

BARRY JOSEPH

THE STRANGE STORY OF
HARPER'S FERRY, WITH
LEGENDS OF THE
SURROUNDING
COUNTRY

Joseph Barry
**The Strange Story of Harper's
Ferry, with Legends of
the Surrounding Country**

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PREFACE

The **real story** of Harper's Ferry is sad, and but little less wild and romantic than the old-time legends that abound in the long settled country around. The **facts** of the story we give with scrupulous **exactness**. We, ourselves, have witnessed many of the most important incidents narrated and, for what happened before our time, we have the evidence of old settlers of the highest character and veracity.

The **legends** are **consistent**, even though they may have no other claim on our consideration. They never have more than one version, although one narrator may give more facts than another. The narratives never **contradict** one another in any material way, which goes to show that there was a time when everybody around believed the main facts.

THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER I

Harper's Ferry, including Bolivar, is a town which, before the war of the late rebellion, contained a population of about three thousand – nine-tenths of whom were whites. At the breaking out of hostilities nearly all the inhabitants left their homes – some casting their lots with "the confederacy" and about an equal number with the old government. On the restoration of peace, comparatively few of them returned. A great many colored people, however, who came at various times with the armies from southern Virginia, have remained, so that the proportion of the races at the place is materially changed. Also, many soldiers of the national army who married Virginia ladies, during the war, have settled there and, consequently, the town yet contains a considerable number of inhabitants. The present population may be set down at sixteen hundred whites and seven hundred blacks. The village is situated in Jefferson county, now West Virginia, at the confluence of the Potomac and the Shenandoah, at the base and in the very shadow of the Blue Ridge Mountain. The distance from Washington City is fifty-five miles, and from Baltimore eighty-one miles. The Baltimore and Ohio railroad crosses the Potomac, at the place, on a magnificent bridge and the Winchester and Potomac railroad, now absorbed by the Baltimore and Ohio, has its northern terminus in the town. The Chesapeake and Ohio canal, also, is in the immediate

neighborhood. Within the last twelve years, the place has become a favorite summer resort for the people of Washington City and, from about the first of June to the last of October, it is visited by tourists from every part of the northern states and Europe.

The scenery around the place is celebrated for its grandeur, and Thomas Jefferson has immortalized it in a fine description composed, it is said, on a remarkable rock that commands a magnificent view of both rivers and their junction. The rock itself is a wonderful freak of Nature and it is regarded by the inhabitants with pride for its being a great natural curiosity, and with veneration on account of the tradition among them that, seated on it, Jefferson wrote his "Notes on Virginia." It is, therefore, called "Jefferson's Rock." It is composed of several huge masses of stone, piled on one another (although the whole is regarded as one rock) the upper piece resting on a foundation, some years ago, so narrow that it might easily be made to sway back and forth by a child's hand. It is supported now, however, by pillars placed under it, by order of one of the old armory superintendents, the original foundation having dwindled to very unsafe dimensions by the action of the weather, and still more, by the devastations of tourists and curiosity-hunters. It is situated on the south side of "Cemetery Hill," behind the Catholic church, the lofty and glittering spire of which can be seen at a great distance, as you approach from the East, adding much beauty to the scene. The first church building there was erected in 1833 by Father Gildea. In 1896 the old edifice was torn down and

a beautiful one substituted, under the supervision of the Rev. Laurence Kelley. There can be no doubt that **this** church, at least, is "built on a rock," for there is not soil enough anywhere near it to plant a few flowers around the House of Worship or the parsonage, and the worthy Fathers have been obliged to haul a scanty supply from a considerable distance to nourish two or three rosebushes. If "The Gates of Hell" try to prevail against **this** institution they had better assault from above. There will be no chance for attacking the foundation, for it is solid rock, extending, no one knows how far, into the bowels of the earth or through them, perhaps, all the way to the supposed location of those terrible gates themselves.

On one side, the Maryland Heights, now so famous in history and, on the other, the Loudoun Heights rise majestically, and imagination might easily picture them as guardian giants defending the portals of the noble Valley of Virginia. The Maryland Heights ascend in successive plateaus to an altitude of thirteen hundred feet above the surrounding country, and two thousand feet above the level of the sea. The Loudoun Heights are not so lofty, but the ascent to them is difficult and, consequently, as the foot of man seldom treads them, they present the appearance of a more marked primeval wildness than the Maryland mountain – a circumstance which compensates the tourist for their inferiority in height. Between these two ramparts, in a gorge of savage grandeur, the lordly Potomac takes to his embrace the beautiful Shenandoah – "The Daughter of the

Stars," as the Indians poetically styled this lovely stream. It will be seen, hereafter, however, that this usually serene and amiable damsel, like the daughters of men, is subject to occasional "spells" of perversity, and that, when she **does** take a tantrum she makes things lively around her. The former river rises in western Virginia and, tumbling from the Alleghany Mountains in an impetuous volume, traverses the northern extremity of the Valley of Virginia, forming the boundary between "The Old Dominion" and the State of Maryland. At Harper's Ferry it encounters the Blue Ridge, at right angles, and receives the tributary Shenandoah which, rising in the upper part of the great valley, flows in a northerly course, at the base of the same mountain, and unites its strength with the Potomac to cut a passage to the Ocean. This is the scenery of which Jefferson said that a sight of it was worth a voyage across the Atlantic, and no person with the least poetry in his soul will consider the praise extravagant. It is, truly, a sublime spectacle and imagination, when allowed to do so, lends its aid to the really wonderful sublimity of the scene. On the rugged cliffs, on both the Maryland and Loudoun sides are supposed to be seen, sculptured by the hand of Nature, various shapes and faces, the appearance of which changes with the seasons and as they are concealed more or less by the verdure of the trees. The giant, dwarf, centaur and almost every other animal of Nature or of Fable are here portrayed to the eye of Faith. On one rock, on the Maryland side, is a tolerably well defined face with an expression

of gravity which, with some other points of resemblance, will remind one of George Washington, and, at almost any hour of any day, may be seen strangers gazing intently on the mountain in search of this likeness. Frequently, the Bald Eagle wheels in majestic circles immediately above this rock and, then, indeed, the illusion is too agreeable to be rejected by the most prosaic spectator. George Washington, chiseled by the hand of Nature in the living rock, on the summit of the Blue Ridge, with the Bird of Victory fanning his brow, is too much poetry to be thrown away and common sense matter of fact is out of the question. Of late years, a new feature has been added to the scene which gives it quite an alpine appearance. Shortly after our civil war, a man named Reid, who then lived at the foot of the Maryland Heights, procured a few goats for the amusement of his children. The goats multiplied rapidly and gradually spread up the side of the mountain, where their opportunities for mischief in gnawing the bark of trees and for avoiding the attacks of dogs were practically unlimited. Their number is now Legion and they frequently gather in great crowds on the overhanging rocks, always in charge of a dignified old buck, with a patriarchal beard, and look down placidly and, may be, with contempt on the busy hive of men below. Perhaps, the old buck often thinks, "'What fools those two legged mortals be.' They call themselves Lords of the creation and claim to own us, free sons of the mountain, and even our neighbor, the eagle, but I would like to see one of them climb up the face of this cliff and jump from crag to crag as the

feeblest of **my** clan can do. There they go crawling along, and when one of them wants to travel a few miles he must purchase a railroad ticket for a point to which my friend, the eagle, could arrive in a few dozen flaps of his wings without the care and trouble of baggage or the fear of a run-in or a collision." Such may be and such, it is to be feared, **ought** to be, the reflections of that old buck.

Before the war, the Loudoun Heights used to be the favorite roosting place of immense numbers of crows that, during the autumn and winter foraged all over the Shenandoah Valley and all the rich grain lands east of the Blue Ridge, as, also, Middletown Valley and the proverbially fertile region between the Catoctin and the Patapsco. About an hour before sunset, advance bodies of the vast army would appear from every direction and, before daylight had died out, it is no exaggeration to say, the whole sky was obliterated from view by myriads upon myriads of the sable freebooters. For some reason best known to themselves, these birds do not, at once, settle down to rest, on arriving at their encampments, but wheel and circle 'round, as if none of them had a fixed perch, and, from their deafening and angry cawing, it may be inferred that, every night, they have to contend for a convenient sleeping place. Sometimes, it would appear as if they were holding a court, for, bodies of them are seen, frequently, to separate themselves from the main crowd and, after conferring, as it were, beat and banish a member – presumably a criminal – and then return to the rookery. During the war, they disappeared

and, no doubt, sought a more peaceful home. Besides, in those sad years agriculture was neglected in this region and it may be supposed that these sagacious birds sought for plenty as well as peace. Even after the war, they no longer frequented the Loudoun Mountain, but took to the Maryland Heights, where they may be seen every morning and evening in the autumn and winter, starting out on their forays or returning to their inaccessible resting place. Their numbers vary very much, however, for, during several consecutive years, they will be comparatively few, while for another period, they will appear in countless thousands. They always disappear in the spring to fulfill the great law of increase and multiplication, but, strange to say, a crow's nest is a comparatively rare sight in the Virginia or Maryland woods, and as far as the writer is advised, it is the same in the neighboring states. The farmers are unrelenting enemies of the crows, and they never neglect an opportunity for their destruction, and the sagacious birds, knowing this by instinct and experience, no doubt, take special pains to protect their young by rearing them in the least accessible places. Some day, perhaps, we will know what useful part the crow takes in the economy of Mother Nature. That he does something to compensate for the corn he consumes, no reflecting man will be disposed to deny but what that service is, certainly, no Virginia or Maryland grain producer appears to have discovered, if we are to judge from the amount of profanity heard from those hard-fisted tillers of the soil, when the subject of crows is mentioned.

At a point unapproachable from any quarter by man and not far from Washington's profile, is a crevice in the rock which has been ever the home of a family of hawks that, like the robber knights of old, issue from their impregnable fortress and levy tribute from all that are too weak to resist them. They prey on the beautiful and useful little birds that are indigenous, often extending their ravages to poultry yards. The only way to destroy them is by shooting them with single bullets, while they are on the wing, for they fly too high for shot. Their screams are peculiarly harsh and cruel, and they often mar the peaceful serenity of a summer evening. The people would compromise with them gladly, if they would war on the English sparrows, but as far as the author knows they never do **that**, recognizing, no doubt, and respecting a kindred depravity. May the shadows of both nuisances grow rapidly less! But, hold; not so fast. **They** too, perhaps, have their uses in the nice balance of Nature, and their annihilation might cause an injurious excess somewhere. How inconsistent, even a philosopher can sometimes be!

Near the hawks' fortress there is a traditional beehive of immense proportions. No one has seen it, for, like the hawks' nest, it is inaccessible to man, but wild bees are seen, in the season of flowers, flying to and from the place where the hive is supposed to be, and it is believed that there is a very great stock of honey stored away, somewhere near, by many generations of these industrious and sagacious creatures. **They**, too, and the hawks and crows, as well as the goats and eagles, may have their

own opinion of the would-be Lords of creation, and it may be well for us of the genus homo that we do not know what that opinion is.

It is supposed by many that the whole Valley of Virginia was, at one time, the bed of a vast sea and that, during some convulsion of Nature, the imprisoned waters found an outlet at this place. There are many circumstances to give an appearance of truth to this theory, especially the fact that complete sea shells, or exact likenesses of them, are found at various points in the Alleghany and Blue Ridge Mountains. Be this as it may, the passage of the rivers through the mighty barrier is a spectacle of awful sublimity and it well deserves the many panegyrics it has received from orator and poet. A good deal depends on the point from which, and the time when, the scene is viewed. The writer would recommend the old cemetery and 10 o'clock, on a moonlight night, especially if the moon should happen to be directly over the gorge where the rivers meet. Then the savage wildness of the prospect is tempered agreeably by the mild moonbeams, and the prevailing silence adds to the impression of mingled sublimity, and weird loveliness. Let no one fear the companionship of the still inhabitants of "the City of the Dead." They are quiet, inoffensive neighbors and they, no doubt, many a time in their lives, admired the same scene and, like the men of to-day, wondered what this whole thing of creation and human existence means. Perhaps they know it all now and, perhaps, they do **not**. Any way, their tongues will not disturb one's meditations, and it

may be that their silence will furnish a wholesome homily on the nothingness of this life and the vanity of all earthly pursuits.

Robert Harper, from whom the place gets its name, was a native of Oxford in England. He was born about the year 1703 and, at the age of twenty years, he emigrated to Philadelphia where he prosecuted the business of architecture and millwrighting. He erected a church for the Protestant Episcopalians in Frankfort, which edifice, however, through some defect of title, was afterwards lost to the congregation for which it was built. In 1747 he was engaged by some members of the Society of "Friends" to erect a meeting-house for that denomination on the Opequon river, near the site of the present city of Winchester, Virginia, and, while on his way through the then unbroken wilderness to fulfill his contract, he lodged, one night, at a lonely inn on the site of what is now the city of Frederick, Maryland. While staying at this hostelry, he met a German named Hoffman to whom, in the course of conversation, he communicated the business that took him on his journey and, also, his intention to proceed to his destination by way of Antietam, a name now so famous in our national history, for the terrible battle fought there during the late rebellion. Hoffman informed him that there was a shorter route, by way of what he called "The Hole," and, as an additional inducement, he promised him a sight of some wonderful scenery. Harper agreed to go by the way of "The Hole" and, next night, he arrived at that point and made the acquaintance of a man named Peter

Stevens who had squatted at the place which was included in the great Fairfax estate. Harper was so much pleased with the scenery that he bought out Stevens for the sum of fifty British guineas. As, however, he could only buy Stevens' good will, the real ownership being vested in Lord Fairfax, he, next year, paid a visit to Greenway, the residence of that nobleman, and from him or his agent he obtained a patent for the lands formerly occupied by Stevens on the precarious tenure of squatter sovereignty. Stevens had held the place for thirteen years and the agents of Lord Fairfax had experienced great trouble from him. They were, therefore, very glad to be rid of him. Harper settled down there and established a ferry, when the place lost the undignified name of "The Hole" and acquired the more euphonious title of "Harper's Ferry" by which it has, ever since, been known and by which, no doubt, it will be designated by the remotest posterity. At that time, there was but one dwelling there – the Stevens cabin – which was situated on what is now called Shenandoah street, on the site of the house at present owned by Mr. William Erwin and used as a drug store, liquor saloon, and a boarding house. Harper lived in this house, many years, until about the year 1775, when he built one about half a mile farther up the Shenandoah, where he died in 1782.

Mr. Harper was a man of medium height and considerable physical strength. He was very energetic and well suited for pioneer life. He left no children, and his property descended, by will, to Sarah, only child of his brother Joseph, and to

some nephews of his wife, named Griffith. Sarah Harper was married to a gentleman of Philadelphia, named Wager. He was a grandson of a German of the same name who, many years before, had emigrated from the city of Worms in Hesse Darmstadt. Neither Mr. Wager nor his wife ever saw their Harper's Ferry property, but many of their descendants were born there and some of them are now living in the neighboring cities, owning still a considerable estate at their old home. Of this family was the late venerable Robert Harper Williamson, of Washington city, the first person having the name of Harper who was born in the town. The wife of Judge Swaim, a few years ago of the Supreme Court of the United States, was one of the Wager family and their son was General Wager Swaim, much distinguished in the Union army during the late rebellion. Just as this goes to press we learn of his death.

Mr. Harper was interred on his own property and his moss-grown grave is yet to be seen in the romantically situated cemetery that overlooks the town – the same heretofore mentioned, as affording the best point from which to view the scenery. By a provision of his will, several acres of land were bequeathed to the place, as a burial ground – his own grave to be in the centre – and now, a very large number sleep their dreamless sleep in a beautiful though until lately a sadly neglected cemetery around the founder of the village.

Few of the events that transpired in Mr. Harper's time are recorded. Shortly after building the house on Shenandoah street

he erected a large stone dwelling on what is now called High street. This house yet stands and occasionally it is occupied by some of his heirs. He experienced great difficulty in finishing this building, owing to a scarcity of mechanics, nearly all the able-bodied men of the place and neighborhood having gone to join the army of Washington. It is recorded that an intimate friend of Mr. Harper, named Hamilton, lost his life in this house, by an accidental fall and this tradition, coupled with the age of the house, gives a sombre character to the building. At the time of Mr. Harper's death, therefore, there were but three houses at "The Ferry."

In 1748, there was a great flood in the Potomac, which, according to some memoranda left by the founder of the place, drove him from the house he then occupied – the Stevens cabin – and another, though a less freshet, called "The Pumpkin Flood," is recorded as having occurred in 1753. The latter derived its name from the great numbers of pumpkins which it washed away from the gardens of the Indians who, then, resided in scattered lodges along the two rivers.

It is said that, at the commencement of the Revolution Mr. Harper's sympathies were Tory, but that, soon, he espoused the cause of his adopted country.

In 1794, during the administration of **General Washington**, Harper's Ferry was chosen as the site of a national armory. It is said that the great Father of his Country, himself, suggested it as the best location then known for the purpose, having visited

the place in person. This is a tradition among the people and, if it is true, it is characteristic of the most sagacious of men. The water-power at the place is immense, some people supposing it to be the finest in the world. The Valley of Virginia and that of Middletown, as well as the fertile plains of Loudoun, gave promise of an abundance of the necessities of life and, perhaps, with the eye of prophecy, he saw railroads penetrating the wilderness of the Allegheny regions and transporting its then hidden mineral treasures to aid in the proposed manufacture of arms. In the year above mentioned Congress applied to the General Assembly of Virginia for permission to purchase the site and, by a vote of the latter, leave was granted to buy a tract, not exceeding six hundred and forty acres. Accordingly a body of land containing one hundred and twenty-five acres was bought from the heirs of Mr. Harper. This tract is contained in a triangle formed by the two rivers and a line running from the Potomac to the Shenandoah along what is now called Union Street. Another purchase was made of three hundred and ten acres from a Mr. Rutherford. The latter tract is that on which the village of Bolivar now stands. In some time after, Congress desiring to obtain the benefit of the fine timber growing on the Loudoun Heights and not deeming it proper to ask for any further concessions from the State of Virginia, leased in perpetuity of Lord Fairfax, proprietor of "The Northern Neck," the right to all the timber growing and to grow on a tract of thirteen hundred and ninety-five acres on the Loudoun Heights immediately adjoining Harper's Ferry.

Thus prepared, the government commenced the erection of shops, and in 1796, a Mr. Perkins, an English Moravian, was appointed to superintend the works. He is represented as having been an amiable, unsophisticated man, and tradition still tells of his simplicity of dress and deportment. During his time, nothing of moment occurred at the place. The town was yet in its infancy, with very few denizens, and, as the period antedates the time of that venerable personage – the oldest inhabitant – very little is known of what took place during Mr. Perkins' administration. One or two centenarians, now a few years deceased, however retained some faint remembrance of him and another Englishman, named Cox, who had been for many years employed under him as a man of all work, and who had followed him to Harper's Ferry from southern Virginia, where Mr. Perkins had formerly resided. On one occasion, Cox was required by his employer to attend to his – Perkins' – garden which was overrun with weeds. For some reason, Cox did not relish the job, but gave, however, a grumbling consent. Next morning, Cox commenced weeding and, towards evening, he presented himself to Mr. Perkins with the information that "he had made a clean sweep of it." The master was much gratified and he told Mrs. Perkins to give Cox a dram of whiskey for which the latter had a good relish. On visiting his garden next day, Mr. Perkins discovered that, sure enough, Cox had made a clean sweep. The weeds were all gone, but so were cabbages, turnips, carrots and everything else of the vegetable kind. In great wrath,

he sent for Cox, charged him with every crime in the calendar and, with a kick on the seat of honor, ejected him from the house, at the same time forbidding him to show his face again around the works. Cox retreated hastily, muttering "the devil a step will I go – the devil a step will I go." He made his way to the shop where he was usually employed and, the good-natured Perkins, soon forgetting his anger towards his old follower, "the devil a step," sure enough, did Cox go from Harper's Ferry. Sir Walter Scott relates that a Scotch nobleman once addressed him in the following words an old and spoiled servant of his family who had given him mortal offense. "John, you can no longer serve me. Tomorrow morning either you or I must leave this house." "Aweel, master," replied John, "if y're determined on ganging awa, we would like to ken what direction ye'll be takin." No doubt, the same relations existed between Mr. Perkins and Cox as between the nobleman and his servant.

In 1799, during the administration of John Adams, in anticipation of a war with France, the government organized a considerable army for defense. A part of the forces was sent, under General Pinkney, into camp at Harper's Ferry, and the ridge on which they were stationed has ever since been called, "Camp Hill." It runs north and south between Harper's Ferry and Bolivar. When the war cloud disappeared many of the soldiers settled down at the place. A good many had died while in the service, and their bodies are buried on the western slope of Camp Hill. Although the mortal portion of them has mingled,

long since, with Mother earth, their spirits are said to hover still around the scene of their earthly campaign and "oft in the stilly night" are the weird notes of their fifes and the clatter of their drums heard by belated Harper's Ferryans. The colored people who appear to be especially favored with spirit manifestations, bear unanimous testimony to these facts, and it is well known that some fine houses in the neighborhood were, for many years, without tenants in consequence of their being supposed to be places of rendezvous for these errant spirits. Once, over forty years ago, the writer spent a winter's night in one of these houses, in company with a corpse and the recollection of the feelings he experienced, on that occasion, still causes the few hairs he has retained to stick up "like the quills of the fretful porcupine." The deceased was a stranger who had taken temporary possession of the house and had died there very suddenly. He had been keeping bachelor's hall there and, as he had no relatives at the place, a committee of charitable citizens undertook the care of the remains, and the writer, then a young man, affecting some courage, was detailed to watch the corpse for one night. The house had an uncanny reputation, any way, and a corpse was not exactly the companion a man would choose to stay with, in a haunted house, but the writer was then courting and desired to rise in the estimation of his girl, and this nerved him to the task. He held to it, but, gentle reader, that was a very long night, indeed, and even such fame as he acquired on that occasion and the approval of his loved one would, never again, be inducement

enough for him to undergo a similar ordeal. But the spirits of the soldiers behaved with commendable decency on the occasion and "not a drum was heard" or fife either. The corpse, too, conducted itself discreetly but, dear reader, that night was a very long one notwithstanding, and the daylight, when at last it did appear, was enthusiastically welcomed by the quaking watcher.

At that time – 1799 – a bitter war existed between the Federalists and Republicans, and a certain Captain Henry, in General Pinkney's army is said to have taken his company, one day, to Jefferson's Rock and ordered them to overthrow the favorite seat of Jefferson, his political enemy. They succeeded in detaching a large boulder from the top which rolled down hill to Shenandoah street, where it lay for many years, a monument of stupid bigotry. This action was the occasion for a challenge to mortal combat for Captain Henry from an equally foolish Republican in the same corps, but the affair having come to the ears of General Pinkney, he had both of the champions arrested before a duel could come off, very much to the regret of all the sensible people in the town who expected that, if the meeting was allowed to take place, there would be, probably at least, one fool the less at Harper's Ferry.

Opposite to Jefferson's Rock and on the Loudoun side of the Shenandoah, there grew, at that time a gigantic oak which had been, from time immemorial, the eyrie of a family of eagles. Jefferson, while at the place, had been much interested in these birds and after his election to the presidency, he sent a request

to Mr. Perkins that he would try to secure for him some of their young. At Mr. Perkins' instance, therefore, three young men named Perkins – the superintendent's son – Dowler and Hume ascended the tree by means of strips nailed to it, and, after a terrible fight with the parent birds, they succeeded in securing three eaglets. They were forwarded to the president and, by him, one of them was sent as a present to the King of Spain who, in return, sent a noble Andalusian ram to Mr. Jefferson. Being forbidden by law to receive presents from foreign potentates, the president kept the animal in the grounds around the White House, as a curiosity, but the ram being very vicious, and the boys of the city delighting to tease him, he, one day, rushed into the streets in pursuit of some of his tormentors and killed a young man, named Carr, whom he unfortunately encountered. Mr. Jefferson, therefore, advertised him for sale, and thus was the first of that breed of sheep introduced into America.

Some time during Mr. Perkins' administration, a singular character came to reside at Harper's Ferry. His name was Brown and he was supposed to be a native of Scotland. He had served as a surgeon in the American army, during the Revolution. He was a bachelor and as, in addition to the profits of his profession, he drew a pension from the government, he was in good circumstances and able to indulge in many costly eccentricities. He lived alone on what is now called High street, and his cabin was situated on the lot opposite to the present residence of Mrs. Ellen O'Bryne. A cave, partly natural and

partly artificial, near his cabin, was used as his store-house and dispensary. His eccentricities were numerous, but the principal one was an inordinate love for the canine and feline races. No less than fifty dogs followed him in his daily rambles and made the night hideous in the town with their howlings. His cats were as numerous as his dogs and they mingled their melodies with those of their canine companions to the delectation of his neighbors. A favorite amusement with the young men of the place, was to watch for the doctor, when he walked abroad, and shoot some of his dogs – an offense that was sure to earn his bitter hatred. He had many good qualities and he made it a point never to charge an armorer for medical advice. He died about the year 1824, and on his death-bed, he ordered that his coffin should be made with a window in the lid and that it should be placed in an erect position, in a brick vault which he had erected in the cemetery, and that it should be left so for nine days after his burial, when, he said, he would return to life. A person was employed to visit the vault every day, until the promised resurrection which did not take place, however, and probably will not, until the Archangel's trump wakes him up like other people. In time the vault crumbled to pieces, and, for years, a skull, supposed to be that of the doctor, lay exposed on the hillside near the site of the vault and children used it for a play-thing. Alas! poor Yorick!

With Mr. Perkins came, from eastern Virginia, the ancestors of the Stipes and Mallory families, as well as others who were regarded as being among the best citizens at the place. In

Mr. Perkins' time a shocking accident occurred in the armory. Michael McCabe, an employe was caught in the machinery of one of the shops and, as he was drawn through a space not exceeding eight inches in breadth, of course, he was crushed to a jelly.

Mr. Perkins died at Harper's Ferry and was interred in Maryland. He was succeeded, in 1810, by James Stubblefield, a Virginian, and a gentleman of the true Virginia stamp. At that time, it was deemed absolutely necessary that the superintendent of a national armory should be, himself, a practical gun-maker. Mr. Stubblefield, therefore, in order to satisfy the ordnance department of his fitness for the position, was obliged to manufacture a gun, he, himself, making all the component parts. The specimen giving satisfaction, he got his appointment, after a considerable interregnum. His superintendency was the longest of any in the history of the armory. It continued from 1810 to 1829, a period of nineteen years. In 1824, some discontented spirits among the armorers brought charges against Mr. Stubblefield which occasioned the convening of a court martial for their investigation. The court acquitted Mr. Stubblefield and, as he was generally popular, his friends among the employes gave him a public dinner which was served in the arsenal yard, in honor of his victory. While the trial was yet pending, a Mr. Lee was appointed to the superintendency, pro tem, but, on the termination of the court martial, Mr. Stubblefield was reinstated. During this superintendency –

August 29th, 1821, an armorer named Jacob Carman lost his life by the bursting of a grinding-stone in one of the shops. A fragment struck him and, such was the force of the blow, that he was driven through the brick wall of the shop and his mangled remains were found several steps from the building.

While Mr. Stubblefield was superintendent, about the year 1818, a gentleman named John H. Hall, of the State of Maine, invented a breech-loading gun – probably the first of the kind manufactured. He obtained a patent for his invention and, the government having concluded to adopt the gun into its service, Mr. Hall was sent to Harper's Ferry to superintend its manufacture. Two buildings on "The Island" were set apart for him, and he continued to make his guns in those shops until 1840, when he moved to Missouri. After this period, other buildings were erected on the same island, for the manufacture of the minie rifle, but the place retained the name of "Hall's Works" by which it was known in Mr. Hall's time. It was, sometimes, called "the Rifle Factory." The reader will understand by the term "armory," used in this book, the main buildings on the Potomac. Although both ranges of shops were used for the manufacture of arms, custom designated the one, "The Armory" and the other – the less important – "the Rifle Factory" or "Hall's Works." Mr. Hall was the father of the Hon. Willard Hall, at one time a member of Congress from Missouri and, during the war, Governor of that state. He was a high-toned gentleman and a man of great ability. His daughter, Lydia, was married to Dr. Nicholas Marion, an

eminent physician who resided at Harper's Ferry from 1827 until his death in 1882. Their sons, William V., and George H., are physicians of Washington, D. C., and are ranked among the first, as specialists, in diseases of the eye and ear. Another son, Robert, is a surgeon in the United States Navy. It may be remarked here, that Harper's Ferry has contributed more than any other place of the same size to the prosperity of other parts of our country, especially the West and Southwest, by sending them many distinguished people. Here, some eighty-five years ago was born, in an old house, now in ruins, on the bank of the Shenandoah, General Jeff Thompson. "Jeff" was but a nickname, his proper name being Merriweather Thompson. His father was, at one time, paymaster's clerk in the armory and was very highly respected.

Besides the parties above named, Harper's Ferry has furnished many other eminent men to the West. Some sixty-five years ago, Captain Jacamiah Seaman, who had resigned his position as captain in the company stationed at Harper's Ferry, moved to Sullivan county, Missouri. He took with him a youth to whom he had taken a fancy. The young man was named Robert W. Daugherty and he had been left by his dying parents in care of Mr. Martin Grace and his wife, nee O'Byrne. This lady's brother, Mr. Terence O'Byrne, will figure further on in this history as one of John Brown's prisoners at the time of that fanatic's famous raid. Young Daugherty had the consent of his guardians to accompany Captain Seaman, who was a man of

very high standing at the place, and whose family – originally of Welsh descent – were always held in the greatest esteem in Virginia. Young Daugherty was a scion of the very warlike and singularly successful clan of O'Daugherty, who, from time immemorial, dwelt in the valleys of romantic Inishowen, in the county of Donegal, Ireland, and who distinguished themselves particularly, in the sanguinary battles of Benburb and Yellow Ford, fought in the 16th century, to the utter destruction, by the Irish clans of two powerful English armies. The name still flourishes in their native country, but alas, like many others, they **will** drop the O before their name, regardless of the loss of euphony, and the memory of the many glories their fathers achieved under the venerable old name. Robert's father was James Daugherty, a man of great force of character and executive ability. He was born in Donegal about the end of the 18th century and died young, of the cholera epidemic at Harper's Ferry, in 1831-1832, leaving several children. He and his wife who, also died young, are buried, side by side, in the cemetery attached to Saint John's Catholic church, Frederick, Maryland, of which they were devoted members. Their children were put under strict Christian guardianship, and those of them who lived to maturity married into some of the best families of Virginia and Maryland. Mary Jane, a highly educated lady, married Hugh Gifford, of Baltimore. John died, we believe, unmarried, at Memphis, Tennessee, aged 22 years. Catherine Anne, the third child, died in the Orphans' House of the Catholic church in

Baltimore aged 14 years. Elizabeth Ellen, the youngest child, married James Wall Keenan, of Winchester, Virginia, a brave confederate soldier, whose sister, Catherine, married Charles B. Rouse, the Merchant Prince and gallant soldier of New York.

Robert W. Daugherty, the second son, accompanied Captain Seaman to the West, as before stated, and, afterwards, married Lydia E. Seaman, sister of Captain Jacamiah Seaman and Richard S. Seaman who, in the civil war, served prominently under General T. J. Jackson. Robert W. Daugherty was the first man in Sullivan county, Missouri, to answer the call of Governor Jackson for volunteers, when the civil war broke out. He entered as a private and was elected captain, but refused further promotion. He served with distinction in the 3rd Missouri Infantry of the Confederate army. At the close of the war, he surrendered at Hempstead, Arkansas, and engaged in planting on Red River, Bosier Parish, Louisiana. He died there on his plantation, June 2nd, 1877, leaving a son, Jacamiah Seaman Daugherty, now of Houston, Texas, who married Maggie C. Bryan, of Lexington, Kentucky, daughter of Daniel Bryan and sister of Joseph Bryan, M. D., who, while in charge of some hospital in New York, first applied plaster of paris in the treatment of sprains and fractures. The Bryans are of the old family who accompanied Boone to Kentucky. A daughter of Robert W. Daugherty – Miss May Ellen – married Col. Caleb J. Perkins, who distinguished himself as a fearless fighter under General Sterling Price of the Confederate army. Col. Perkins is

now dead. His widow survives him in Carroll county, Missouri, with an only son, a young man of great promise, as befits his gallant father's son and one with the mingled blood of the Seamans of Virginia and the O'Daughertys of Inishowen, so many whom fought and bled for their beloved native land on the gory fields of Benburb, Yellow Ford and many other famous battles.

Nancy Augusta Jane Daugherty married Wesley Arnold, of Bosier Parish, Louisiana. He was a member of the old Arnold family of Georgia. Her husband is now dead and she lives with her two promising children – Hugh and Genevieve Arnold in Terrel, Kaufman county, Texas. Robert Richard Daugherty disappeared from Daugherty, Kaufman county, Texas, in the fall of 1889. He left his store locked and his safe had a considerable amount of cash in it. That was the last thing known of him, except that his hat was found in a creek bottom, a mile from his store. It is supposed that he was murdered by a band of thieves, because of his having aided in the arrest of some of their companions. John Edward, the youngest child of Robert W. Daugherty, married a Miss Scott in Kaufman county, Texas. He is now a prominent farmer of Denton county, in that state.

The parties who were instrumental in bringing charges against Mr. Stubblefield were not yet satisfied and, in 1829, he was subjected to another trial by court martial. He was again acquitted, after a protracted hearing and the general sympathy of the community was more than ever before in his favor.

While the second trial was progressing, his accusers were very active in hunting up evidence against him. They learned that Mr. Stubblefield had obligingly given to a man named McNulty the temporary use of some tools belonging to the government. They sought this man and they were much gratified to find that he spoke very disparagingly of the superintendent. Expecting great things from his evidence, they had him summoned, next day, before the court martial. On his being questioned by the prosecuting lawyer, however, he gave the most glowing account of Mr. Stubblefield's goodness and efficiency. Much disappointed, the counsel for the complainants exclaimed: "Sir, this is not what you said last night." "No," replied McNulty, "but what I said then was nothing but street talk. I am now on my oath and I am determined to tell the truth." The court and a great majority of the people were satisfied, before, of Mr. Stubblefield's innocence and his acquittal was long deemed certain, but McNulty's testimony tended to throw contempt on the whole prosecution and ridicule is often a more powerful weapon than reason or logic.

During the second trial, Lieutenant Symington was appointed to the temporary superintendency, but, as in the case of Lee, at the first trial, he was immediately withdrawn on the second acquittal of Mr. Stubblefield, and the latter was again reinstated. The proud Virginian, however, refused to continue in the office. He had been a benefactor to the people and had been treated with ingratitude by many. Twice he had been honorably acquitted

by a military tribunal – always the most rigorous of courts – and, his honor being satisfied, he voluntarily vacated the superintendency.

In Mr. Stubblefield's time – 1824 – the "bell shop" of the armory was destroyed by fire. It got its name from its having the armory bell suspended in a turret which overtopped the roof. The origin of the fire was unknown, but it was supposed that some sparks from a fire made in the yard for culinary purposes, occasioned the accident.

Mr. Stubblefield was succeeded, in 1829, by Colonel Dunn. This gentleman had been connected with a manufacturing establishment, at the mouth of Antietam Creek. His was a melancholy history. He was a strict disciplinarian and, indeed, he is represented as having been a martinet. The severity of his rules offended several of the workmen, and he paid with his life a heavy penalty for his harshness. A young man named Ebenezer Cox, an armorer, had given offense to Lieutenant Symington, while the latter temporarily filled the office of superintendent, during the second court martial on Mr. Stubblefield, and, therefore, he was dismissed by that officer. When Colonel Dunn succeeded to the office, Cox applied to him for a reinstatement. It is said that the latter expressed contrition and made submission to Colonel Dunn who, with violent language, refused to be appeased and displayed great vindictiveness by threatening with expulsion from the armory works any employe who should shelter the offender in his house. Cox's brother-in-law, with

whom he boarded, was obliged to refuse him entertainment, and it appeared as if Colonel Dunn was determined by all means to force Cox to leave his native town. Thus "driven to the wall" the desperate man armed himself with a carbine and presented himself at the office of the superintendent, about noon, on the 30th day of January, 1830. What conversation took place is unknown, but in a few minutes, a report of fire arms was heard. People rushed to Colonel Dunn's office and were met by his wife who, with loud lamentations, informed them that her husband was murdered. The colonel was found with a ghastly wound in the stomach, through which protruded portions of the dinner he had eaten a few minutes before. Being a very delicate, dyspeptic man, he generally used rice at his meals and a considerable quantity of this food was found on the floor near him, having been ejected through the wound, but, strange to say, it was unstained with blood. When found the Colonel was expiring and no information could be got from him. Mrs. Dunn was in her own house, opposite to the office, within the armory enclosure, when the crime was committed, and knew nothing, except the fact of the murder. She had heard the shot and, suspecting something wrong, had entered the office and found her husband as above described, but the murderer had escaped. Suspicion, however, at once rested on Cox and diligent search was made for him. He was discovered in the "wheelhouse" and taken prisoner. The arrest was made by Reuben Stipes. Cox made no resistance and he was immediately committed to Charlestown jail. The body

of Colonel Dunn was buried in Sharpsburg, Maryland, near the spot where, many years afterwards, General Robert E. Lee of the Confederate army, stood while directing the movements of his troops at the battle of Antietam. There is a tradition that the day of his funeral was the coldest ever experienced in this latitude. So severe, indeed, was the weather that the fact is thought to be of sufficient interest to be mentioned in the chronicles of the place. In the course of the following summer – August 27th – Cox was executed publicly, near Charlestown, confessing his guilt and hinting strongly at complicity in the crime, on the part of some others. His words, however, were not considered to be of sufficient importance to form grounds for indictment against those to whom he alluded, and there were no more prosecutions. This murder marks an era in the history of Harper's Ferry and, although many more important and thrilling events have occurred there, since that time, this unfortunate tragedy still furnishes material for many a fireside tale, and the site of the building in which the murder was perpetrated is yet pointed out, as unhallowed ground.

Cox is said to have been a remarkably handsome young man of about twenty-four years of age. He was a grandson of Cox who, in Mr. Perkins' time, figured in various capacities around the armory and who particularly distinguished himself at gardening, as before related.

General George Rust succeeded Colonel Dunn in 1830. For the seven years during which he superintended the armory,

nothing of any interest is recorded. He was rather popular with the employes, and survivors of his time speak well of his administration. It may be that the melancholy death of his immediate predecessor had cast a gloom on the place which operated to prevent the occurrence of any stirring events. It is said that General Rust spent very little of his time at Harper's Ferry. He was a wealthy man, owning a good deal of property in Loudoun county, Virginia, where he lived much of his time, delegating the duties of his office in the armory to trusty assistants who managed his affairs so as to give satisfaction to the government. Had he been a poor man his long stays at home, no doubt, would have excited comment and some busy-body would have reported the facts to his detriment. As it was, the General was independent and he enjoyed his otium cum dignitate without any attempt at interruption or annoyance from tale-bearers.

General Rust was succeeded, in 1837, by Colonel Edward Lucas, a Virginian of Jefferson county. He was an exceedingly amiable and generous man, although fiery and pugnacious when he deemed himself insulted. He was extremely popular and the writer well remembers his bent form, while he walked or rode his mule along the streets of Harper's Ferry, lavishing kind expressions on old and young and receiving in return the hearty good wishes of every one he met. The name of "Colonel Ed" was familiar as a household word at the place, and, as he was honored and respected in life, so was he lamented at his death, which occurred in 1858, while he occupied the position of paymaster

at the armory. While Colonel Lucas was superintendent, the armory canal was much improved by the building of a permanent rock forebay. A stone wall also was built, extending from the front gate of the armory to the "tilt hammer shop" – the whole river front of the grounds – protecting the yard and shops from high waters and, indeed reclaiming from the Potomac, several feet of land and adding that much to the government property. Twelve good dwellings, also, were built for the use of the families of the employes, and the place was much improved in every respect. During the exciting presidential contest in 1840, Colonel Lucas was a strong Van Buren man but, to his honor, he never oppressed any of the men under him, on account of politics nor was he charged with having done so. In 1847, he was appointed paymaster, an office which he filled until his death, eleven years afterwards.

It is said of Colonel Lucas that, if any of the mechanics or laborers employed under him did wrong, he was not inclined to discharge them, preferring to punish them by administering a sound thrashing. He had several fist-fights with his men and, although he was a small man, it is said that he always deported himself well in his combats and generally came off winner. In any case, he was never known to use his authority as superintendent to punish any one who had spirit enough to stand up for what he considered his rights, even if it involved a personal quarrel with himself. The Colonel owned a good many slaves, nearly all of whom were of the most worthless description. It was said,

indeed, with some show of reason, that he was virtually owned by his servants. Whenever a negro, anywhere near Harper's Ferry, had become so unprofitable that his master determined to sell him to a trader, the slave would appeal to Colonel Lucas to save him from the slave-drivers and servitude in "Georgia," which was regarded, justly perhaps, by the negroes as a fate worse than death. With them "Georgia" was a synonym for all the South. The good-natured Colonel would purchase the slave, if possible, and, consequently, he always had the most useless lot of servants in Virginia. His favorite slave was a diminutive old negro named "Tanner," who hardly weighed one hundred pounds, but who, nevertheless, prided himself on his muscle and was as fiery as his master. One day, Tanner had a fight with another negro and, while they were belaboring one another, the Colonel happened to come up, and, seeing his servant in a tight place, he called out, "Pitch in, Tanner! Pitch in, Tanner!" The street arabs took up the cry, and it has been used ever since, at Harper's Ferry, in cases where great exertion of muscle or energy is recommended. Colonel Lucas was truly a chivalrous man and we will not see his "like again," very soon.

It is to be noted that Colonel Lucas and his predecessors, with military titles, were, in reality, civilians, being merely militia officers or getting the prefix to their names by courtesy. This explanation is necessary for an understanding of the following:

THE MILITARY SYSTEM.

CHAPTER II

Colonel Lucas was succeeded in the superintendency by Major Henry K. Craig in 1841. The Major was an ordnance officer and, of course, his education having been military, he was inclined somewhat to that strictness of discipline which the most amiable of men, in military command, soon learn to exact from their inferiors, having been taught to observe it, themselves, toward their superiors. There were two classes of employes in the armory – the day workers and the piece workers. By an order of Major Craig, the latter were obliged to work the same number of hours as the former. This edict was deemed unjust by the piece workers, as they considered themselves entitled to the privilege of working for whatever time they chose. They claimed remuneration, only, for the work done, and, in their opinion, it mattered little to the government how many hours they were employed. The superintendent thought otherwise, however, and hence arose a "*causa tetterima belli*." Besides, everything around the armory grounds assumed a military air, and a guard, at the gate, regulated the ingress and egress of armorers and casual visitors. Drunkenness was positively forbidden. These restrictions were not relished at all by the armorers and the older men remembered with regret the good old days of Perkins and

Stubblefield, when the workmen used to have hung up in the shops buckets of whiskey from which it was their custom to regale themselves at short intervals. It is said, indeed, that this license was carried to such excess in the time of Mr. Stubblefield that an order was issued, prohibiting the men from drinking spirituous liquors in the shops – a command which, at the time, was deemed arbitrary and which was evaded through the ingenious plan of the men's putting their heads outside of the windows, while they were taking their "nips." These grievances rendered the men rebellious and, for some years a bitter feud existed between the parties favoring the military system and those who were opposed to it. In 1842, a large number of the men chartered a boat on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and proceeded to Washington City to see the president, John Tyler, and state to him their grievances. At that time, little of an exciting nature had taken place at Harper's Ferry. The Dunn murder, alone, furnished the whole history of the town, up to the period of which we are treating, and that trip to Washington, therefore, assumed an undue importance which it has retained ever since, in the minds of the survivors of the voyage, notwithstanding the fearful ordeals to which they were afterwards subjected. Neither Jason and his Argonauts when they went in search of the Golden Fleece nor Ulysses in his protracted return home from Troy encountered as many vicissitudes of fortune as those hardy mariners of the canal boat. The writer has been listening to stories of this expedition for more than forty years, but as they

never had any interest for him and as he does not suppose his readers would care to hear them, he leaves them to be collected by some future poet, able and willing to do them justice. The octogenarian participants in this voyage deem them of surpassing interest, but they were young when those events took place and, now, they are old and that accounts for their fond recollection. Having reached Washington they obtained an audience of the president who received them in a style worthy of the head of a great nation and, what is more in the estimation of some people, a Virginia gentleman. Compliments were exchanged and the president gave each of them a cordial shake of the hand, an honor which was duly appreciated, for it is related that one of the delegation, in a burst of enthusiasm, reached out a hand of enormous proportions and dubious color to meet that of the president, at the same time exclaiming, "Hullo, old fellow, give us your corn stealer." This handsome compliment, no doubt, was very gratifying to the president, for he made them a speech in which he declared in the most emphatic manner, that he considered the working men as the bone and sinew of the land and its main dependence in war and in peace; that he loved them as such and that their interests should be his care. In this strain he continued for some time, but suddenly, he threw cold water on the hopes he had created by telling them that "they must go home and hammer out their own salvation." This figurative expression and the allusion to that emblem of vulcanic labor – the hammer – were not received with the admiration which their

wit deserved, and it is said that many loud and deep curses were uttered by some sensitive and indiscreet piece workers, and that the august presence of "Tyler too" had not the effect of awing the bold navigators into suitable respect for the head of the nation. They returned home wiser but hardly better men and, from that period dates the bitter opposition of many Harper's Ferry people to the military system of superintendency which continued until the final overthrow of that order of things in 1854. This contest is the chief event of the time of Colonel Craig's command.

The Colonel was a veteran of the war of 1812. He had served on the Canadian frontier with General Scott and had received a severe wound in the leg, the effects of which were, ever after, apparent in his walk. He was not, however, a graduate of West Point.

He was succeeded in 1844 by Major John Symington, another military officer and the same who, with an inferior rank, had superintended the armory, pro tem, during the second trial of Mr. Stubblefield. Major Symington was an exceedingly eccentric man. His talents were undoubted and he got credit for many virtues, but his oddities detracted much from his usefulness. His voice was of a peculiar intonation and his gestures were odd, but withal, he had a clear head and a good heart and, during his administration, many improvements were made at his suggestion, and the people were generally prosperous. The shops were remodeled, and many believe that he did more for the prosperity of the place than any other superintendent. Those who

knew him best asserted that his eccentricities were mere pretense and assumed for the gratification of a latent vein of humor. On the whole, he is remembered with very kind feelings. Like other superintendents, he was much annoyed with applications for employment. People of every trade and calling, when out of work, thought they had a right to a part of the government patronage, no matter how unsuited they were, from their former occupations, to serve as armorers. One day the Major was troubled by more than the usual number of applicants and his temper was sorely tried. Towards evening a stranger presented himself and made the stereotyped request for work. "Well," said the Major, rubbing his hands in a manner peculiar to himself, "What is **your** trade?" "I am a saddler and harnessmaker," replied the stranger. "Oh," said the Major, "we do not make leather guns here. When we do we will send for you."

He made it a point to exact from his subordinates the most literal obedience to his orders and, while he must have often regretted his having issued absurd commands while in his pets, he always gave credit to those who carried them out fully. He had a colored servant on whom he could always rely for the exact performance of his most unreasonable orders. One day, this servant carried to the dinner table a magnificent turkey, cooked in the most approved fashion, but the Major was in one of his tantrums and would not endure the sight of the sumptuous feast. "Take it to the window and throw it out," said he, in the querulous tone peculiar to him and, perhaps, to his surprise, the command

was instantly obeyed. The servant raised the window and pitched out into the lawn, turkey, dish and all. The Major commended his servant's obedience and was instantly appeased and induced to settle down to his dinner.

In his time, one of those exhibitions then rare, but unfortunately too common now – a prize fight – took place at, or very near Harper's Ferry. The then notorious Yankee Sullivan and an English bruiser named Ben Caunt, met by appointment there in 1846, and treated the people to one of those brutal shows. Caunt came to Harper's Ferry several weeks before the fight and there he went through his course of training. He was the favorite with the people, no doubt, because of his nationality – most of the armorers being descended from Birmingham gunsmiths. Sullivan arrived on the night before the encounter and with him came a crowd of shoulder-hitters, pick-pockets, et hoc genus omne. They took possession of the town and, until the fight was decided, the utmost terror prevailed among the peaceable inhabitants. The battle ground was outside the town limits, east of the Shenandoah, in a meadow near what is called "the old still-house," on the line of Jefferson and Loudoun counties. Sullivan won the fight, but the exhibition broke up in a general row.

In the summer of 1850, the fearful scourge – the Asiatic cholera again made its appearance at the place and decimated the people. Although it is said that the ravages of this pestilence are mostly confined to people of dissolute habits, it was not so in this case, for it visited the homes of rich and poor indiscriminately,

and all classes suffered equally. It is estimated that over one hundred people at the place perished by this epidemic and, the town having been deserted by all who could leave it, business, too, suffered severely.

Major Symington was succeeded, in 1851, by Colonel Benjamin Huger. He was of Huguenot extraction and a native of South Carolina. His administration was not marked by any very important events. The excitement against the military system that arose in the time of Colonel Craig continued unabated. During Colonel Huger's superintendency in 1851, a sad accident occurred at Harper's Ferry. On the opening of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad from Cumberland to Fairmont, an excursion train containing the principal officers of the road proceeded from Baltimore to what was then the western terminus of that great channel of commerce. A number of Harper's Ferry people determined to give them a salute, as they passed that station, and, with this purpose, they loaded an old twelve-pounder cannon which was kept at the armory for such occasions. Through some mismanagement, there was a premature explosion which caused the death of two colored men. One of them, named John Butler, was a veteran of the war of 1812 and had been long a resident of the town. The other, named Scipio, was, too, like Butler, well known and respected at the place. A third party, a white man, named James O'Laughlin, to whose want of forethought the accident was attributed, lost his life shortly afterwards by being run over by the railway cars, in front of the ticket office.

In 1852, on an order from the Secretary of War, the government disposed of a considerable portion of its property at Harper's Ferry to employes at the armory. Many of those people desired to purchase houses and the government deemed it politic to encourage them in so doing. The plan insured a number of prudent, sober and steady mechanics for employment in the government works – men who, having a deep interest in the place, would consult the well-being of society there and would feel the more attached to the public service. Therefore, many houses and lots were disposed of at public sale and, at the same time, many donations of land were made by the government for religious, educational and town purposes.

In 1852 there was a remarkable inundation at Harper's Ferry – the greatest that, up to that time, had occurred there – at least since the settlement of the place by white people. The winter of 1851-1852 was exceedingly severe. From November until April, the snow lay deep upon the ground, and when, about the middle of the latter month, there was a heavy and warm rain for several days, the snow melted rapidly and an unprecedented flood was the consequence. The Potomac, swollen by a thousand tributaries, the smallest of which might aspire, at the time, to the dignity of a river, rolled in an irresistible tide and was met by the Shenandoah with the accumulated waters of the whole upper Valley of Virginia. The town was literally submerged and large boats were propelled with oar and pole along the principal streets. Of course, much damage was done to property, but no

loss of life on that occasion is recorded. Similar inundations we have mentioned as having occurred there in Mr. Harper's time, and in 1832 a very remarkable one took place which is fresh in the memories of a few of the citizens. Indeed, there is a belief that at least once in every twenty years the town is partially submerged. Since the war these inundations are more frequent and far more injurious than they were before, because of the wholesale destruction of the forests for the use of the armies during the civil war, and the increased demand for timber for mercantile purposes. The day will come when legislation must step in to prevent this evil and when the American people must take a lesson from certain European governments in which the state takes charge of the forests and regulates the cutting down and planting of trees. The suggestion is, perhaps, an unpopular one, but it may be right nevertheless.

It may be observed that Colonel Huger afterwards became a general in the service of the Confederacy and obtained some fame in the seven days' fighting before Richmond.

Colonel Huger was succeeded, in 1854, by Major Bell, who was the last of the military superintendents. He "reigned" but a few months, the government having decided about the end of that year to change the system of armory superintendence back from the military to the civil order. There was great rejoicing among the anti-military men and a corresponding depression among those of the opposite party, for the military system had many friends at the place, although they were in a minority.

CHAPTER III.

THE CIVIL SYSTEM REVIVED

Major Bell was succeeded, early in 1855, by Henry W. Clowe, a native of Prince William county, Virginia, a very worthy mechanic who had been employed, for many years before, as a master millwright in the armory. He was a man of a very impulsive nature with all the virtues and many of the faults of men with that temperament. He was highstrung, as the saying is, but he was generous to a fault and never did the place enjoy greater prosperity than under his administration. Whether this was owing to his good management or not was a question which every man at the place decided according to his partialities, perhaps, but the fact of the great prosperity of Harper's Ferry at that time, is undoubted. Having been associated a long time with the workmen as an equal he had many difficulties to encounter to which a stranger would not be exposed. It is probable, however, that his greatest trouble arose from the intrigues of politicians. He had a quarrel with the representative in Congress from the district to which Harper's Ferry then belonged, and by the influence of the latter or of some other party, Mr. Clowe was removed from the superintendency about the close of 1858.

In this administration, in the spring of 1856, a tragical occurrence took place in the town. Two men named Engle and

Alison had a quarrel originating in drunkenness, when the latter struck the former on the head with a four-pound weight, breaking his skull in several places. The wounded man lay in a comatose state for some hours before his inevitable death. Alison was arrested immediately and conveyed to Charlestown jail to await trial. Having concealed on his person a small pistol he blew out his own brains in a few minutes after his lodgement in prison, and his spirit arrived at the great judgment seat almost as soon as that of his victim.

In the summer of 1858 – June 10th – a melancholy accident occurred in the armory yard, whereby Mr. Thomas Cunningham, a most worthy man, lost his life. A very curious circumstance is connected with this accident. The mishap took place about 9 o'clock a.m. A few minutes before that hour the writer of these pages was passing the armory gate, when he encountered a very respectable citizen of the place, who, in an excited manner asked him if he had heard of any accident in the shops or the armory yard. Having heard of none the writer inquired what grounds the other had for the question. The reply was, that he had heard of no accident, but that he was certain that somebody was or would be hurt that day at the place, for he had seen in his dreams that morning several men at work in a deep excavation in the armory grounds and noticed particles of gravel falling from the sides of the pit and a big rock starting to fall on the men. In his endeavor to give notice to the parties in danger he awoke and this was his reason for believing that somebody would be injured that day in

the place. Politeness alone prevented the writer from laughing outright at what he considered a foolish superstition in his friend. He reasoned with him on the absurdity of a belief in dreams which, instead of being prophetic, can always be traced to some impression made on the mind during waking hours. While they were yet conversing, a man ran out from the armory in breathless haste and inquired for a physician. On being questioned he replied that Mr. Cunningham had been crushed by a rock falling on him in an excavation he was making and that Mr. Edward Savin, also, had been badly hurt. Mr. Cunningham died in a few minutes after his being injured and thus was the dream literally verified, even to the exact place, foreshadowed – the armory yard – for there it was the excavation was being made. Mr. Savin recovered from his hurts and afterwards served with great credit in the 69th regiment of New York Volunteers. At the first battle of Bull Run he had, it is said, his clothing perforated in more than a dozen places by bullets, but he escaped without a wound. It is reported that his preservation in this battle was among the most extraordinary of the war of the rebellion, considering the very shower of bullets that must have poured on him to so riddle his clothes. Whether the dream was a mere coincidence or a psychological phenomenon let every reader judge for himself. There is high authority for believing that "coming events cast their shadows before" and the above, for which the writer can vouch, would appear to confirm the truth of what every one is inclined, in his heart, to believe, though but few dare to own it, for

fear of incurring ridicule. The occurrence convinced the writer of what he more than suspected before and fully believes now, that verily, there are many things transpiring daily which do not enter into anybody's philosophy and which can not be explained by intellect clothed in flesh. Perhaps, we will understand it all when we enter some other sphere of existence and, perhaps, again, we will **not**.

Apropos of the foregoing, the reader may feel interested in the following which, although it did not occur at Harper's Ferry, took place so near to it that it will not be considered much out of place in our chronicles. Besides, it was proposed at the start that the author should give strange incidents of the neighborhood of Harper's Ferry, especially when the actors in the scenes, as in this case, were identified closely with that place and had daily business relations with its people. Some sixty years ago, there lived near Kabletown in the upper part of Jefferson county, a Scotchman, named McFillan, who was overseer on a plantation belonging to a Mrs. Hunter. He was a man of dissipated habits, and some person whom he had offended informed his employer in an anonymous note that he was neglecting his duties. On being taken to task by Mrs. Hunter, McFillan at once concluded that the author of the note was a neighbor named Chamberlain with whom he had had some quarrel. In a short time after McFillan and his supposed enemy encountered one another at a blacksmith's shop in Kabletown and, the former charging the latter with the authorship of the

letter, fight took place between them, when Chamberlain struck McFillan on the head with a stone, injuring him severely. Before any great length of time the wounded man died and, it being supposed that his death was caused by the injury received from Chamberlain, a coroner's inquiry was held over the remains and a post-mortem examination was made by Dr. Creamer, a physician of local celebrity in those days. Chamberlain was put on trial in Charlestown and, as the fact of his having struck the deceased was notorious, he based his defense on the probability that McFillan had come to his death by dissipation. Dr. Creamer's evidence favored the prisoner's theory, and, as the utmost confidence was felt generally in the doctor's ability and integrity, the accused was acquitted. Why the doctor did not so testify before the coroner's jury, the tradition does not tell.

In some time after the trial a man named Jenkins moved into the neighborhood of Kabletown and took up his residence in the house formerly occupied by McFillan and in which he had died. Jenkins was a bachelor and he lived without any company, except that of some slaves whom he had brought with him. Feeling lonely, he extended an invitation to the young men of the vicinity to visit him and assist him to pass away the long winter evenings in a social game of "old sledge" or "three-trick loo." One night Chamberlain visited him and engaged at a game. Their conversation was cheerful and not, at all, calculated to excite their imaginations disagreeably. While they were playing, a shuffling of feet was heard in the hall and, presently, a knock

was given at the room door. Jenkins said, "walk in," when the door was opened and in came two men who were strangers to the proprietor. Chamberlain instantly fell to the floor in a swoon and Jenkins jumped up to assist him. While stooping to help his friend, the host, of course, took his eyes from the strangers and when he had succeeded in lifting Chamberlain to a seat, they had vanished unseen and unheard by any other person about the house. The negroes, on being questioned, denied positively their having heard or seen them arrive or depart, and it was impossible that any one in the flesh could enter the house and proceed to the room occupied by Jenkins and Chamberlain, without being discovered by the servants. Chamberlain exhibited signs of the most abject terror and his host was obliged to send some five or six of his slaves to accompany him to his home. Of course, the matter got noised abroad and the neighbors eagerly questioned Jenkins about it, but he could give no explanation of it, beyond describing the appearance of the strangers. The description of one of them answered exactly to that of McFillan. The height, make, complexion and dress of the supposed spectre corresponded closely with those of the deceased overseer and the other equally resembled Chamberlain's father who had been dead some years. The latter apparition wore the peculiar dress of the Society of Friends of which the old gentleman had been a member and, in other respects, its description coincided exactly with that of the deceased Quaker. Of course, no one ventured to question Chamberlain on the subject, but it is religiously believed

in the neighborhood that the apparitions were the ghosts of the men whom they so much resembled, but why they should travel in company or what the object of their visit was is as much of a mystery as the dream which suggested this episode. Jenkins had never before seen either of them, being as before noted, a stranger in the neighborhood and, certainly there was no reason why **his** imagination should conjure up those apparitions.

Whatever skepticism may be entertained about the matter, it is certain that Jenkins, to the day of his death, persisted in his statement, and there was no man in the county of a higher character than he for veracity. It is said that never after that night did Chamberlain sleep in a dark room, but that he always kept a light burning in his bed chamber, from the time he retired to rest until daylight. He met his death many years afterwards in a singular manner. He was riding one day in a wagon over a rough road. In the bed of the wagon was a loaded musket with the muzzle of the barrel pointing towards him. In some way the musket was discharged and the bullet killed Chamberlain. It was claimed by some who, perhaps, were interested in having it appear so, that the jolting of the wagon caused the discharge of the gun, but no one attempted to explain how the weapon was cocked or why the bullet did not pass under the driver's seat, instead of through his body. Many ugly rumors floated around for some time in connection with the affair, but the writer does not feel at liberty to give them further currency. All the parties concerned are now dead, and let no one disturb their

repose by rehashing what may have been mere slander or idle gossip. During Mr. Clowe's time as superintendent – in 1857 – died at Harper's Ferry, John, commonly known as "Lawyer" Barnett, who was in his way, quite a celebrity. He was by trade a carpenter and he had the reputation of being an excellent mechanic. Like many other deluded visionaries, he conceived that he had discovered a principle on which perpetual motion could be produced and, for many years, he devoted his energies, spent his earnings and tried the patience of his friends, in the construction of a machine illustrative of his idea, and explaining his theory to any person willing to listen. His device was certainly very ingenious but marvelously complicated and when set in motion, it terrified, with its unearthly noises, his timid neighbors, many of whom looked with superstitious awe on the mysterious fabric and its uncanny inventor. The poor "Lawyer," however, was the most harmless of mankind and the last man that his friends should suspect of being in league with the powers of darkness. If any compact existed the poor fellow's appearance certainly did not indicate any accession of wealth, as he always went about dressed like a scare-crow, his rags fluttering in the breeze, betokening the most abject poverty. He always carried a thick cudgel and was accompanied by a ferocious looking bull dog. The latter was, however, as harmless as his master and, for all that any one knew, as much abstracted in the contemplation of some problem of interest to his canine friends. Barnett, like many other great men, would takesprees occasionally, and the

poor fellow died one night in one of his drinking bouts, at his solitary bachelor home, and his face was devoured by rats before his death was discovered by his neighbors. It need not be said that he did not accomplish the impossibility he had proposed to himself, and his machine now lies in a garret almost forgotten. Had the "Lawyer" been a married man he would not have met so appalling a fate and, besides, if we may rehash a stale joke on the ladies, he might have got some valuable hints from his wife's tongue and accomplished something for science.

Mr. Clowe was succeeded in January, 1859, by Alfred M. Barbour, a young lawyer from western Virginia, whose administration was the most eventful in the history of the place, as it was during that period that the great civil war broke out which, as is well known, caused the total destruction of the armory works. Other remarkable events, however, occurred in Mr. Barbour's time which were precursors of the subsequent great evils and foreshadowed the final catastrophe. These will be narrated in the next chapter.

On the 28th day of June, 1859, a memorable tornado swept over the place. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon a thunder storm came up and two clouds were noticed approaching each other, driven by currents of wind from opposite directions. When they encountered one another, a fierce flash of lightning followed by an appalling thunder peal, lit up the heavens. Rain poured down in cataracts, and, as if Aeolus had suddenly released all his boisterous subjects, the winds rushed from all quarters and

came in conflict in the gap through which the Potomac finds its way to the Ocean. In the war of winds a fine covered bridge that crossed the Shenandoah about three hundred yards above the mouth of that river was lifted from its piers and completely overturned into the bed of the stream. Mrs. Sloan, a respectable old lady, happened to be on the bridge at the time and, of course, was carried with it into the river. She was found shortly after, standing up in a shallow place, and completely covered over with the debris of the wrecked bridge, but fortunately, and almost miraculously, she received very little injury.

Having given a sketch of each of the superintendents, the writer thinks a notice due to the master-armorers, also. Originally, the superintendents were styled master-armorers, and Messrs. Perkins and Stubblefield went by this appellation officially. In 1815, however, the latter gentleman was allowed an assistant to whom that title was transferred, and that of superintendent was given to the principal officer. In the above mentioned year, Armistead Beckham was appointed to the second office in the armory. He was a high-minded gentleman who did his duty regardless of the clamor of factions and with a stern resolve to do justice – a difficult task during a portion of his time, as the administration at Washington was democratic and Mr. Beckham was always much opposed to President Jackson. The latter, however, could not be induced to dismiss the honest master-armorer – such was the respect entertained for the character of that gentleman. In 1830 Mr.

Beckham exchanged with Benjamin Moore, who occupied a similar position in Pittsburg, each taking the place of the other. In some time after, Mr. Beckham was appointed superintendent of the Western Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, in Allegheny City, which position he held until his death, many years after.

Benjamin Moore was a remarkable person. He was a fine specimen of the physical man and his mind was on the same scale as his body. He occupied the position of master-armorer at Harper's Ferry for nineteen years and, during that time, he introduced an improvement into the manufacture of arms which is universally admitted to be of utmost advantage, but for which neither he nor his heirs ever received compensation, although a claim for it has been pending for many years. His invention was that of the interchange of the component parts of a gun, which means that any particular part will suit any gun. The advantage of this plan in field operations must be at once apparent as, from piles composed of the various parts of a rifle or musket, a gun can be extemporized to replace one rendered useless by accident. It is to be hoped that his descendants may yet reap the benefit of his ingenuity and that justice may at length be done to the heirs of a man who did so much for the efficiency of our armies.

Like many other men of studious minds, Mr. Moore had, in many things, a child-like simplicity. His son, Thomas, was a man of great talent and, in almost every field of art, his ability was apparent. Among other agreeable gifts, he possessed that of consummate mimicry. Sometimes he would disguise himself in

the garb of a beggar and meet his father with the most piteous tale of distress, which never failed to work on the old gentleman's sympathies to the opening of his purse. Many a dollar did the son thus obtain from the benevolent father and, when the young man would throw off his disguise and make himself known, nobody enjoyed the deception better than the victim. Next day, however, the father was just as liable to be taken in as before, such was his abstraction of mind, caused by intense thought on the subject of his invention. He died some forty years ago, at a ripe old age, covered with honors and with the happy assurance of the rewards promised for a well-spent life.

Mr. Moore was succeeded in 1849 by James Burton, a young man whose whole previous life had been devoted to the service of the government at Harper's Ferry. He was a fine musician and a man of varied accomplishments. In 1853, he was appointed by the British government to superintend the manufacture of their Enfield rifle. Shortly before our civil war, he returned to his native country, and, while the struggle was in progress, he superintended the manufacture of arms in Richmond. Mr. Burton died a few years ago in Winchester, Virginia.

He was succeeded in 1853 by Samuel Byington, a good-natured, easy-going man, who was much respected by all at Harper's Ferry. He died, during the civil war, at Washington City, to which place he had moved in 1858.

Mr. Byington was succeeded in the year last mentioned, by Benjamin Mills, a practical gunsmith, of Harrodsburg, Kentucky.

Mr. Mills did not reside very long at Harper's Ferry, returning, in the autumn of 1859, to his former residence. During his stay, however, he met with an adventure which will be related in the next chapter, and it can be safely said that, in his experience in the west, he scarcely met with anything that made a deeper impression on him than what he encountered on this occasion, or which will bide longer in his memory.

Mr. Mills was succeeded, in 1859, by Armistead M. Ball, a man of remarkable powers as a machinist. He participated in Mr. Mills' adventure and, like the latter, no doubt, had a lively recollection of the affair until his death, which occurred in 1861.

The capacity of the Harper's Ferry armory was from fifteen hundred to two thousand guns a month, and the muskets and rifles manufactured there were, generally, considered the best in the world. A good deal has been heard of the needle-gun, the Chassepot and other guns used by various nations, which may be all that is claimed for them, but the Harper's Ferry Rifle Yerger enjoyed in its day a reputation second to no weapon of the small arms kind under the sun, and it is very doubtful if it will be much excelled hereafter, notwithstanding the many improvements we hear of year after year. In the war of the rebellion it went by the name of the Mississippi Rifle because the troops of that state were the first of the Confederates to be armed with it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BROWN RAID

In the summer of 1859, a party of strangers made their appearance at Sandy Hook, a small village of Washington county, Maryland, in the immediate vicinity of Harper's Ferry. With them was an old man of venerable appearance and austere demeanor who called himself Isaac Smith. They represented themselves as being prospecting for minerals, and they took frequent and long rambles, with this ostensible purpose, over the various peaks of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Since the first settlement of Harper's Ferry, it has been believed that, in the earth beneath the wild crags of the Maryland and Loudoun Heights, mines of different metals and of fabulous value are hidden, awaiting the eye of science and the hand of industry to discover and develop them. Many of the citizens of the place, from time to time, have supposed that they had found them and no small excitement has been aroused on this account by sanguine explorers. Specimens of different kinds of valuable ore or what was supposed to be such, were sent to Boston and subjected to chemical analysis and very favorable reports were returned by the most eminent chemists and geologists of the Athens of America. No wonder was felt, therefore, at the appearance of the party, and their expedition over the tortuous

and difficult paths of the mountains excited no suspicion. At first, they boarded at the house of Mr. Ormond Butler, where their conduct was unexceptionable. They paid in gold for whatever they purchased and, as their manners were courteous to all, they were, on the whole, very much liked by Mr. Butler's family and his guests. After a week's stay at Sandy Hook, they removed to what is known as "the Kennedy Farm" about five miles from Harper's Ferry, on the Maryland side of the Potomac, where they established their headquarters. While at this place, Smith and his party, of whom three were his sons, made themselves very agreeable to their neighbors and they were as popular there as they had been at Sandy Hook. The father was regarded as a man of stern morality, devoted to church exercises, and the sons, with the others of the party, as good-natured, amiable, young men. Thus things continued 'till the night of Sunday, October 16th, 1859. On that night about 10 o'clock, Mr. William Williams, one of the watchmen on the railroad bridge, was surprised to find himself taken prisoner by an armed party, consisting of about twenty men, who suddenly made their appearance from the Maryland side of the river. Most of the party then proceeded to the armory enclosure, taking with them their prisoner, and leaving two men to guard the bridge. They next captured Daniel Whelan, one of the watchmen at the armory, who was posted at the front gate, and they took possession of that establishment. The party then separated into two bodies – one remaining in the armory and the other proceeding to the rifle factory, half

a mile up the Shenandoah, where they captured Mr. Samuel Williams – father of William Williams before mentioned – an old and highly respected man, who was in charge of that place as night watchman. He, too, was conducted to the armory where the other prisoners were confined, and a detachment of the strangers was left to supply his place. About 12 o'clock – midnight – Mr. Patrick Higgins, of Sandy Hook, arrived on the bridge, for the purpose of relieving Mr. William Williams. They were both in the employment of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad company as watchmen, and each used to serve twelve hours of the twenty-four on duty. Higgins found all in darkness on the bridge and, suspecting that something had gone wrong with Williams, he called loudly for him. To his astonishment he was ordered to halt and two men presented guns at his breast, at the same time telling him that he was their prisoner. One of them undertook to conduct him to the armory, but, on their arriving at a point near the Virginia end of the bridge, the hot-blooded Celt struck his captor a stunning blow with his fist, and, before the stranger could recover from its effects, Higgins had succeeded in escaping to Fouke's hotel, where he eluded pursuit. Several shots were fired after him without effect, and he attributes his safety to the fact that his pursuers, while in the act of firing, stumbled in the darkness over some cross pieces in the bridge, and had their aim disconcerted. About this time a party of the invaders went to the houses of Messrs. Lewis Washington and John Alstadt, living a few miles from Harper's Ferry, and took

them and some of their slaves prisoners, conducting them to the general rendezvous for themselves and their captives – the armory enclosure. From the house of the former they took some relics of the great Washington and the Revolution, which the proprietor, of course, very highly prized. Among them was a sword, said to be the same that was sent to the "Father of his Country" by Frederick the Great, King of Prussia – a present, as a legend inscribed on it said, "from the oldest General of the time to the best." All through the night, great excitement existed among such of the citizens as became cognizant of these facts. There happened to be, at the time, protracted meetings at nearly all of the Methodist churches in the town and neighborhood, and the members, returning home late, were taken prisoners in detail, until the armory enclosure contained a great many captives, who were unable to communicate to their friends an account of their situation.

About one o'clock a.m., Monday, the east bound express train, on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, arrived in charge of Conductor Phelps. The train was detained by order of the leader of the band, and the telegraph wires were cut. The object of these orders was, of course, to prevent news of the invasion from being spread. The train was allowed to proceed, however, after a considerable delay. While the train was at Harper's Ferry, great alarm naturally existed among the passengers who could not understand these movements. Several shots were exchanged between the attacking force and a Mr. Throckmorton, clerk at

Fouke's hotel, and some other parties unknown, but no person was injured. Some time in the course of the night, Heywood Shepherd, a colored porter at the railroad office, walked to the bridge, impelled, no doubt, by curiosity to understand the enigma. He was ordered to halt by the guards at the bridge and being seized with a panic and running back, he was shot through the body. He succeeded in reaching the railroad office, where he died next day at 3 o'clock, in great agony.

A little before daylight, some early risers were surprised to find themselves taken prisoners, as soon as they appeared on the streets. Among them was James Darrell, aged about sixty-five years, the bell-ringer at the armory, whose duties, of course, compelled him to be the first of the hands at his post. It being yet dark, he carried a lantern. When near the gate, he was halted by an armed negro, one of the invading party, and, Darrell, not dreaming of what was transpiring and mistaking his challenger for one of Mr. Fouke's slaves on a "drunk," struck the negro with his lantern and consigned his "black soul" to a climate of much higher temperature than that of Virginia. The negro presented a Sharp's rifle at Darrell and, no doubt, the situation of bell-ringer at Harper's Ferry armory would have been very soon vacant had not a white man of the stranger party who appeared to relish very highly the joke of the mistake, caught the gun and prevented the negro from carrying out his intention. Another white man of the party, however, came up and struck Darrell on the side with the butt of his gun, injuring him severely. Darrell

was then dragged before "the captain" who, pitying his age and his bodily sufferings, dismissed him on a sort of parole. Mr. Walter Kemp, an aged, infirm man, bartender at Fouke's hotel, was taken prisoner about this time and consigned to Limbo with the others.

It was, now, daylight and the armorers proceeded singly or in parties of two or three from their various homes to work at the shops. They were gobbled up in detail and marched to prison, lost in astonishment at the strange doings and many, perhaps, doubting if they were not yet asleep and dreaming. Several of the officers of the armory were captured, but the superintendent not being in the town at the time, the invaders missed what, no doubt, would have been to them a rich prize. About this time, Mr. George W. Cutshaw, an old and estimable citizen of the place, proceeded from his house on High street, towards the Potomac bridge, in company with a lady who was on her way to Washington City and whom Mr. Cutshaw was escorting across the river, to the place where the canal packetboat on which she intended to travel, was tied up. He passed along unmolested until he disposed of his charge, but, on his return, he encountered on the bridge several armed apparitions – one of them, an old man of commanding presence, appearing to be the leader. Mr. Cutshaw, who was "a man of infinite jest," used to relate in the humorous manner peculiar to himself, how he, on first seeing them, took up the thought that a great robbery had been committed somewhere and that the tall, stern figure before

him was some famous detective, employed to discover and arrest the perpetrators, while the minor personages were his assistants. He was halted, but, being in a hurry for his breakfast, he was moving on, when he received another and peremptory challenge. At last he said impatiently, "let me go on! What do I know about your robberies?" These were unfortunate words for Cutshaw, as they gave the chief to understand that his party were suspected of an intention to plunder – an imputation which the old warrior very highly resented. Mr. Cutshaw was, therefore, immediately marched off to the armory and placed among the other prisoners, where "the Captain" kept a close eye on him until his attention was engrossed by the subsequent skirmish.

A little before 7 o'clock a.m., Mr. Alexander Kelly approached the corner of High and Shenandoah streets, armed with a shotgun, for the purpose of discharging it at the invaders. No sooner did he turn the corner than two shots were fired at him and a bullet was sent through his hat. Immediately afterwards, Mr. Thomas Boerly approached the same corner with the same purpose. He was a man of herculean strength and great personal courage. He discharged his gun at some of the enemy who were standing at the arsenal gate, when a shot was fired at him by one of the party who was crouching behind the arsenal fence. The bullet penetrated his groin, inflicting a ghastly wound, of which he died in a few hours.

The writer of these annals met with an adventure on this occasion which, though it partook largely of romance to which

he is much addicted, was anything but agreeable. Sharing in the general curiosity to know what it was all about, he imprudently walked down High street to Shenandoah street. At the arsenal gate he encountered four armed men – two white and two black. Not being conscious of guilt he thought he had no reason to fear anybody. The four guards saluted him civilly and one of the white men asked him if he owned any slaves. On his answering in the negative, the strangers told him that there was a movement on foot that would benefit him and all persons who did not own such property. The writer passed on strongly impressed with the thought that, sure enough, there was something in the wind. He then looked in at the prisoners, among whom was Mr. Thomas Gallaher, to whom he spoke. The invaders had ceased some time before from making prisoners, as they thought they now had as many as they could well manage. This accounts for the writer's escape from arrest when he first exposed himself to capture. The leader of the party approached the writer on his speaking to Gallaher, and ordered him off the street, telling him, that it was against military law to talk with prisoners. Not conceiving that this stranger had a right to order him off so unceremoniously and not being at the best of times of a very patient temper, the historian refused to comply, when a pistol was presented at his breast by the captain, which obliged him to duck a little and take shelter behind a brick pillar in the wall that enclosed the armory grounds. The commander then called out to the same men whom the writer had encountered at the

arsenal gate, on the opposite side of the street, and who were not thirty yards off when the encounter with the chief took place. He ordered them to shoot or to arrest the historian and they at once prepared to obey the order. Not relishing either alternative of death or imprisonment, the writer dodged up the alleyway that ran along the sidewall of the armory yard, and, in order to disconcert their aim, he took a zigzag course which probably would not have been enough to save him from four bullets shot after him in a narrow alley by experienced marksmen, had not aid come from an unexpected source. And, now, for the romance. A colored woman, who was crouching in a doorway in the alley, rushed out between him and the guns, and, extending her arms, begged of the men not to shoot. They did not shoot and the present generation has not lost and posterity will not be deprived of this history, a calamity which, without the intervention of a miracle, their shooting would have entailed. Ever since, the writer has claimed great credit to himself for presence of mind in thinking of the "zigzag," under these trying circumstances, but his friends maliciously insinuate that absence of body did more to save him than presence of mind. He takes consolation, however, by comparing himself to the great John Smith, the first white explorer of Virginia, who was once in an equally bad fix and was saved by the timely intervention of another dusky maiden. The heroine who, in the present case, conferred so great a blessing on posterity, was Hannah, a slave belonging to Mrs. Margaret Carroll, of Harper's Ferry, and her name will be embalmed in

history, like that of Pocahontas, and it will be more gratefully remembered than that of the Indian maiden, by future readers of this veracious story, who will consider themselves – partly at least – indebted to her for an unparalleled intellectual treat.

It was now breakfast time and "the captain" sent an order to Fouke's hotel for refreshments for his men. The state of his exchequer is not known, but he did not pay for the meals in any usual species of currency. He released Walter, familiarly called "Watty" Kemp, the bartender at Fouke's and he announced this as the equivalent he was willing to pay. It is to be feared that the landlord did not duly appreciate the advantages he gained by this profitable bargain, and it may be that "Uncle Watty" himself did not feel much flattered at the estimate put on him in the terms of the ransom and his being valued at the price of twenty breakfasts. Be this as it may, the bargain was struck and the meals furnished. The leader of the raiders invited his prisoners to partake of the provisions as far as they would go 'round, but only a few accepted the hospitable offer for fear of the food's being drugged.

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