee cavalry, several hundred in number, made their appearance at the Turnout. Having missed the train, they seemed to have no particular object in view, but loitered about the neighborhood for a couple of hours. They, however, before taking leave, searched the house of Mr. John S. Anderson, which is near the railroad, and took prisoner his son, who is in the Confederate service, but at home on sick furlough. They also took possession of four of Mr. Anderson's horses. They made no attempt to tear up the railroad, having no doubt had enough of that business at Beaver Dam last Sunday. They did not interfere with the telegraph wire through prudential motives, shrewdly guessing that any meddling with that would give notice of their presence.

"Of the movements of our troops occasioned by this second impudent foray it is unnecessary to say any thing. The Central train reached this city at eight o'clock, three hours behind its usual time."

It is evident that we are greatly embarrassing the Rebel travelling public by our raids, destroying public property, capturing prisoners and horses, and gaining some valuable information. We have learned from contrabands and other sources that Rebel forces in considerable numbers are being transported westward over this route. Some grand movements are undoubtedly on foot.

We have received word that on the fourteenth General John P. Hatch, with all his cavalry, was ordered by General Banks to proceed at once upon Gordonsville, capture the place and destroy all the railroads that centre there, but especially to make havoc of the Central road, as far east as possible, and west to Charlottesville. For some reason General Hatch was too slow in his movements, and General Ewell, with a division of Lee's army, reached the place on the sixteenth, one day ahead of Hatch. Thereupon Hatch was ordered to take from fifteen hundred to two thousand picked men, well mounted, and to hasten from Madison Court House, over the Blue Ridge, and destroy the railroad westward to Staunton. He commenced the movement; but after passing through the narrow defiles of the mountains at Swift Run Gap, he felt that there was no hope of accomplishing any thing,

and returned. General Pope immediately relieved him from command, and appointed General John Buford, General Banks' chief of artillery, in his place.

After some months had elapsed, the following correspondence between General Hatch and his former command will partly vindicate, if it does not fully justify, his course:

Second Cavalry Brigade, Third Army Corps,
Near Fort Scott, Va., – 1862.

To Brigadier-General John P. Hatch:

General: The accompanying sabre is presented to you by the officers of the First Vermont and Fifth New York Cavalry.

We have served under you while you commanded the cavalry in Virginia – a period of active operations and military enterprise – during which your courage and judgment inspired us with confidence, while your zeal and integrity have left us an example easier to be admired than imitated.

We, who have passed with you beyond the Rapidan and through Swift Run Gap, are best able to recognize your qualities as a commander.

Accept, therefore, General, this testimonial of esteem offered long after we were removed from your command, – when the external glitter of an ordinary man ceases to affect the mind, but when real worth begins to be appreciated.

On behalf of the officers of the Fifth New York,
Robert Johnstone,
Lieutenant-Colonel, Fifth New York Cavalry.

To the Officers of the Fifth New York and First Vermont Regiments of Cavalry:

Oswego, N. Y., – 1862.

Gentlemen: A very beautiful sabre, your present to myself, has been received. I shall wear it with pride, and will never draw it but in an honorable cause.

The very kind letter accompanying the sabre has caused emotions of the deepest nature. The assurance it gives of the confidence you feel in myself, and your approval of my course when in command of Banks' Cavalry, is particularly gratifying. You, actors with myself in those stirring scenes, are competent judges as to the propriety of my course, when it unfortunately did not meet with the approval of my superior; and your testimony, so handsomely expressed, after time has allowed opportunity for reflection, more than compensates for the mortification of that moment.

I have watched with pride the movements of your regiments since my separation from you. When a telegram has announced that "in a cavalry fight *the edge of the sabre* was successfully used, and the enemy routed," the further announcement that the First Vermont and Fifth New York were engaged, was unnecessary.

Accept my kindest wishes for your future success. Sharp sabres and a trust in Providence will enable you to secure it in the field.
Your obedient servant,
John P. Hatch,
Brigadier-General.

August 5.– The Harris Light was again sent out on a reconnoissance to the Central Railroad, which we struck on the sixth, about ten o'clock A. M., at Frederick's Hall. The dépôt, which contained large supplies of commissary and quartermaster stores, was burned. The telegraph office was also

destroyed, with considerable length of wire, while the railroad track was torn and otherwise injured, principally by the fires we built upon it. In a factory near the station were found huge quantities of tobacco. The men took as much as the jaded condition of their horses would permit, and the remainder was wrapped in flames.

All this was accomplished without loss on our side. These daring and successful raids made Kilpatrick very conspicuous before the army and country. He was complimented by the general commanding both in orders and by telegraph, and his name became a synonym of courage and success. This gave wonderful enthusiasm to his men, and their devotion to him was unbounded. Wherever he led us we gladly went, feeling that however formidable the force or dangerous the position we assailed, either by main force we could overcome, or by stratagem or celerity we could escape. This gave our young hero a double power.

August 8.– To-day Kilpatrick was ordered with his regiments to reconnoitre in the direction of Orange Court House. He advanced by way of Chancellorsville and old Wilderness Tavern; but on approaching the Court House we found it occupied by a heavy force of the enemy. It is evident that the Rebel army is advancing with a show of fight towards the upper fords of the Rapidan, where, we understand, Generals Buford and Bayard are picketing. After ascertaining all we could about present and prospective movements, we returned to our old camp, having made a swift and tedious march.

BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN

On the ninth was fought the memorable battle of Cedar or Slaughter's Mountain, in which both sides claimed the victory. The Confederates certainly had the advantage of position, having taken possession of the wooded crest before the arrival of our advance; and they also greatly outnumbered the Union ranks. But their loss was nearly double our own, and nearly the same ground was occupied by the combatants at night, which each held in the beginning of the fight. The cavalry was not conspicuously engaged in this bloody fray, except such portions of it as were escort or body-guard to officers in command, and among these some were killed. The main cavalry force watched the flanks, doing good service there.

August 10.– At an early hour of the day the Harris Light was ordered to report at Culpepper Court House, and we were soon on the march. On arriving at our destination we found the place well nigh filled with our wounded from the battle of yesterday. It is estimated that not less than fifteen hundred of our men were killed and wounded, about a thousand of the latter having found a refuge here. The seventh part of the casualties of a battle, on an average, will number the killed and mortally wounded; the others claim the especial attention of their comrades. It is heart-sickening to witness their bloody, mangled forms. All the public buildings and many private residences of this village are occupied as hospitals, and the surgeons with their corps of hospital stewards and nurses are doing their work, assisted by as many others as have been detailed for this purpose, or volunteer their services. The Rebel wounded who have fallen into our hands receive the same attention that is bestowed upon our own men, many of them acknowledging that they are far better off in our care than they would be among their confederates.

These hospitals are all much more quiet than one would naturally suppose. How calmly the brave boys endure the wounds they have received in defence of their beloved country! Only now and then can be heard a subdued sob, or a dying groan; while those who are fully conscious, though suffering excruciating pain, are either engaged in silent prayer or meditation, or reading a Testament or a last letter from loved ones, and patiently awaiting their turn with the surgeon or the nurse.

In the most available places tables have been spread for the purpose of amputations. We cannot approach them, with their heaps of mangled hands and feet, of shattered bones and yet quivering flesh, without a shudder. A man must need the highest style of heroism willingly to drag himself or be borne by others to one of these tables, to undergo the processes of the amputating blade. But

thanks be to modern skill in surgery, and to the discoverer of chloroform; for by these the operations are performed quickly and without the least sensation, until the poor brave awakes with the painful consciousness of the loss of limbs, which no artificer can fully replace. Thus the skill displayed and the care taken greatly mitigate the horrors of battle. Men here are wounded in every conceivable manner, from the crowns of their heads to the soles of their feet, while some are most fearfully torn by shells. It had been thought that men shot through the lungs or entrails were past cure, yet several of the former have been saved, and a few of the latter. Indeed, it would seem as though modern science was measuring nearly up to the age of miracles.

We found that a large force of cavalry was concentrating at Culpepper, awaiting new developments. Reconnoissances are of frequent occurrence, and all of them reveal that the enemy is in motion, concentrating on our front. Our picket lines are made doubly strong, and the utmost vigilance is enjoined. Scouts and spies are on the rampage, and more or less excitement prevails everywhere.

IMPORTANT CAVALRY MOVEMENTS

August 16.– To-day a small detachment of cavalry under Colonel Broadhead, of the First Michigan Cavalry, was despatched on a scout in the direction of Louisa Court House. Having penetrated to within the enemy's lines, and not far from the Court House, they made a swift descent upon a suspicious looking house, which proved to be General Stuart's headquarters. The general barely escaped through a back door, as it were "by the skin of his teeth," leaving a part of his wardrobe behind him. His belt fell into our hands, and several very important despatches from General Lee. Stuart's adjutant-general was found concealed in the house and captured. General Pope, in his official reports, speaks of this affair as follows:

"The cavalry expedition sent out on the sixteenth in the direction of Louisa Court House, captured the adjutant-general of General Stuart, and was very near capturing that officer himself. Among the papers taken was an autograph letter of General Robert E. Lee to General Stuart, dated Gordonsville, August fifteenth, which made manifest to me the disposition and force of the enemy and their determination to overwhelm the army under my command before it could be reënforced by any portion of the Army of the Potomac."

Had it not been for the timely discovery of this Rebel order, General Pope's army, only a handful to the multitudes which were gathering against him from the defences of Richmond, would have been flanked and probably annihilated. Assured, however, that reënforcements from McClellan's army could certainly reach him before long, General Pope held his advanced position to the last, our pickets guarding the fords of the Rapidan. On the eighteenth, the entire force of cavalry relieved the infantry pickets, and evident preparations were being made for a retreat. On the day following a sharp skirmish took place with Rebel cavalry which appeared across the narrow, rapid river. In this engagement Captain Charles Walters, of the Harris Light, was killed, and his remains were interred at midnight just as orders were received to retreat on the road to Culpepper.

The cavalry under General Bayard is acting as rear guard to our retreating columns. Stuart's cavalry, with whom we are engaged at almost every step, is vanguard of the Rebel army, which is advancing as rapidly as possible. The prospect before us is exceedingly dark. Nothing is more discouraging to a soldier than to be compelled to retreat, especially under a general whose first order on assuming command contained the following utterances:

"Meantime, I desire you to dismiss from your minds certain phrases which I am sorry to find much in vogue among you.

"I hear constantly of taking strong positions and holding them – of lines of retreat and of bases of supplies. Let us discard such ideas.

"The strongest position a soldier should desire to occupy is one from which he can most easily advance against the enemy.

"Let us study the probable lines of retreat of our opponents, and leave our own to take care of themselves. Let us look before, and not behind. Success and glory are in the advance. Disaster and shame lurk in the rear."

We all felt that the moment we begin to turn our backs to the enemy, that moment we acknowledge ourselves either outgeneraled or whipped, a thing most disheartening, and to which pride never easily condescends. Our only hope was based on early reënforcements. Should these fail us we saw nothing but defeat and disaster in our path.

August 20.– While our cavalry forces were feeding their horses on the large plains near Brandy Station, about six o'clock this morning, a heavy column of Stuart's cavalry was discovered, approaching from the direction of Culpepper. Kilpatrick was ordered to attack and check this advance, which he did in a spirited manner. The Harris Light added fresh laurels to its already famous record, and made Brandy Station memorable in the annals of cavalry conflicts. Stuart's advance was not only retarded, but diverted; and it was made our business to watch closely his future movements.

On the twenty-first we reached Freeman's Ford, on the Rappahannock, which we picketed, preventing the enemy from effecting a crossing. As the fords of the river were generally heavily guarded up to this point, the enemy kept moving up the stream toward our right, evidently designing to make a flank movement upon us.

On the twenty-second a notable cavalry engagement, with light artillery, took place at Waterloo Bridge. During this fight a Rebel shell took effect in our ranks, killing instantly the three horses ridden by the three officers of the same company, dismounting the braves very unceremoniously, but injuring no one seriously. Through the darkness of the night following, Stuart, with about fifteen hundred picked cavalry, effected a crossing of the river, and after making quite a *détour* via Warrenton, came down unperceived through the intense darkness and the falling rain upon General Pope's headquarters near Catlett's Station. He captured the general's field quartermaster and many important documents, made great havoc among the guards, horses, and wagons, and finally escaped, without injury to himself, with about three hundred prisoners, and considerable private baggage taken from the train. His victory was indeed a cheap one, but we all felt its disgrace, which the darkness to some extent explained, but did not fully excuse.

August 23.– A severe contest occurred to-day at Sulphur Springs. The enemy is pressing us hard at every crossing of the river, and continues to move towards our right. Skirmishing occurs at nearly every hour of the day and night, occasioning more or less loss of life. Yesterday in a skirmish led by General Sigel, who had crossed the river, General Bohlen was killed, and our forces driven back to the north side of the river. While this manœuvring was going on along the Rappahannock, General Lee had despatched Stonewall Jackson, to pass around our right, which he did by crossing about four miles above Waterloo, and, on the twenty-fifth, he struck our forces at Bristoe Station, where a severe contest took place, the losses in killed and wounded being heavy on both sides. But the enemy was successful in taking possession of the railroad; and in the evening a portion of Stuart's cavalry, strengthened by two regiments of infantry, advanced to Manassas Junction, where they surprised and charged our guards, capturing many prisoners, also ten locomotives, seven trains loaded with immense quantities of stores, horses, tents, and eight cannon. They destroyed what they could not take away. The Rebel General Ewell, having followed closely in the track of Jackson, also came upon the railroad in rear of General Pope's army.

Our commander, greatly astonished at this embarrassing juncture of affairs, began to make the best disposition of his forces, to extricate himself from the toils that had been carefully laid for him; still hoping that new forces would come to his aid from McClellan's army via Alexandria. But "hope deferred made his heart sick," and he was compelled to encounter the immense Rebel hosts, not only massed on his front, but also lapping on his flanks, and penetrating, as we have seen, even to his rear. The situation was critical in the extreme; and had not the available forces behaved themselves with undaunted courage and, at times, with mad desperation, the disaster would have been unprecedented.

Several unimportant and yet hotly contested battles were fought at Sulphur Springs, Thoroughfare Gap, Bristoe Station, etc., and early on the morning of the twenty-ninth commenced the battle of Groveton, by some called the second Bull Run. The Rebels were in overwhelming numbers, though driven badly during the earlier hours of the day; and had Fitz-John Porter brought his forces into the action, the victory must have been ours. The cavalry, though quiet most of the day, made an important charge in the evening. The carnage had been terrible, and the fields were strewn with the dead and dying. It is estimated that the casualties would include not less than seven thousand men on our side alone; and it is fair to suppose that the enemy has lost not less than that number.

August 30.– Our lines having fallen back during the night, the battle was renewed to-day on the field of the first Bull Run. But the fates were again against us, and, though not panic-stricken, our men retired from the field at night, until they rested themselves on the heights of Centreville. The enemy did not follow us very closely, not attempting even to cross Bull Run.

On the thirty-first General Pope expected to be attacked in his strong position at Centreville, but the enemy was too cautious to expose himself in a position so advantageous to ourselves, where the repulse of Malvern Hill might have been repeated. Quiet reigned along our entire line during the day.

KEARNY'S DEATH AT CHANTILLY

September 1.– Becoming aware that a flank movement was in operation, General Pope started his entire army in the direction of Washington. But his army had not proceeded far, before one of his columns, which had been sent to intercept the Little River Turnpike, near Chantilly, encountered Stonewall Jackson, who had led his weary, yet intrepid legions entirely around our right wing, and now contested our farther retreat. General Isaac J. Stevens, commanding General Reno's Second division, who led our advance, at once ordered a charge and moved with terrible impetuosity upon the foe; but he was shot dead, on the very start, by a bullet through his head. His command was thereupon thrown into utter disorder, uncovering General Reno's First division, which was also demoralized and broken.

Just at this critical moment, General Philip Kearny, who was leading one of General Heintzelman's divisions, advanced with intrepid heart and unfaltering step upon the exultant foe. This was during a most fearful thunder-storm, so furious that with difficulty could ammunition be kept at all serviceable, and the roar of cannon could scarcely be heard a half dozen miles away. The Rebel ranks recoiled and broke before this terrible bolt of war. Just before dark, while riding too carelessly over the field and very near the rebel lines, Kearny was shot dead by one of the enemy's sharpshooters. His command devolved upon General Birney, who ordered another charge, which was executed with great gallantry, driving the enemy from the field, and defeating the great flanker in his attempts farther to harass our retreating columns. But our success had been dearly bought. Two generals had been sacrificed, and Kearny especially was lamented all over the land. Of him the poet sings:

"Our country bleeds
With blows her own hands strike. He starts, he heeds
Her cries for succor. In a foreign land
He dwells; his bowers with luxury's pinions fanned,
His cup with roses crowned. He dashes down
The cup, he leaves the bowers; he flies to aid
His native land. Out leaps his patriot blade!
Quick to the van he darts. Again the frown
Of strife bends blackening; once again his ear
War's furious trump with stern delight drinks in;
Again tho Battle-Bolt in red career!
Again the flood, the frenzy, and the din!

At tottering Williamsburg his granite front

Bears without shook the battle's fiercest brunt.
So have we seen the crag beat back the blast,
So has the shore the surges backward cast.
Behind his rock the shattered ranks re-form;
Forward, still forward, until dark defeat
Burns to bright victory!

Fame commands
The song; we yield it gladly; but the glow
Fades as we sing. The dire, the fatal blow
Fell, fell at last. Full, full in deadliest front
Leading his legions, leading as his wont,
The bullet wafts him to his mortal goal!
And not alone War's thunders saw him die;
Amid the glare, the rushing, and the roll,
Glared, crashed, the grand dread battle of the sky!
There on two pinions, – War's and Storm's, – he soared
Flight how majestic! up! His dirge was roared
Not warbled, and his pall was smoke and cloud;
Flowers of red shot, red lightnings strewed his bier,
And night, black night, the mourner.

Now farewell,
O hero! In our Glory's Pantheon
Thy name will shine, a name immortal won
By deeds immortal! In our heart's deep heart
Thy statued fame, that never shall depart,
Shall tower, the loftier as Time fleets, and show
How Heaven can sometimes plant its Titans here below."

General Pope, during all the day, and most of the night, hastened his retreat, and on the second of September, his broken and demoralized columns found rest and rations within the fortifications which guard the approaches to Washington. Thus ended General Pope's brief and trying career as commander of the Army of Virginia. Here he resigned his command, and was succeeded by General McClellan.

CHAPTER VI.
REBEL INVASION OF MARYLAND

1863. – Result of Pope's Campaign. – Best and Recruit at Hall's Hill. – "My Maryland: " Its Invasion. – Offensive Policy of the Rebellion. – Pennsylvania and the Whole Country Aroused. – Battle of South Mountain. – Harper's Ferry. – Colonel Miles. – His Treachery and Death. – Bloody Battle of Antietam. – Drilling Recruits. – The Harris Light again at the Front. – At Chantilly. – Sudley Church. – Leesburg. – McClellan again Relieved from Command.

By the almost continual fighting of General Pope's campaign, our ranks had been greatly depleted. Of the cavalry in general one correspondent makes the following remark: "They picket our outposts, scout the whole country for information, open our fights, cover our retreats, or clear up and finish our victories, as the case may be. In short, they are never idle, and rarely find rest for either men or horses." We had felt the influence of this wear and tear so sadly, that our once full and noble regiment was now reduced to about three hundred and fifty men, scarcely one third of our original number. Nearly every regiment of cavalry which had participated in the misfortunes of the campaign, had suffered a like decimation. To replenish our weakened ranks and to infuse new vigor and discipline into the various commands, became a question of no little moment. Consequently a large number of regiments, under the direct supervision of General Bayard, were ordered to Hall's Hill, about ten miles from Washington, where we established camps of instruction and drill.

During the disasters of the Peninsular campaign, and the subsequent defeats and retreats from the Rapidan to the Potomac, the country had awakened to the importance of increasing the army by new organizations, and of filling up the broken ranks by fresh levies of recruits. This feeling was greatly intensified by the exposure of Washington to the victorious and advancing enemy, and by the invasions of Northern soil, which the triumphs of the Rebellion made imminent. Hence multitudes of recruits were pouring into Washington principally, and into other places, gladly donning the uniform, and eager to learn the duties, of the soldier. Camps of instruction were, of course, necessary. And as the attention of young men was turning very favorably to the cavalry service, our camps at Hall's Hill were the scenes of daily arrivals of fine specimens of patriots, whose hands were warmly grasped by us; and gladly we initiated them into the mysteries of this new science. We were not a little elated at the epithet of "Veteran," which these recruits lavished upon us.

The experiences and labors of our old camps "Oregon" and "Sussex" were repeated with somewhat of new combinations and interests, as we sought to prepare ourselves and others more thoroughly than before to meet the foe in coming campaigns.

We had scarcely reached our new camps and entered upon our new labors, when we learned that General Lee was marching his confident hosts into Maryland. This movement at first was regarded as a feint only, with the intention of uncovering Washington; but as column after column was known to have crossed the Potomac, and to be advancing through the State with more or less rapidity, the tocsin of alarm was sounded everywhere, and a general movement was made to repel the invaders. Pennsylvania was thoroughly aroused, and her loyal and true governor issued a proclamation calling upon all the able-bodied men of the Commonwealth to organize for defence. The militia promptly responded to the call, and military preparations were going on, not only in the old Keystone State, but throughout the land.

Up to this time the attitude of the Rebels had been defensive, but their recent great victories had led them to change their tactics, and thinking that ultimate success was almost within their grasp, they now assumed the offensive policy. Aside from this consideration they doubtless hoped to awaken in the Border States a sympathy and an enthusiasm on their behalf, which thus far they had failed to

create; and that their brilliant march northward would not only carry a strong political influence, but that their ranks would be greatly swollen by accessions of recruits from those States. This indication of Rebel thought is evidently found in the address which General Lee issued to the people of Maryland on the eighth day of September. In it are found the following sentences:

"The people of the Confederate States have long watched with the deepest sympathy the wrongs and outrages that have been inflicted upon the citizens of a Commonwealth allied to the States of the South by the strongest social, political, and commercial ties, and reduced to the condition of a conquered province. * * *

"Believing that the people of Maryland possess a spirit too lofty to submit to such a Government, the people of the South have long wished to aid you in throwing off this foreign yoke, to enable you again to enjoy the inalienable rights of freemen, and restore the independence and sovereignty of your State.

"In obedience to this wish, our army has come among you, and is prepared to assist you with the power of its arms in regaining the rights of which you have been so unjustly despoiled."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.