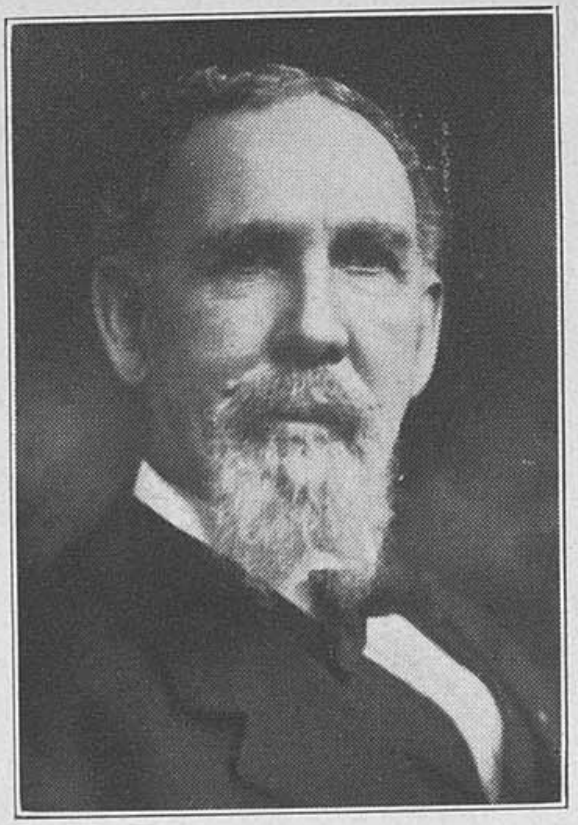
EXPERIENCE OF A SOLDIER 1861-1865

FARLEY



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OF A

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PREFACE.

I have often been asked, by friends, to write an account of my experiences as a soldier, but not until requested by my Grand Army Post have I decided to do so. I first thought I would write but a short story of my entrance into the army, a green unsophisticated country boy but I was urged to go further.

I was born in Walworth County, in the TERRITORY of Wisconsin, August 28, 1842. Worked on a farm until I enrolled as a soldier, August 26, 1861, under Capt. A. E. Smith. Ten days later our squad joined Co. "K" 8th Wis. Infty. Received education in country schools, one year in academy. Served four years and five months in the army; engaged in cotton planting in Coahoma Co., Miss., 1866 and 1867; located in Paducah, Ky., February, 1868, where I have resided ever since; engaged in mercantile and manufacturing business; was Deputy U. S. Marshal 1875-8; appointed Collector of Internal Revenue Second District of Kentucky by President Arthur 1883; was appointed Postmaster at Paducah by President Harrison 1892; was elected State Treasurer of Kentucky 1907 and served four years, and was Department Commander G. A. R. Department of Kentucky 1914. I married a Kentucky lady—Miss Ella M. Nunn—in 1871 and we have raised a family of five children, two sons and three daughters, all well and prospering. I am fortunate in having preserved a great portion of my diary, which I kept during the war, and which aids me greatly in recalling incidents and dates.

I am now a happy old man "at peace with the world and the balance of mankind" and am glad that I lived at a time when I had an opportunity to be of service to my country.

E. FARLEY.

Paducah, Ky.
Dec. 31, 1918.

CHAPTER ONE.

COMRADES:

I have read a good many stories of the many experiences, hardships, discomforts and suffering of the soldier boys of '61-'65, so I thought I would write a few lines relating some of the jars and discomforts which overtook me during my four years and five months service in the federal army. What I write now only refers to my first fifteen months service, and I shall not, at this time mention the many engagements participated in and serious wounds received later on, nor do I write in a spirit of complaint, for as a boy approaching my nineteenth year, in 1861, I entered the army with the thought and belief that war was surely what General Sherman afterwards defined it to be, and therefore was ready and prepared in mind for whatever might come.

Our regiment left Madison, Wis., on the 12th day of October, 1861, and was sent to help "save Missouri." Went to St. Louis by rail and on the trip was fed on strictly army rations, hardtack (and never from that day to this have I ever seen such HARD hardtack) sow belly, coffee and plenty of salt and pepper, which we did not need. From St. Louis we were at once ordered down the Iron Mountain railroad to Pilot Knob, on which place rebel General Jeff Thompson, with a large force, was said to be advancing.

We were somewhat delayed by the enemy tearing up the road in front of us, burning bridges, firing on us from ambush and otherwise harassing us young soft shelled soldiers who had never had but one regimental drill, and whose officers were entirely inexperienced and nearly as green as the men.

My first night on picket guard was on this trip, near DeSoto(where the rebels stopped us by burning a railroad bridge. A Captain, a Lieutenant, two Sergeants and several Corporals escorted

the guards and assigned them to their respective posts around the picket line. It was a gray, dark night, and as none of us were familiar with the country or roads, we just followed the hog paths and by chance I was placed a hundred and fifty yards further out than any of the other pickets, where I remained from eight o'clock at night until seven o'clock the next morning without relief, the officers explaining that they had forgotten where I "was at." The enemy was hovering around us and we were told we might expect an attack at any time.

Scared beyond expression, I stood that lonely watch all night, without relief until morning. Visions of an approaching enemy constantly rose before me, and every crack of a limb or twitter of a night prowling varmint excited me in the belief that I would be attacked by the horrible enemy in a few minutes. It was the first time I ever remained alone in the dark, and under the circumstances, it was neither reassuring or comfortable. Other picket guards around the line seemed to share my feeling, for there were many shots fired

by them during the night, and I myself fired one shot at an approaching enemy (?) which suddenly emerged from the thick underbrush about thirty yards in my front and was coming straight towards me. If it had been our Colonel who thus approached my post at that time I fear I would have made a mistake, for I have no recollection of challenging his advance before firing. In the morning we found a white faced calf laying dead in the path. I often thought of this incident in my soldier life after I became a commissioned officer, and always with a shudder and a smile.

We beat Gen. Thompson to Pilot Knob but learned next day that he was concentrating 4,000 men at Fredericktown, twenty miles distant, with the intention of swooping down upon us within a few days and, in the language of the verbrose Gen. Thompson himself, "wipe us off the face of the sacred soil of Missouri." But Col. Carlin, commanding post at Pilot Knob, and Col. Plummer, commanding post at Cape Girardeau, decreed

otherwise and by forced march on the night of October 20th, 1861, reached Fredericktown next morning with about 3,000 men. A battle was fought which lasted several hours when, leaving Col. Lowe, second in command, and fifty or sixty of his men dead on the field, Gen. Thompson and his army retreated, scattering in all directions and never after did he assemble as many men as he had that day.

We lost some men but we were learning military and learning it fast and it was probably worth the price. Thompson never bothered us any more. I am quite sure the reason we won this victory was because the enemy was as green and inexperienced as we were, and perhaps more so for they failed to take advantage of their own chosen ground to fight us.

We campaigned in Southeastern Missouri the balance of the year, and in the spring of '62, with Gen. Pope's command, took New Madrid and on April 8th captured Island No. 10 with 6,000 pris-

oners and had the honor of having "New Madrid" and "Island No. 10" inscribed on our banner by order of Gen. Pope, so you see we were growing in military society.

Constant marching and campaigning through the intolerable mud and swamps of Southeastern Missouri at this cold and rainy season of the year caused much sickness in the regiment, fully one-third of the officers and men being in hospitals or unfit for duty; even Old Abe (the live eagle we carried through the war) would often make known his weariness and discomfort by his low mutterings of "eagle talk" which we all understood. I was fortunate in retaining my health and although worn to a frazzle, was always able to take my place in the ranks and drag myself through the mud with the other boys. We were properly called mud ducks.

After the capture of Island No. 10, Gen. Pope with his army embarked on transports and went up the river to join Gen. Grant's army at Shiloh,

with the view of proceeding against Gen. Beauregard's Confederate army, which, after its defeat at Shiloh, was now concentrated at Corinth where it was reorganizing and receiving recruits from all parts of the south.

We reached Shiloh on the morning of April 22nd and went into camp about four miles above, near Hamburg, Tenn. We found Gen. Halleck in command, Gen. Grant having been relieved of command because, I suppose, he had been winning too many victories—Ft. Henry, Ft. Donaldson, Shiloh, etc.

Gen. Pope's forces led the advance of the army towards Corinth and we all expected to go forth and offer battle, but to our chagrin, Gen. Halleck, for some reason, decreed otherwise anl commenced a kind of seige at long range, of the Confederate forces nearly twenty miles away. We were permitted to advance less than a mile a day on an average, and the enemy, emboldened by our timidity, would send detachments to attack our ad-

vance forces every day, thus keeping us under constant fire for more than thirty days. We all felt that we could press for battle at any time, defeat and perhaps destroy Bouregard's army. We entered Corinth on the morning of May 30th and found the enemy had evacuated the night before carrying with them all their supplies, leaving notes of derision behind. Gen. Halleck was a good man, a splendid theoretic soldier, but he never fought a battle and seemed to fail to understand that long ranged sieges would not defeat an enemy. Gen. Grant was restored to command. Gen. Halleck was called to Washington and given another position and we went into camp at Clear Creek (a few miles south of Corinth, where we remained until the middle of August.

After our long and arduous campaign in Missouri, followed immediately by more than thirty days constant skirmishing in our advance on Corinth, including the spirited fight at Farmington, Miss., this going into camp was a gracious relief affording the first rest since entering the service,

besides it gave us our first opportunity to drill and learn the possible evolutions of platoons, companies and regiments. Several of the members of our company (K. 8th Wis.) had by this time distinguished themselves in action and were marked for promotion; our Captain (W. P. Lyon) and our First Lieut. (A. E. Smith) already being promoted for gallantry, the former to Colonelcy of the 13th Wis. Infty, and the latter to Captaincy of Co. B. of our regiment vice Captain Conger resigned, so we now began to think we were "some soldiers."

On August 18th our Brigade—11 Mo., 26 and 47 Ill., 5 Minn., 8 Wis. Infty. and 2nd Iowa Battery—broke camp and started for Northern Alabama, passing through Iuka, Miss., reaching Tuscumbia on the 22nd where we remained until the 31st, when we were ordered to proceed towards Decator, Ala., but on reaching Town Creek we received orders to return and join the main army near Corinth at once, as Confederate Gen. Price was advancing on Iuka and Corinth with a large

force. We did not hesitate in retracing our steps and on the night of Sept. 12th reached Iuka and went into camp. It was a dark drizzly night. About 10 o'clock I was sent with three other men to guard a Railroad water tank on the M. & C. R. R. more than a mile from our camp. Our instructions were to see that the tank was kept full of water for an engine which was expected to come from Corinth in the morning to haul our supplies from Iuka and keep them from falling in to the hands of the Confederates who were fast approaching. Nothing happened to disturb us during the night, but at dawn the next morning we heard shots fired along the picket line (which was between us and camp). At first we thought but little of this, but as a woodpecker began to beat reveille on the stump of an old cypress tree, which stood near by, and the sun began to smile upon the world in the eastern horizon, the firing became heavier, and realizing that the enemy was hovering about us, that it was the 13th day of the month and Friday, I decided to abandon our post, without orders, and take refuge in an abandoned

log house which stood on a hill top near the railroad and about two hundred yards in our rear. While the boys were picking up their traps preparatory to moving, we were surprised by a full regiment, the 4th Miss. Cav. commanded by Col. James Gordon, which came sweeping down a road which cut us off from our command and circled around our lonely little post. **We were captured.** The enemy promptly relieved us of such things as suited their fancy, including our money, diaries, letters and photographs of our best girl, and hustled us off without breakfast to a point four or five miles south of Iuka where they had established a carrol for prisoners. We found several there.

The enemy had swept around our line, capturing nearly all our outposts and by noon there were twenty-four as sad faced and as broken hearted boys gathered together in that little improvised prison pen—sheltered by the trees and enclosed by a cordon of rebel soldiers with loaded guns and fixed bayonets—as could be found in this or any country. Had I been the only prison-

er, I think I would have died of chagrin, but as there were boys from every regiment of the brigade, we gibed one another good naturedly, and concluded to make the best of it. I was just twenty years old, was trying to make a good soldier and I felt humiliated to think I should be taken prisoner; it nearly killed me. I felt that I would rather have been shot.

We learned in the evening that the enemy had captured Iuka with all the stores, driving our brigade in the direction of Corinth. The soldiers guarding us were a very clever set of men and with the exception of robbing us, treated us quite civilly. As darkness set in, we built a fire to give us light and to afford a little warmth (we now had no blankets or overcoats) and we made known to our captors that we had nothing to eat for the last twenty-four hours and were beginning to be hungry.

We were informed that rations were scarce but that they would try to get us something to eat. We waited impatiently, nursing our appetite

until nearly midnight when a wagon was driven up with six or eight bushels of green corn in it and a jolly Confederate soldier commenced shoveling it out and good naturedly calling "pigs, pigs, pigs." This was our supper, and let me inform you epicures, it was good.

The next morning the prisoners were marched into Iuka, and as the enemy had captured what stores there was there, we were furnished plenty to eat. Having fasted thirty-six hours, with the exception of one or two ears of corn to the "pig" some of the boys ate too ravenously and had to call in a rebel doctor to treat them for indigestion.

Early the next morning we were ordered out and with an escort of a company of cavalry—Baxter's Independent Scouts or Beauregard's Body Guard—commanded by a Lieutenant Hindman, we started in a southerly direction and marched rapidly for about seven miles when we were permitted to halt a few minutes for rest. During this halt I made the acquaintance of Lieut. Hindman and found him to be a highly polished

and good hearted gentleman. He told me in confidence that he was taking us to Tupelo, Miss., about sixty miles from Iuka, and he was informed a regiment of Federal cavalry was following him with a view of recapturing the prisoners, and to prevent this it would be necessary for us to march fast and long.

We did not stop again until eight o'colck at night when we were given some corn meal and a piece of bacon and told to prepare something to eat as quickly as possible. Although the boys were very hungry, they were worn out, almost dead on their feet and the most of them fell to the ground and were asleep in three minutes. Horace Baker, my comrade who was captured with me, and myself, undertook to make a hoecake, but before we had a fire fairly started, the Lieutenant came to me smiling and said "Curly," he called me "Curly." "We must go again at once." I told him I thought he was trying to kill us by marching us to death and suggested that it would be more humane to stand us up and shoot us. He

disavowed any intention to be cruel and said his scouts reported an enemy close on his rear and he must go, so we went.

We marched until about one o'clock in the morning when he said we were now out of the danger zone and we could rest. We filed into an old orchard and all fell to the ground and slept soundly until eight o'clock. We cooked some hoe-cake and rusty bacon, ate our breakfast and were on our way by ten o'clock. We now had but about twenty miles to go to reach Tupelo and Lieut. Hindman seemed glad to inform us we could take it more leisurely. We had to cross the Tombigbee river; near where we forded it, was a nice inviting pool of clear water. I requested the Lieut. to permit us to take a bath in the pool. After some persuasion and hesitation on his part he finally consented, and throwing around an ample guard, all the prisoners and half the escort plunged into the refreshing water. We reached Tupelo sometime after dark where Lieut. Hindman turned us over to another command and

where we were to await a train to take us somewhere.

We were given a little corn bread and plenty of water for our supper and were then put on board an old passenger car, with eight guards to keep us in order, which was easily done, for the boys, worn out from their long forced march from Iuka, arranged places as best they could to lay down, and all were sound asleep in less than ten minutes. I awoke a little after sunrise, and to get a little fresh air (the car being closed with windows all down) I made my way to the front platform, stepping carefully over the boys, and asked permission of the guard to open the door so a little air might get in and thus save the tired sleeping soldiers from possible suffocation. I was fortunate in finding a big, stalwart good natured guard on duty; he had seen service in the field at Shiloh, Farmington and Corinth and had the heart of a soldier. He complied with my request, saying he wondered if some of the sleeping men were not already dead.

Our car was standing on a siding at Meridian, Miss., and early risers were already beginning to asseble to see the carload of "nasty, thieving Yankee prisoners," which they heard were in town. The guard permitted me to stand on the platform with him and the eyes of all the gathering crowd were turned on me, and the injectives hurled at me were too numerous and varied to undertake to enumerate.

Among others who came "to see" was a large portly man, fashionably dressed and riding a fine black horse; he wore gold spectacles, carried a gold headed cane and appeared to be a man of prominence. He dismounted, waddled up to the platform of the car on which the guard and myself were standing and after discharging a bundle of oaths—too vicious to repeat—told the guard he had a burning desire to kill one blankety-blank-Yank at least, and that if he would let him kill me, he would give him the best "nigger" on his place. The guard, who had said nothing up to this time exploded, and in no complimentary manner

ordered the pompous man away, telling him if he wanted to kill "Yanks" to join Gen. Price's army and there he would find plenty opportunities to satisfy his desire. The man said in reply "you don't know who you are talking to; I shall report you at once." The guard replied by telling him to go. "I shall report YOU for trying to bribe me to permit you to do a dastardly act." He left.

Our guard was changed and the new sentinel ordered me to go inside the car. We lay at Meridian until late in the afternoon, and all this time without a bite to eat since we left Tupelo.

About four or five o'clock in the evening our car was picked up by a train going west (we never knew where we were going). We reached Jackson, Miss., about ten or eleven o'clock and were ordered out. We thought we would certainly be given something to eat here, but instead we were marched up to the state house where Gen. Tiglman, commander of the post, was waiting to receive us. He was informed that we had nothing to eat for more than twenty-four hours and

should have some rations. He said he would have some furnished, and ordered us taken to the penitentiary which was in the city, and locked in a room, with ample guard on the outside and there kept until morning. An hour after the barred door was locked upon us, some one came, had the door opened and shoved into the dark room (it was now after midnight) a sack full of something which we were told was rations. It proved to be nothing but dry cornmeal and as we had no water nor fire, we could not prepare it for eating in any way, so we were forced to fast some longer. I do not doubt that Gen. Tiglman intended that we be furnished with something we could eat, but this is the way his order was carelessly (or maybe maliciously) obeyed, and we went hungry.

CHAPTER 2.

In the morning we were taken out of the penitentiary, marched to and lined up on the railroad

platform to await a train to take us to Vicksburg. They gave us no breakfast and we were ravenously hungry. Just across the railroad, and fronting the platform on which we were standing, was a large hotel, the "Confederate House," which fronted the railroad. It was early morning, and while I had discovered that the air of Jackson was permeated with hatred and disgust for all "Yanks," I thought, possibly, if I could see the landlord and tell him of my suffering for want of food, that I might be able to get a bite of something to eat. As the boarders would come out of the dining room of the hotel to the front porch wiping their lips and smacking their mouths, it excited my appetite to a point of desperation, so I asked the officer of the guard to permit one of his men to go with me to the hotel to try to get a little something to eat. The officer laughed but complied with my request and I went over to the hotel. Just as I got there, the proprietor, a Mr. ———, came out. I saluted him and asked if he was the proprietor. He cast a side look of hatred and venom at me, which pierced to the

bone, and said, "Yes, why?" I told him how long it had been since I had anything to eat, that I was nearly starved and begged him to give me a bite of something, no matter how common, for which I would gladly pay him fifty cents in silver, all my friends (?) left on me. Then he turned on me and while I thought my pompous friend at Meridian had the most perfect vocabulary of oaths and invectives, he could not hold a candle to the landlord. He told me he had plenty to eat but not a bite for me or any other blankety-blank Yanks; he would feed it to the hogs or dogs first. So I still went hungry.

I learned in after years that my Meridian friend died of apoplexy and the landlord lost his hotel by fire, without insurance.

When we remember that Mississippi was the home of Jefferson Davis, President of the so-called Confederacy, and that all the citizens of the State were worked up to the highest pitch of rebellion and determination to try to disrupt the

Federal Government, we may be a little lenient with the few overly zealous secessionists (stay at homes generally) who thought the only way they could show their loyalty to the Confederacy was by being abusive, unreasonable and cruel— But I was hungry and did not entertain a good feeling for the landlord nor did I admire conditions surrounding me.

Our train came, and we left Jackson about 9 o'clock, arriving at Vicksburg a little before noon. We were marched up to the county jail and ushered through a strong iron gate with double locks and set in a rock wall ten feet high which surrounded the jail, so now we were incarcerated within the walls of Warren County bastile. In Mississippi penitentiary last night and in Warren County jail today! And for what? For being loyal to our government and protecting "Old Glory" from insult and disgrace.

But we were lucky, for we were given some cornbread, without salt, and some Texas beef for

dinner, and we were happy. The cornbread disappeared like soft snow in the hot sun, but the beef kept us chewing the balance of the day. It was tough.

We were paroled within a week, went to St. Louis by boat, there to remain in parole camp until exchanged January 1st, 1863, when we rejoined our respective regiments.

By request I will continue a narrative of my subsequent services as a soldier.

My experience as prisoner of war was most trying and disagreeable. While I was blessed with a good constitution, was young and vigorous, I feel sure that had I remained a captive for any considerable length of time, with the treatment I had already received, I could not have survived. When we reached parole camp at St. Louis, with my clothing literally filled with vermin and my stomach entirely empty, I found that I weighed only one hundred and twenty pounds, having lost thirteen pounds during my short cap-

tivity. I burned all my clothing at once, having procured a new outfit from the quartermaster at St. Louis, began filling the cavity within me with good U. S. army rations, and soon felt myself again.

There were several hundred paroled prisoners in camp at St. Louis awaiting exchange, and while we fared very well there, the boys were all very anxious and somewhat impatient to return to their respective regiments. To me the days seemed as weeks and the weeks as months until on January 1, 1863, we received the glad tidings that a general exchange had been negotiated and we were all ordered to return to our commands. We found our regiment (8 Wis. Infty.) at La Grange, Tenn., and our boys of the command greeted our return with a hearty good will, our own company (K) giving us a regular reception. Oven Old Abe, our regimental live eagle, which we carried through the war, flapped his wings and chirped HIS words of greeting which could not be misunderstood. I was glad to be back with the boys

again. My companions, Horace Baker, I. N. Felch, and Wm. Whonn, who were captured with me, entertained and amused the boys for many days after our return relating our surprise and capture, and graphically describing our experience while prisoners in the hands of the enemy.

Our regiment campaigned through West Tennessee and North Mississippi for two months when on March 13 we embarged on Steamer Empress at Memphis and started down the Mississippi River.

We knew that Gen. Grant was planning to attack and capture Vicksburg, a rebel stronghold on the Mississippi River, the only principal obstruction to the navigation of said river since Island No. 10 was captured, and as it was strongly fortified and heavily guarded by a large rebel force under Gen. Pemberton, we realized that there was some strenuous work and hard fighting in store for us.

Gen. Sherman, with more than thirty thousand men, had gone into the Yazoo river Decem-

ber previous, and attacked Vicksburg from the direction of Chicasaw Bayou, but was repulsed with considerable loss. The problem was to gain a footing on land, in the rear of Vicksburg where Gen. Grant might assemble his army to attack the city from that direction. This, under the circumstances, was a difficult proposition. Gen. Grant had resolved to open the Mississippi so we knew we had a job before us.

We proceeded down the Mississippi River to a point six or eight miles below Helena, Ark., and landed, on the 15th, on an island just opposite the mouth of Yazoo Pass where we remained until the 29th, while the general in command was exploring the Pass with the view of finding an eligible place to land and organize his forces, but the country being low and swampy, he abandoned the project and we, on board the Steamer Ben Franklin (the balance of the army on many other transports) went down the river to Young's Point, La., a point a few miles above Vicksburg, and just opposite the mouth of Yazoo River, ar-

riving at this place April 1. During the month of April our whole brigade, which was composed of the 11 Mo., 47 Ill., 5 Minn. and 8 Wis., was employed on fatigue duty most of the time—digging on a canal across the bend of the river through which to try to run boats and get them below Vicksburg; building roads; performing guard duty and finally preparing boats to run the blockade. The canal project proved a failure, so Gen. Grant ordered five or six gunboats and three transports to run the blockade. Volunteers were called for to accompany the boats, and the night of the 16th was named as the time. I, being young and venturesome, volunteered, but was rejected because I did not appear to be as strong as others. There was no lack of volunteers. The night was dark and cloudy and when the flotilla, with all lights bedimmed, turned the bend approaching Vicksburg, and was finally discovered by the sentry there, fifty cannons opened fire upon it and for an hour kept up the most intense racket I ever heard. I remained up nearly all night, or until the firing ceased, with other boys who failed to get to go

with the blockade runners, for we were all interested in the enterprise. In the morning we learned that all the boats but one had passed the batteries safely, or with little damage. One of the transports was sunk and three or four men lost.

Six days later, six other steamboats and several barges, heavily loaded with supplies, also ran the blockade, with a loss of one steamer and two or three barges.

Gen. Grant ordered his army to move from Young's Point, go down the river on Louisiana side to a point below Grand Gulf where he was now prepared to transfer it across the river to high ground on the Mississippi side. On May 2 our regiment broke camp and marched sixty-two miles through swamps, to Hard Times Landing where the gunboat Louisville took us across.

We left our knapsacks and tents at Young's Point and went in light marching order, taking nothing but a blanket and rubber poncho with us. One wagon accompanied us to carry rations and

a few camp kettles in which to make coffee when we stopped for the night. I never saw my knapsack again and therefore lost all my change of underwear, my letters and the many little articles which contribute to the comfort of a soldier.

Our brigade was attached to the 15th army corps, commanded by Gen. Sherman, who was left to bring up the rear, and who was instructed to make feints upon the enemies works at Hayne's Bluff for the purpose of deceiving them and holding their army from going south along the east bank of the Mississippi River to interfere with the crossing of our army from the Louisiana side to or near Grand Gulf, and for further purpose of guarding our flank and rear from any attack that might be made by Gen. Marmaduke or any Confederate force west of the Mississippi River. We reached Hard Times Landing on the evening of the 7th and by daylight the next morning were all across.

Two other corps, Gens. McClernand and Mc-

Pherson commanding, had preceeded us, and now the whole army was on dry land where we could, if not prevented, march to the rear of Vicksburg and attack that stronghold.

And now that Gen. Grant had "crossed the Rubicon" and was in the heart of the enemy's country, with Grand Gulf, Vicksburg and Hayne's Bluff strongly fortified and well protected by ample forces under Gen. Pemberton, and Gen. Johnson with a large Confederate force at Jackson, forty-five miles east of Vicksburg—an enemy of more than fifty thousand confronting him ready to give battle on their own chosen ground —and separated from his own base of supplies, found it necessary to move fast, strike hard and never let the enemy know just what he intended to do next. He immediately ordered the Commissary to issue three days rations (all he had) to be carried in haversacks, and put his whole army (about thirty-five thousand at the time) in motion. Port Gibson and Grand Gulf were captured by the advance forces, after hard fighting,

before our corps crossed the river, so when Gen. Sherman did cross, all was ready for the investment and reduction of Vicksburg, with the special and burning desire to capture Gen. Pemberton and his whole army; but we knew this was not an easy job, and could not be accomplished without much maneuvering and hard fighting.

On the morning of May 8, our regiment, with the balance of the brigade, started to hunt trouble, and for nearly two months we found it every day. We marched eighteen miles, skirmishing with small forces of the enemy at every turn of the road and camped near Port Gibson. On the 9th, we marched sixteen miles to, or near, Edwards Depot.

Our rations began to get short, and some of the boys would forage a little. Gen. Sherman had issued a strict order forbidding straggling, or the taking from or interfering with citizens in any way. We had in our mess a young man by the name of Horace Baker. He was a native of Texas and as good a soldier as ever shouldered

a gun, but when hungry, he knew no law and paid little attention to orders when they interfered with his getting something to eat. On the 12, we marched sixteen miles and had a sharp skirmish with the enemy at Fourteen Miles Creek.

After the skirmish, about 1 P. M. we bivouacked by the roadside, but Baker was missing. We were alarmed, thinking he might have been shot or perhaps captured, but we were not kept long in suspense, for in about fifteen minutes Baker appeared, whistling in the highest key and carrying two fine fat hens. When told he was violating orders, he innocently requested one of his mess mates to build a good fire, get a camp kettle with some water, and he proceeded to dress the hens. He explained that while on the left of the line, during the skirmish, these hens, on an elevation near the house on the hill, cackled or laughed at him. He knew they were disloyal hens, so he went for them. Baker was, and still is, enthusiastically loyal to our government, and although born and raised in the south (Texas)

any demonstration of disloyalty, even by a fat hen, would arouse his indignation and cause him to show his disapproval in any way he might think proper and discreet. He is still living at Weatherford, Texas.

We laid in our position long enough to enable us to thoroughly stew our hens. The odor of the stewed chicken filled the air, and caused great commotion throughout the entire regiment. Suggestions were made to RAID our mess and make us divide, but Baker told the "hungry hounds there is not enough for all, stand back and take a smell, it may do you good."

Just as we began to eat, the austere Gen. Sherman and staff was seen coming down the road towards us. We thought we were caught, and feared we would be disciplined for disobedience of orders. We were in a flurry and did not know what to do, but A. G. Weissert of our mess, the diplomat of the company (late Commander-in-Chief G. A. R. advised us to do nothing.

Of course we divided with "Old Abe," for under all circumstances our innermost thoughts were for our eagle, so we gave him the INNER parts of our chickens, which he relished.

The General stopped, dismounted and was admiring "Old Abe" but soon stepped over to our mess and with a smile on his face asked in a pleasant and patronizing tone of voice how we were getting along. Weissert answering, said "all right" and at once changed the subject, remarked that "the 'rebs' seemed a little stubborn this morning" and added, "we are eating a little dinner, won't you join us?" The General took a "drumstick," a cup of chicken broth and a "hardtack" offered him by our polite spokesman, and ate with a relish, talking all the time about the topography of the country and condition of the roads. When urged to eat more, he politely declined, mounted his horse and rode away.

We felt better. On the 13th, we had a fight with the enemy at Raymond. On the 14th, we marched fourteen miles, charged the rebel bat-

teries at Jackson, Miss., and captured the city with many prisoners, eighteen pieces of artillery and vast quantities of military stores. Our regiment was among the first to enter the city. Our Lieutenant Colonel (Jefferson) was appointed Provost Marshal and our whole brigade designated to maintain order in the capital city of Mississippi, and home of Jefferson Davis, president of the Southern Confederacy. We tore up the railroad tracks entering the city, destroyed several million dollars worth of Confederate cotton, stores and munitions and on the 16th marched toward Vicksburg to support McClernand's and McPherson's Corps which were being attacked at Champion Hill. We were not needed, so we proceeded to Big Black River, which we crossed at Bridgeport on pontoons on the night of the 18th. On the 19th, we marched eighteen miles, and that evening took position in line of battle within range of the enemy's guns on their works at Vicksburg.

The advance of our Corps had on this day

attacked and captured Hayne's Bluff, thus opening for us a new base of supplies and making it possible for us to procure rations, so much needed.

I kept a diary and have it yet, which assists me greatly in enumerating these details.

We now had Vicksburg invested with Gen. Pemberton and about thirty thousand veteran Confederates and more than a hundred cannon on the inside properly placed, to defend it against any assault we might make. Vicksburg, by nature, is a veritable fortification. It is situated on a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi River, both north and south, and surrounded in the rear by a succession of abrupt ridges, with hollows intervening, running, generally parallel with the river. It was called the Gibraltar of the Mississippi. This is what we had to attack. Gen. Grant made his dispositions with the view of making an early assault upon the place. On the evening of the 21st, an order was issued directing the entire army to be ready to charge the works at 10 o'clock the next day. A few of the officers

and men had a sudden attack of lumbago, or some other horrible disease, spent a sleepless night and were not fit for duty in the morning. The morning of May 22, 1863, was clear and pleasant. All were ready for the assault. At 9 o'clock a cloud covered the sun as though to deprecate the horrible drama about to be enacted. The sun shone again and kissed the cheek of many a gallant boy who would never see another sunrise.

All was ready at the appointed time; the men, with bayonets fixed, and carrying nothing to obstruct them but a haversack with one day's rations and every one eager for the charge. We knew the almost impossibility of reaching the rebel entrenchments in our front, located as they were on the top of one of these high ridges with a deep wide valley stretching in front of it, but the boys were impatient to be ordered forward. For some reason, our brigade was held in its place for several hours when, about three or four o'clock, the order CHARGE was given. Then the slaughter began.

We had to pass through a defile in order to reach the valley in front of the works, and therefore were compelled to charge in columns to get to open ground where we could deploy. The defile, and for three hundred yards beyond, were in range of the enemy's guns, and as the head of our column reached the open space, fire flashed from three thousand rebel rifles and shells came screaming and bursting through our ranks, causing death and destruction in their path. But on we went, deploying to the right and crossing the open ravine in the face of this hail of bullets and raking fire of artillery. Many of our men were killed, and twice as many wounded, among the latter, our Lieutenant Colonel (Jefferson) who led us in the charge. We reached the foot of the enemy's intrenchments but could not climb the hill and enter. We lay in our place until dark and then returned to our camp of the night before. Gen. Grant had concluded that the works could not be taken by assault, and decided to lay siege to the place. We carried in many of our wounded that night. I did not enjoy the day's

experience, but was glad that I got through alive.

During the charge I saw one gallant fellow with his leg shattered by a fragment of a shell, while being carried to the rear, shot through the head and killed by a bullet from the enemy while laying on the stretcher on which he was being borne. There were 502 men killed and more than 2,500 wounded, around the line, in this charge.

CHAPTER 3.

Our brigade and regiment lost heavily. On the afternoon of the 24th—the regiment still laying in camp—Baker, a man from the 47 Ill., and myself slipped out to get a few shots at the enemy. We discovered a large log within 150 yards of their line, but it was on exposed ground. We crawled to it and for some time practiced our marksmanship by firing at any "Johnny Reb"

who might show himself above the parapet. At last our location was discovered and such a fusillade of bullets as was put into that log was a caution. We chose a time between volleys to retire, but just as we started, our comrade from the 47 Ill. was struck in the hip and disabled. Baker and myself carried our comrade to camp, but in going across forty or fifty yards of exposed ground, a volley was fired at us and the whiz of bullets sounded as though a hive of bees had been turned loose on us. We escaped unhurt but my Captain reprimanded us severely for going out without permission and even threatened punishment, which he might have inflicted had it not been that Gen. McPherson, just passing, told the Captain he saw us carrying our wounded comrade across the exposed field under heavy fire, and he thought such a display of courage might mitigate the offense. I felt grateful for the General's kindly words but never after did I think so well of my Captain because of his severe (and I thought unreasonable) reprimand.

On the 25th there was a truce to allow us to bury our dead who had fallen between the lines. The same evening our brigade, with other troops, was ordered to Mechanicsburg, about forty miles northeast of Vicksburg to disburse forces under Gen. Johnson which was assembling there to attack us in the rear. We had a brisk skirmish on the 29th, the enemy retiring, we returned to Haynes' Bluff, capturing quantities of Confederate property on the way. On June 3, we went up Yazoo River by boat as far as Satartia, disembarked there and went to Mechanicsburg again where we, this time, found quite a large force of cavalry with four pieces of artillery. We fought them about two hours when they fled, leaving their dead, wounded and forty prisoners in our hands.

We returned to Hayne's Bluff, reaching there the 7th. The enemy was doing its best to relieve the beleagued city and was threatening attacks on our rear from every direction. On the 9th, we went by boat to Young's Point, La. On the

14th, we marched 18 miles to Richmond, La., where, on the following day we had a severe engagement with the enemy lasting two hours, completely routing him.

On the 16th we returned to Young's Point where we remained until after Vicksburg surrendered, warding off any interference that might threaten us from the west and preventing the Confederates from crossing the river and escaping. Vicksburg surrendered July 4.

I visited Vicksburg July 5, the day after the surrender, talked pleasantly with the prisoners, and viewed with much interest their big guns and strong fortifications. The Confederates fought stubbornly and well there, but Gen. Grant held them with an iron grip and starved them out. Gen. Grant reported 31,600 soldiers captured (and paroled) 60,000 stand of arms and 172 cannon. We enjoyed our National holiday as never before. We treated our prisoners kindly and with much consideration, and they appreciated our

civility and kindness.

We did not have a tent to shelter us from the date we left Young's Point (May 2) until June 10 when we returned to that place; but the weather was fairly good, the rains only reasonably wet—never penetrating further than the skin—and the sun, when it shown, seemed always able to furnish heat enough to dry us out.

But when it is remembered that during these forty days we marched 350 miles in the face of an enemy, fought ten battles and skirmishes, including the charge on the works of Vicksburg, it may be known that we had little time to indulge in luxuries. Vicksburg was captured, the Mississippi River was opened from its source to the Gulf and the Confederacy cut in two, this compensated for all hardships and privations endured by us.

On July 12, our regiment went to Vicksburg by boat, thence to Black River where we found a healthier camp ground than we had. Young's Point was a veritable death hole, situated as it is

in a low, swampy country with stagnant lakes, sloughs and ponds surrounding it, and with no water fit to drink except that carried from the Mississippi River. At this season of the year malaria permeated the whole atmosphere, causing much sickness and many deaths. One-half of our regiment was in hospital with Ague.

As we passed through the city of Vicksburg we visited many excavations in the sides of abrupt hills along the streets and in yards (somewhat like storm cellars but more commodious) in which the people lived during the seige to protect them from the storm of shell and shot that was continually hurled into the city during the forty-two days' seige. Some of these underground homes were quite large and elaborately furnished. Our eagle, "Old Abe," seemed to enjoy our change of location as much as any of the soldiers and showed his delight by many expressions of approval. He was a remarkably intelligent bird. In all our various engagements he seemed to understand the situation thoroughly. If the enemy was approach-

ing he would give a wild shriek of alarm, and when we attacked or charged he would hop around excitedly, on his perch and loudly chatter, chatter, chatter his words of approval and encouragement. If we were victorious, he would spread his wings, fly in the air and give loud shrieks of exultation, but if we were repulsed (and this sometimes happened) he would hang his head and lowly chirp his disappointment.

On reaching Black River we fixed our camp, breathed a breath of pure air and contentment and began recuperating our malarial stricken regiment. Many furloughs were granted, but none for me. I was too healthy. Thieves began to infest our camp, stealing watches and pocketbooks from the boys. We watched closely and set many traps to try to catch the culprit but without avail.

Hundreds of negroes flocked to our camp to escape from slavery and catch the first breath of freedom. Among them were two young "smart elek" fellows who had much to say and who were

overly anxious to wait upon the soldiers by carrying water, washing their clothes and keeping their tents in order. I suspicioned them and stated my suspicion to the Colonel. I was detailed to carry on an investigation and arrest the thief if possible. With the request that nothing should be said and all losses be reported to me at once, I proceeded, and in two days had these two villians cornered and found on them $33.00 and a watch, taken from two of my comrades the night before. ($14.00 and a watch from one and $19.00 from the other). They confessed and begged for mercy but we told them in presence of all the other negroes, that there was no mercy for a thief, that they deserved death and would be punished.

We proceeded at once to give each twenty-one licks with a keen horsewhip and then hung them by the neck until they could just peep into the happy land of Canian. We then took them down and when they were sufficiently revived, we told them their fervent prayers saved their lives, but

to leave our camp and become better negroes. Quick justice by a perfectly competent court. There was no more stealing in camp. I have heard since that one of these negroes became a preacher.

Our regiment remained at, or near, Black River for about three months recuperating and getting ready for further service in the future. We were frequently called out to repel threatened attacks of the enemy who were constantly recruiting their forces in Mississippi and persistently disturbing us in our repose. One of their most vigorous demonstrations was on October 13, when we followed them two days towards Canton, Miss., near which place they had collected quite a formidable force, and on the 16th, gave us a stubborn fight. We succeeded in disbursing them and returned to our camp.

On October 25, 1863, I was promoted to First Sergeant and by order of Gen. McPherson was detailed to help organize the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry which was being recruited at Vicksburg.

I was thus separated from the "Live Eagle Regiment" (8th Wis. Infty.) to do duty in another field.

In September, 1863, many thousand negroes who had left their former masters seeking freedom were gathered in and about Vicksburg, all praying for an opportunity to do something to help subdue the rebellion and insure their emancipation. They seemed to have a clearer vision of the future than some of our statesmen and many who held high rank in the army. Illiterate as they were, they knew the war would continue long and be bitter; that their old masters would sacrifice everything and fight to the death rather than lose their slaves; they realized that they were an expense and a burden to the government while they might be a help in bringing about the desired result. They clamored to be permitted to take arms and help fight the slave oligarchy and thus be instrumental, in some degree at least, in their own liberation.

In the same month, Adjutant General Lorenzo

Thomas visited Vicksburg for the purpose of conferring with Gen. Grant on the subject of organizing colored troops in his department, and recommended that it be done at once. Gen Grant coincided with him, and suggested that one regiment of cavalry be included. This was agreed to, Adjt.-Gen. Thomas stipulating that the regimental and line officers be appointed from the army and none appointed except those who came recommended by their superior officers for intelligence, soldierly qualities and fighting disposition (no gun shy men wanted.)

Gen. Grant gave Capt. E. D. Osband, who commanded his escort (Co. "A" 4th Ill. Cav.) from November, 1861, to be Colonel of the Third U. S. Colored Cavalry and his Chief Clerk F. E. Lovejoy to be its Adjutant. The General expressed a desire that this be made a "crack" regiment in every respect, and to make it so, none but men of undoubted courage and known ability as cavalry leaders should be selected as its officers. He and Col. Osband at once selected Capt. J. B. Cook,

Capt. C. H. Chapin and Lieut. E. M. Main as Majors, and Lieut. W. W. Weber, Lieut. C. C. Spaids, Sergt. A. Emery, Sergt. G. C. Starr, Sergt. B. S. Wing and Sergt. Geo. Coykendal as Captains. These men had distinguished themselves in various engagements under the immediate notice of Gen. Grant. They were all from the 4th Ill. Cav. The balance of the officers were to be selected from men recommended by their superiors as capable and worthy, but all had to stand a thorough military examination. It was with this embryo organization that I was assigned to duty, by order of Gen. McPherson. When completed, the regiment would have twelve companies, 100 men each, and six white officers to each company including 1st Sergt., Q. M., Sergt. and Commissary Sergt, all to be of the type specified.

I reported for duty to Col. Osband October 27, 1863, and found that recruiting had already begun, companies A, B and C being well under way. The officers then on duty, held a consultation for the purpose of determining the best mode

of procedure, and our future policy. We all knew that we were out-lawed by proclamation of Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States, who, on December 23, 1862, ordered "that all commissioner officers in the command of said Benjamin F. Butler x x x be, whenever captured reserved for execution x x x and that like orders be executed in all cases with respect to all commissioned officers of the United States, when found serving in company with slaves x x x." This order was emphasized by the Confederate Congress on January 12, 1863, when it was enacted "that every white person being a commissioned officer, or acting as such who, during the present war, shall command Negroes or Mulattoes x x x shall, if captured, be put to death x x x ."

We unanimously resolved that, even with this dire threat staring us in the face, we would not be deterred from doing full duty to our Government, and using every legitimate means to put down the rebellion and preserve our Union. Slavery had been abolished, never to be resurrected, and

the loyal negroes wanted to help us with the good work. I was soon made Second Lieutenant and I engaged in the work of recruiting and drilling the men with enthusiasm. We had thousands to select from, but we accepted none but young, active and the most intelligent among them. There were many mulattoes. I have never, before or since, seen men learn the drill, on foot and on horseback, the manual of arms and the use of firearms as readily and perfectly as these men did. We read to them the Articles of War, and taught them their duty as soldiers and they understood.

On June 6, Confederate Gen. McCulloch, with six regiments, attacked Milliken's Bend, which was garrisoned by the 9th and 11th La. and 1st Miss. colored regiments, 901 effectives, and 160 of the 23rd Iowa, total 1061. The battle was very severe and lasted from early morning until 2 P. M. when the enemy was repulsed. The loss on the Federal side was heavy. Seven officers were killed and nine wounded. Of the colored regi-

ments, 305 men killed and wounded. There were three officers and about 100 men captured by the enemy and never heard of again. All killed while prisoners. But this did not deter us, and recruiting went on.

About the middle of November, 1863, with what recruits we had already, (companies A, B and C being full and properly equipped) we were ordered to Skipwith's Landing, 100 miles above Vicksburg, to disperse some Confederate forces that were making incursions into that rich section and carrying away large quantities of supplies for the use and benefit of the Confederate army. We had skirmishes with the enemy nearly every day, sometimes very spirited and persistent, they seeming to think it a disgrace to ever be repulsed or dispersed by negro troops. We scoured the country for many miles in every direction and were very successful in clearing this vicinity of these marauders.

We captured quite a number of prisoners and large quantities of Confederate property, all of

which we sent, by boat, to the proper authorities at Vicksburg. It was valuable training for our colored troops, teaching them order, discipline and the art of war, and inuring them to army life in the field and under fire.

On December 10, an expedition composed of a detail of 125 men from companies A., B. and C., 3rd U. S. Colored Cavalry, commanded by Major J. B. Cook, and 75 men from the 4th Ill. Cavalry, under command of Lieut. E. M. Main, the whole under command of Major C. H. Chapin, was sent across the Mississippi River into Louisiana with instructions to make a scout through the country in the direction of Lake Village, and endeavor to capture a band of men, under one Capt. Adams, which was said to be there, driving off all stock, and robbing and killing all union men and negroes they could catch. The expedition proceeded up the east side of Baeuf River until crossing the Arkansas line, and camped the night of the 12th at Merriwethers plantation in Chicot County, Ark. This plantation was flanked, on one side,

by a dense boggy swamp half a mile wide, with no known roads or paths leading through. Proper precaution was taken, pickets being posted on all roads. Capt. Adams, who was in the neighborhood, was promptly informed by a rebel citizen, of our presence, our numbers and our exact location. He gathered four or five hundred men, and guided by a native, stealthily picked his way through the swamp towards the camp, evading all pickets. The night was dark but he was guided on his way by the camp fires. The men were up an hour before daylight, had fed and saddled horses and were standing by the fires eating freakfast when, like a thunderbolt from heaven, five hundred guns were fired into the camp followed by the rebel yell.

With officers of less nerve and experience, this would have been a stampede but not so with Chapin, Cook, Emery, Calais and other veterans in command, men who had fought a hundred battles; this meant a good fight. "Kick out the fires," said Chapin; "Fall in," said Cook. "Use

revolvers! We'll give them h— boys," said Emery. "I'll charge their right," said Calais, and every man kept his place and all fought like Spartans. It was glorious. The enemy had gained position close to our camp but could be seen only by the flash of their guns. The fight lasted less than twenty minutes when day began to dawn and the rebels fell back in disorder leaving ten of their dead on the field. The 3rd U. S. Colored Cavalry lost seven men killed and had five commissioned officers and twenty-eight men wounded. The 4th Ill. Cavalry had thirteen men taken prisoners. There were no prisoners taken from the 3rd U. S. Colored Cavalry. This fight, and victory, stimulated the men greatly and made veterans of them all.

The raid was successful, and the detachments returned to Skipwith's Landing where we remained for two weeks making frequent excursions in different directions through the country.

Capt. Adams was not captured, but he and his band were driven out of the country. We

were then ordered to Hayne's Bluff, on the Yazoo River, where we found the other nine companies nearly all recruited to their capacity and all being intensively drilled by the competent veteran officers in command. The rich and productive Yazoo delta was constantly being invaded by Confederate forces and large quantities of supplies were being carried away for the use and benefit of the rebel army, and to our regiment, with other forces, was assigned the duty of protecting this country and keeping these valuable supplies from falling into the hands of the enemy. We had strong opposition to contend against, there being three brigades of Confederate Cavalry in the vicinity—Adam's Miss. brigade, Richardson's, Tenn., brigade, and Ross' Texas brigade —all veteran troops and good fighters, ready to resist and attack us from all sides and on every occasion. Besides procuring and carrying off supplies, they had a burning desire to destroy that black cavalry regiment.

About the middle of January, 1864, Capt. Emery of company "A" and myself of company

"C" were ordered to take twenty men each from our respective companies and make a reconnoissance up the Yazoo River as far as Satartia, twenty miles above. We were instructed to go up the bottom road. There is another road which intersects the bottom road, at or near the Roach plantation, which runs nearly parallel with the latter but is on a high bluff, terminating near the plantation. This was called the ridge road. We had passed the intersection of these roads about half a mile when, to our astonishment, a full company of a Texas regiment swung down from the ridge road and came charging on our rear with the wildest rebel yell I ever heard. We were trapped; the river on one side and the bluffy ridge on the other; the enemy a few miles in front and now a formidable force of the enemy in our rear. Capt. Emery, never at a loss as to what to do next, ordered head of column right about and, in his language, "charge like h—and go through."

The change of front, which took but a fraction of a minute, now put me and my detachment in the lead, and as the order was given, we lost no

time in dashing forward to meet the rebel column which was within a few hundred yards of us, coming like mad but in a disorganized condition. Our boys, who had loud voices and good lungs, took up the war whoop which sounded like twenty caliopes on a clear day, completely drowning the rebel yell, now in our front. The enemy fired at random, but on we went, hurling their advance guard back upon their main column, thus causing utter confusion in their whole command, and through we went. We reached a gin house on the plantation mentioned, behind which we halted to await the pleasure of the enemy. They did not follow. We had but two men slightly wounded. I was once asked if I was scared that day. I will say that I think I felt like a wild broncho the first time he saw an elephant, I would leap ditches, swim rivers, jump over the moon or fight the devil to escape from that trap—and with vigorous effort we did escape.

Reinforcement of two other companies soon joined us and, leaving one company at the junction of the roads, we galloped forward, four or

five miles out the ridge road, to try to overtake the enemy but they outran us and got away. We captured two of their men whose horses had been shot in our charge, thus leaving them afoot. We took these prisoners to camp where rather an amusing conversation ensued between one of them and a colored soldier of my company. Talking about the "fool charge" we made as he called it, the rebel asked, "what kind of wild cats are you?" "Well, sah," the soldier replied, "we is black cats and am pretty hard to catch napping."

CHAPTER 4.

On February first, Colonel Ostand, with 300 of our regiment, joined an expedition of about 800 infantry under command of Colonel J. H. Coats, which left Vicksburg the day before on transports, with orders to proceed up the Yazoo

River as far as Greenwood, scouring the country on both sides of the river. Of course the Confederates heard of this contemplated expedition and gathered forces to harass it in every way they could. Two or three small "tinclad" gunboats accompanied us, but ours was the only cavalry. Gen. Ross' Texas brigade of cavalry, with three pieces of artillery, was disputing our advance, firing on our boats at every point of vantage, making it necessary for our cavalry to land once or twice every day and fight them off, the gunboats frequently shelling the woods on either side. Major Cook, in command of our cavalry when ashore, enjoyed the game but he lost several men in his various skirmishes. Our progress was slow. We reached Greenwood on the 14th.

On the morning of the 16th, Col. Osband was ordered to take 250 of his command and make a reconnoissance in the direction of Granada, a place 35 miles from Greenwood. We were in saddle at daylight and started, my company in

advance. We were in the heart of the enemy's country, which fact made it necessary for us to proceed with the utmost care and caution. Nothing unusual transpired for the first two hours when, being quite thirsty and seeing a housetop over a sharp hill about one-eighth of a mile to the left and on a road leading in that direction, I halted the advance guard and putting spurs to my horse, galloped up the hill to get a drink of water. As I neared the house, and about one hundred yards from it, I was surprised by seeing a lone Confederate cavalryman sitting on his horse, with his back to me, his leg thrown over the pommel of his saddle and earnestly talking to a young lady who stood just inside the gate. I could not hesitate; if I turned to retreat, he would hear me and perhaps shoot me in the back; if I dallied in the least, he might have time to gather himself and a duel might ensue. I took no chance. I dashed up to him and before he had time to right himself in his saddle, had him covered with my revolver and demanded a surrender.

He surrendered, and as I made him walk his horse in front of me down the hill to my command, he accused me of doing him a mean trick. He said he had ridden ten miles to have a talk with this young lady before leaving Canton with Forrest's brigade, which was to start the next day. I got no drink, but captured a prisoner and procured valuable information from him; besides I relieved him of his weapons, two new French revolvers which I still have. We proceeded on our way and struck the rebels' pickets within four miles of Granada, drove them back into town and made some demonstration, but knowing there was a whole brigade to contend with, we returned to Greenwood. We loaded our transports with several hundred bales of Confederate cotton and other stores found there, and on the 19th the boats with infantry and 75 of our cavalry aboard, started down the river. Major Cook, with about 200 of our regiment, made a circuitous trip through Carrollton and Blackhawk to join the fleet again at Sidon, 30 or 35 miles below Greenwood. We had sharp fights with portions of

Forrest's command at both these inland towns. We lost four men, killed. Major Cook, at the head of the column, dashed into Carrollton and scattered a company of rebels, capturing twenty prisoners, all Forrest's men. Lieut. Fred Fernald, commanding the advance guard as we approached Blackhawk, distinguished himself by charging 150 home guards who fired shot guns in the air and scattered like sheep. We reached Sidon on the 20th, with 43 prisoners.

We embarked on the transports, which were waiting our arrival, and started down the river. Having been in command of the rear guard all day of the 19th, and officer of the picket guard that night, and with portions of Col. Bill Forrest's Cavalry following and harassing us all the time, I did not get a minute's sleep from the time we left Greenwood, and when we reached Sidon on the evening of the 20th I was worn out. I secured a bed on one of the boats (the first I had enjoyed for a month) and slept for ten hours. I felt refreshed.

Our progress down the river was very slow; the enemy firing on us at every bend of the river, making it necessary frequently to debark and drive them off. We reached Yazoo City on the 28th. Our regiment was landed several miles above the city with orders to reconnoiter the country in all directions and place pickets on all roads leading into the town, the balance of the troops, with gunboats and transports, moving down to the city where the infantry landed and went into camp on shore. After placing pickets, as directed, we joined the main forces in the city.

On the next morning, Col. Coats ordered Major Cook of our regiment to take a detachment of forty men and reconnoiter the road leading to Benton, twelve miles out, and to go to the latter place unless prevented. When within four or five miles of Benton, he unexpectedly ran into Gen. Ross' Texas brigade of cavalary, composed of four regiments—3rd, 6th, 7th and 9th Texas Cavalry and a battery of artillery—which had just reached that point and was going into camp.

Of course Major Cook started back, but was closely followed by the Texans who sprang into their saddles and dashed after him. He did some splendid street fighting for six miles, holding the enemy in check at many points and saved his command, with the exception of six men killed and one officer slightly wounded.

We now knew the enemy was closing in on us, but we were instructed to hold Yazoo City until further orders. We doubled our guards and awaited developments. Our pickets were fired on every night, the enemy becoming bolder every day. On March 4th we learned that Gen. Richardson had joined Gen. Ross with his brigade of Tennessee Cavalry, composed of the 14th, 15th and 17th regiments, 1,000 strong which, together with Ross' brigade, gave them about 3,000 and a battery of artillery to attack our force of 1,100 in Yazoo City.

I, with my company picketed the Benton road the night of the 4th and was kept busy repulsing various attacks which was made on my outposts

during the night. I was relieved at sunrise on the morning of the 5th by Capt. Emery, Co. B, and went to our camp just above the city where we ate some breakfast and laid down to get a little sleep and rest. At about 8 o'clock Capt. Emery was attacked by a heavy force and driven back to a little redoubt about 400 yards from the city where our regiment and part of the 11th Ill. Infantry were stationed.

Major Cook sent orders for me to immediately take my men, dismounted, to a redoubt on the Lexington road and hold that place if possible. The redoubt on the Lexington road was about 1,500 yards in a straight line north of the redoubt on the Benton road, the country intervening being hilly and covered with a dense growth of shrubby timber. By this time heavy fighting was going on on the Benton road where the enemy made their main attack. Major Cook had ordered all the horses sent to camp and with his men dismounted, occupied the redoubt. I had nearly reached the redoubt on the Lexington road

when I was horrified by seeing Richardson's Tennesseeans wedging in between me and our main command, pushing on in large numbers with the view of cutting me off. I hastened back and reached the city just ahead of the enemy. Lieut. Carson now joined me with a few men he had gathered up in camp and for fully an hour we fought from house to house, making our way to our regiment. The enemy was so numerous we could not make a straight run, else they would see us and shoot us in the back, so we had to dodge behind every house we came to, deliver a volley and while the smoke was clearing away, run for the next shelter. The 14th Tennessee Cavalry, led by Major J. G. Turmand, followed us closely, and while trying to rush us from shelter at one stand, the Major was killed, falling in front of his men. I lost three men, killed, and had a bullet put through my coat collar which nearly frightened me to death. We succeeded in reaching our regiment at the redoubt on the Benton road about 11 o'clock, the enemy following and now completely surrounding our position. Major

McKee, who was Major Cook's senior, now came and assumed command of the redoubt.

Major Cook had already received a flag of truce with a demand from Gen. Ross for the surrender of his forces, with the verbal statement that all our "niggers would be killed if taken by storm." Major Cook would not receive the communication, sending word to Gen. Ross to put ALL he had to say in writing. When Lieut. Carson and myself reached the redoubt we were ordered to take position in the ditch outside and on the northwest side of the little earthwork confronting the 9th Texas Cavalry which lay behind the brow of a hill not more than 150 yards from us, and be ready to help repulse an assault which threatened us after Major Cook declined to surrender.

We were surrounded with superior force of the enemy on every side, and artillery firing at us from three different directions; our chances looked slim. The enemy had surrounded our redoubt and by doing so had cut off Col. Coats with

the larger part of his command, holding him on the river bank in front of the city where Gen. Richardson kept him engaged all day.

We had no artillery and only the little redoubt for protection. Lieutenants Eugene Walker, Archebald Stewart and twenty men of our regiment lay dead, and with less than 400 men now with us, things looked blue. We realized that the fight would be desperate with the odds against us. The Texans outnumbered us, had artillery and had a burning desire to destroy our regiment. They were good fighters and determined, but conditions were such that WE COULD NOT SURRENDER. Soon the expected charge was made on our works. We held our fire for short range and repulsed it handsomely. Soon another demand for surrender was borne to Major McKee under flag of truce. After a short consultation with Major Cook, Major McKee replied to Gen. Ross: "x x x In answer I can only say that I have no idea of surrendering x x x." Again they charged our works, and were again repulsed. The storm of bullets and shell for the next fifteen

minutes was terrific. Then another flag of truce approached with a third demand from Gen. Ross for surrender which said, "I regret for the sake of humanity that you x x x do not surrender the redoubt which I can certainly storm and take x x x. If you have no reply to make, we will resume operations when the white flag is down from both your line and mine." To this demand, Major McKee made no written reply, but told the bearer to "tell Gen. Ross to take down his flag as soon as he reached the line." (R. R. Vol. 32 Series 1, p. 328).

Another desperate attack was made upon us with shot from every side and shells hurled at us from six pieces of artillery. Although suffering heavily from loss of killed and wounded, we held our position. It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon and firing seemed to slacken a little. Major McKee asked Major Cook to select a small force and make a sortie in the direction of the city. Major Cook designated myself and Lieut. Carson for this work, and with twenty men we dashed out with a yell and actually, and to our

astonishment, doubled back the right wing of the 9th Texas Cavalry.

Major McKee and five or six men from the redoubt joined us soon after the Texans began to give way. The enemy's whole line seemed to be thrown into disorder and they did not rally again, but withdrew from our front a short time before sunset. This was an all day, bitter, fight against odds. Gen. Richardson—who was the senior Confederate General in command—said and reported to his government that "we"—he and Gen Ross —"concluded that to carry the work by storm would sacrifice too many valuable lives and was not worth the price." So the battle of Yazoo City ended.

While our regiment lost two officers killed, three wounded and fifteen or twenty men killed, we did not lose a horse or a dollar's worth of equipage, nor did we lose any, from our regiment, as prisoners. Ten or twelve of the 11th Ill. Infantry went out and were captured, thus avoiding

the attacks made upon us, and the danger of being taken "by storm."

The next day (March 6, 1864) Col. Coats received orders to evacuate Yazoo City and return to Vicksburg. Our regiment went into camp at Hayne's Bluff where we remained for about two weeks.

CHAPTER 5.

On April 20th we accompanied an expedition, commanded by Col. Schofield, which left Vicksburg to go to Yazoo City. Before we reached the latter place, we met Gen. Wirt Adam's brigade of Mississippi Cavalry, with four pieces of artillery, in a position well chosen, which disputed our advance. We engaged them for an hour, but finding them too strong for our force, Col. Schofield ordered the command to fall back to Liver-

pool Heights on Yazoo River, and go into camp for the night. As we quit the field and were falling back, the enemy undertook to rush us and cause a stampede. Capt. Emery with Co. "B" and myself commanding Co "C" were acting as rear guard. Continuing to fall back to reach our camp before night, the rebels became emboldened and pressed our rear and flanks with vigor, so much so that they lost discretion and failed to realize what might happen. The roads were very dry and dusty and as we passed through a lane, three-quarters of a mile long, and entered the timber beyond, a whole regiment came dashing after us in column of fours, riding ahead of their flankers. They were just entering the lane when I asked permission to be allowed to charge them.

Major Cook, commanding our regiment at the time, thought it a dangerous undertaking as we had the weaker force, and it might bring on a general engagement in which event he would want all his regiment well in hand. Being in the rear, I saw the reckless manner in which the

enemy was approaching. I urged my request, saying I wanted but few men and believed I could dampen their ardor for further fighting that day if I might go at once. The Major then consented and formed an ambush in the woods a short distance from the end of the lane while I selected fifteen of the best mounted men in my company and was ready for the dash. By this time, the lane was full of the enemy's column, and as it was about to enter the woods at our end, the Major gave them a volley and onto them I dashed with my little band. The Major, Capt. Emery and myself had figured out results correctly. The enemy was careless, the lane filled with their troops and the dust so dense that they did not know but that our whole command was after them. They were taken by surprise and in utter disorder tried to escape in all directions.

I charged through them for nearly a mile. We were not bothered any more that day. For leading this charge, I received special mention in the official report (R. R. Vol. XXXII. p 674). There

were some thrills connected with this ride. The enemy, taken by surprise, and greatly demoralized, became helpless. Many of them rode to the fence and hurled themselves from their saddles over into the fields to make their escape. One gallant fellow, about half way down the lane, well mounted and with saber drawn, was trying to restore order and rally his men. As I dashed along to pass him, he turned in saddle to give me a right cut with his saber, which he would have done, and perhaps killed me, but just at that moment he fell from his horse.

We learned afterward that five dead men and quite a number of wounded were picked up in that lane. We left them for their friends to look after, and proceeded on our way. I had two men slightly wounded and my horse received a flesh wound across the breast. Our regiment became very popular and stood high in the estimation of the authorities. Gen. Hurlbut, in reporting conditions in the Yazoo Delta, wrote, from Memphis, in April, 1864, to Gen. McPherson: "Osband's

Negro Cavalry are good, and if properly armed they will handle Ross' brigade."

Our Colonel (Osband) having proven himself a superior Cavalry leader and strategist was designated, by orders, to command a Cavalry brigade thus leaving our regiment under command of Major Cook. On May 4th we joined an expedition, commanded by Gen. McArthur, which left Vicksburg for the purpose of driving the enemy out of the country between there, Black River, Benton and Yazoo City. We met strong opposition and had heavy skirmishes every day. On the 13th we encountered a heavy force, commanded by Gen. Wirt Adams near Benton, which engaged us in battle. The fighting was fierce and stubborn on both sides, lasting about two hours, when the enemy withdrew. It was in this fight that my warm personal friend, Capt. Geo. C. Starr of Co. "D" was shot and killed while loaning me some cartridges for my revolver. He was a courteous gentleman and a brave and fearless

soldier. He was never happier than when on the firing line, and there he met death bravely and with a smile.

I was fortunate in retaining good health, generally, from the time I entered the army in 1861 until now when, on account of campaigning so continually in the Yazoo valley, the home of malaria, water moccassins and mosquitoes, for more than a year, I was attacked with a virulent case of ague which confined me to my quarters in Vicksburg for three weeks. I nearly died and think I would have handed in my checks if I had not discharged the local physician who fed me on thirty-five dollars worth of little no account pills and indulged in the use of many long technical words trying to explain the nature of my ailment. I finally grasped the situation and concluded that it was five dollars per which was prolonging my sickness, so I paid him, took a few vigorous doses of quinine and got well. I was prevented, by enfeebled health, from being with my regiment on its expedition, with other troops, to Jackson, Miss., which left Vicksburg July 2nd, 1864. It

was on this expedition on the 5th in a desperate Cavalry fight that my personal friend, the chivalrous Joseph Sedgwick, was struck by a shell and instantly killed. The regiment lost seventeen men, killed and wounded, in this engagement.

On July 11th, 1864, our regiment joined an expedition, commanded by Brigadier-General Ellet, to scour the southwestern part of Mississippi from Vicksburg down. As Col. Osband was in command of a Cavalry brigade, Major Cook commanded our regiment. I was in command of Co. "C". (Although but a Lieutenant, it fell to my lot to command a company in every engagement I have mentioned, but one.)

The enemy had strong forces along Pearl River, south of Jackson, and they sent detachments to attack us at every convenient point. We were engaged every day in skirmishes of greater or lesser dimentions. We proceeded by way of Black River, Edwards Station, Utica and Port Gibson, reaching Grand Gulf at 7 o'clock P. M. on the 15th with the rebels trailing closely and

hanging onto our flanks with strong force. Our regiment was in the rear of the column that day, and had several encounters with the enemy, who made attacks upon us, but with great caution. They were Gen. Wirt Adams' men and did not forget their indiscretion and jolt they had received near Liverpool Heights in April. They had commendable respect for our regiment ever after.

When we encamped for the night at Grand Gulf, to our regiment was assigned the duty of picketing the various roads leading in from the interior. (Grand Gulf is on the river). Major Cook, knowing the enemy was numerous and bold, placed his pickets with great care and in such positions that they could not be taken by surprise. The country back of Grand Gulf is very broken with ridges extending in every direction. One company of our regiment was placed a half mile out from our camp on the Grand Gulf and Port Gibson road in a well chosen position. We felt safe for the night but before sunrise the next

morning that picket post was suddenly and vigorously attacked by a full regiment, the 7th Mississippi mounted infantry, which drove the vedettes back onto the reserve. We were still asleep but Major Cook, hearing the firing at the picket post, ordered the regiment to fall in, dismount, and led in double quick out the road. He took a ravine to the left of the road to flank the enemy, but my company, being in the rear of the column, I kept straight on toward the picket post, which was now being strongly pressed.

Just before reaching the pickets, I discovered that the rebels (who were dismounted) were making a movement to flank them on their right and I ran my company out on a ridge to the right of the road to confront them. The enemy was now crossing one of these ridges, which ran parallel with the one I was on and about three hundred yards from me. They saw me and dashed forward to charge my position. Seeing this, and knowing that Major Cook was, by this time, menacing their right flank, and seeing that, though they outnumbered me, they were not moving in good order, I decided to meet them with a charge, which I did with a perfect outburst of

defiance when they broke and most of them escaped. I succeeded, however, in capturing Major A. E. Peyton, their commander, who was gallantly leading his men, but the balance, greatly to the disgust of Peyton, who, in his own language, said, "my men flunked at the crucial moment." Major Cook was well on their flank by this time and would have captured many if they had not retreated hastily.

When Peyton steped toward me to surrender, one of my men, not understanding his motive, leveled his carbine at him and would have killed him had I not intervened. I sent the Major to the rear by a Sergeant and one man and continued to follow the retreating enemy. The Major was exchanged a few weeks after for Major Shorey, 1st Mississippi Mounted Rifles, who was captured on this trip while commanding the rear guard of our column. Peyton returned to his regiment and, I learn, was made Colonel.

Some twenty-five years after the war, I saw

in some paper the name of Col. A. E. Peyton, Satartia, Miss., and I wrote him a card, asking if he was the same Peyton I met at Grand Gulf in a little fight we had there on the 16th of July, 1864, where I had the honor of receiving his surrender. He answered promptly and in a generous letter, saying he was the man. He referred to the incident of the surrender and stated that he owed the latter years of his life to my timely intervention. He said Gen. Wirt Adams had ordered him to make a night ride attack and drive in our pickets in the morning, ascertain our location and strength and report to him. He further said he carried out instructions to the letter except that he DID NOT REPORT. Major Peyton was a veteran of the Mexican war, serving under Col. Jefferson Davis. He became prominent in politics in Mississippi after the Civil War.

The Confederates had strong forces in the southern part of Mississippi and in East Louisaina engaged in conscripting recruits for their army and securing supplies from that rich productive

section for their support and for the further purpose of trying to secure a passway across the Mississippi River to enable reinforcements and material to reach them from Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas, and to our branch of the army was assigned the duty of watching them and preventing the consummation of their plans, as far as possible. This kept us busy all the time. On October 1st we joined an expedition composed of detachments from the 2nd Wisconsin Cavalry, 4th and 5th Illinois Cavalry and two sections of artilery, 1,250 strong, all under command of Col. E. D. Osband, to make a survey of the river below, and to break up a considerable force of Confederates which was reported concentrating at Woodville, Wilkinson Co., Miss. Woodville is 18 miles east of Fort Adams on the Mississippi. We took boats at Natches, Miss., on the 4th and proceeded down the river to Tunica Bend where we disembarked and started inland. We met opposition at once but with small forces, so we pushed on reaching Woodville the night of the 5th. From dispatches captured, we learned that the enemy

was concentrating to give us battle and drive us out of the country. Col. Osband, always careful, watchful and ready, put his command in camp that night in a well chosen position about a half mile south of the town on what was known as the Sligo road. A road leading from Bayou Sara to Woodville lay about three-quarters of a mile east of the road we were on and running nearly parallel with it. About midnight, a scout brought a negro into camp, who informed Col. Osband that a large force of rebel cavalry with artillery under command of Col. Gober were encamped on the plantation of Judge McGehee, about three miles from us on the Bayou Sara road, and that he heard the Colonel tell Judge McGehee that he would attack us early in the morning. He expected Col. Scott with two Louisiana regiments to join him and he said he would "eat you up."

With this information Col. Osband decided that he would be the first to strike. He ordered Major Cook with our regiment, the detachment of the 5th Illinois Cavalry and one section of

artillery, to attack the enemy on their extreme right, east of the Bayou Sara road, at daylight in the morning, while he would, with the balance of the command, move on their left. We were in our saddles and moving before dawn. Of course the enemy heard us, and threw out a line to meet us, their three pieces of artillery being placed on a slight elevation near the road, and their whole line sheltered by a growth of scrubby timber.

There was a deep ravine extending east and west, about two hundred yards in front of their position and between us and them. Major Cook with our regiment in advance, moved on a trot crossing the Bayou Sara road, then south of the McGehee plantation. He had a guide with him who knew the lay of the land perfectly. There was a bridge crossing the deep ravine, on the Bayou Sara road, and another temporary bridge, for plantation use, a third of a mile east of the former, and in the large field across which we were advancing. The guide informed Major Cook where this plantation bridge was. We de-

ployed hastily, the 5th Illinois crossing the Bayou Sara road, and our regiment east of them and extending down to the plantation bridge. The enemy soon opened fire on us with shot and shell. Major Cook, always quick to act, directed me to move forward rapidly with my company "C," dash across the plantation bridge, if possible, and after crossing be governed by circumstances. The enemy seemed intent on defending the Bayou Sara bridge—probably did not know about the bridge I was approaching—so I had but little trouble in crossing. The right of the enemy's line extended east to just opposite this bridge and their scattering fire, at long range, did me no harm. After crossing the bridge, I dashed through and passed to the rear of the enemy's right, doubling it back on their center. Major Cook led the regiment on, but had to cross this bridge in column of twos, which detarded his movement to some extent. With my company I turned to the right about three hundred yards in rear of the enemy's line, going west until I reached the Bayou Sara road. I was about to continue

my course when one of my men informed me that they were trying to escape with their battery down that road. I ordered head of column right about and as I formed line across the road I saw them putting their guns in battery to give me a raking shot. I had to act quick, so I ordered sabers drawn and with a yell that would arouse the natives, charged upon them, driving the men from the guns and captured their three pieces, together with Captain Holmes, the commander, several men and all their horses. As the enemy began to give way, the 5th Illinois Cavalry pressed forward and crossed the bridge on the Bayou Sara road. Major Cook moved forward, in order, on their right and soon joined me at the battery. Col. Gober, with his cavalry, made a detour to his left and nearly all escaped. So we captured Holmes' Louisiana Battery, dispursed Gober and saved ourselves from being "eaten up." We received many compliments from higher officials for our success.

Our Colonel (Osband) was now promoted to the position of Brevet Brigadier General and

placed in command of all the cavalry forces in and about Vicksburg. In November, 1864, General Hood was concentrating his forces for an attack on Nashville, and was drawing large quantities of supplies and reinforcements from Southern Mississippi and East Louisiana. To prevent this, Gen. Osband undertook to interrupt their means of transportation. The Mississippi Central Railroad was the main artery over which these supplies were being furnished. The General decided to disable this road and to do this effectively, he determined to destroy one of its bridges crossing Big Black River near Canton, and tear up as much track as possible. Other troops had attempted to do this but failed. To approach this bridge, we would have to cross an almost impenetrable swamp, while at the opposite end the ground was higher on which was a stockade and block house occupied by soldiers for the protection of the bridge.

Gen. Osband selected our regiment to do the work. Early on the morning of the 27th, we left our camp, near Deasonville, and started on

our perilous undertaking. Before starting, Major Cook, appreciating the hazzard, harangued the regiment, telling what was expected of it, and for every man to be prepared and determined to destroy the bridge no mater what the cost. Major Cook ordered three companies to push forward through the swamp and under brush to the river on either side of the railroad opposite the stockade (the river was not more than 200 yards wide) while he, with the balance of the regiment, formed in column on the trestle approaching the bridge, ready at a given signal to charge across. Of course we were dismounted. Those who had approached the river, opened fire on the stockade and block house, aiming at the port holes, thus making it dangerous for the enemy to approach them, and the column, led by the interpid Lieut. F. W. Calais, Co. "A," and Capt. A. J. Haynes, Co. "H," dashed forward, on ties, crossed the bridge and drove the enemy from their shelter, they retreating to the woods beyond. Major Cook was always in front pointing the way and giving necessary orders. We carried an ample supply

of coal oil with which we thoroughly saturated the timbers, and after piling large quantities of brush on it, set fire and thoroughly destroyed the bridge. Our loss was pretty heavy, but we accomplished the job, and interfered materially with Gen. Hood's plans. We then destroyed more than a mile of railroad track and returned to Vicksburg. Our regiment was highly complimented by officers high in position and by the War Department for the success of this undertaking.

Major General E. R. S. Canby, commanding military division of West Mississippi in General Order No. 81 dated, New Orleans, December 9th, 1864, recommended Major Cook's promotion, saying: "Subject to the approval of the President of the United States, Major J. B. Cook, Third U. S. Colored Cavalry, is hereby promoted to the Lieut. Coloncy of that regiment, to date from the 27th of November, 1864, in consideration of the gallantry displayed by him on that day when, with his men dismounted and having nothing but railroad ties for a path, he charged over the Big Black bridge near Canton, Miss., in the face of a

heavy fire, drove off the rebel force stationed on the opposite shore behind a strong stockade and destroyed the bridge, x x x The Major General commanding the District of West Tennessee and Vicksburg styles this affair as ONE OF THE MOST DARING AND HEROIC ACTS OF THE WAR." (R. R. Vol. XLV. part 1, p. 778). The President approved the order.

General U. J. T. Dana, commanding the District of West Tennessee and Vicksburg, learning that quantities of contraband goods was being sent out from Vicksburg to the enemy, and that spies were visiting Vicksburg and procuring information, revoked all passes in and out of Vicksburg and ordered that no further communication be allowed.

CHAPTER 6.

About the middle of December, I was officer of the guard around the city. It was a cold,

blustery day with a northeast rain pelting down. In making the rounds, when I approached the Jackson road, I found that the guard had halted a young lady, who was coming in. She was soaking wet and apparently nearly frozen. On asking her business, she informed me that when she left the city ten days ago, her sister, a Mrs. Riley, was very ill and she ventured to come to try to learn of her condition. I would not let her pass, but I invited her to come to our camp fire and warm while I sent a man with a note inquiring of Mrs. Riley's condition. She was fully recovered, and the information greatly cheered and satisfied the young lady (Miss Price). The next day I received a cordial invitation from Mr. Riley for me to bring a couple of friends and dine with him the day following. Captain Emery, Lieut. Matthews and myself accepted (we would never turn down such an invitation). We found Mr. Riley intensely rebel in his sentiment, but he was a gentleman and he treated us royally. He said he wished in some way to repay a debt of gratitude which he conceived he owed for the

courtesy shown his sister-in-law and his family by me. He said he knew the stringent orders of General Dana concerning communication across the line and felt that I endangered myself to rebuke. He was sincerely grateful and we were profoundly glad that we had excited his generosity. His dinner was excellent in every respect, the best we had during the war. I will have occasion to mention Mr. Riley again.

On the 21st of December, 1864, our regiment, then at Memphis, joined an expedition composed of about 3,500 Cavalry commanded by Gen. B. H. Grierson, to drive down through the heart of Mississippi, stop rebel conscription, capture and destroy Confederate property and stop supplies going to the enemy from that productive section. We took no wagons or artillery, carrying some hardtack, bacon, coffee and ammunition on pack mules. We were strictly in light marching order, depending on our ability to secure forage for our horses in the country through which we passed. We had to guard against attacks by Gen. Forrest from the north, Gen. Wirt Adams and Gen. Gholson from the east and south. We met and had

skirmishes with small forces of the enemy every day from the start. They were puzzled to know where to concentrate to give us battle. Gen. Grierson sent detachments in various directions each day threatening different points but always to come together at some designated place at night, so we kept the enemy guessing. On the 27th we learned, from captured dispatches that there was a force of about 1,000 rebels at Egypt, on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad, who were ordered to hold the place at all hazard and that reinforcements would reach there by the morning of the 29th. Gen. Grierson pushed forward to attack Egypt on the 28th. We found the enemy barricaded behind a stockade of railroad ties set on end. We attacked about ten o'clock in the morning, the first brigade, Col. Karge commanding, in advance. He, unwisely, charged the face of the stockade and was repulsed, losing forty men in the charge. Gen. Osband, with our brigade, swung around to the right and rear and as we were dismounting to attack in the rear, the enemy, after firing a couple of volleys at us, hoisted a white flag, and surrendered the garrison

to us. We had just started the prisoners, (between 800 and 1,000) towards Vicksburg with proper escort and were burying our dead when a long train loaded with Confederate soldiers, and with Gen. Gholson aboard, was seen apporaching from the south. Our regiment was sent to meet the train, and after some desultory firing, the train hastily withdrew. The prisoners all reached Vicksburg in due time.

We had traveled through fourteen different counties, seizing and destroying Confederate property everywhere. We now started in the direction of Vicksburg, the General dividing his forces, as much as prudent, so as to cut as wide a swath as possible.

Our brigade proceeded in a southwesterly course while the balance of the command swung to the south, but all to concentrate at Benton, in Yazoo County, by the morning of January 3rd. We passed through Ripley, Booneville, Guntown, Pontotoc, Egypt, thence to Lodi, and Viadan, capturing and destroying large quantities of Con-

federate property and disabling railroads as we went. At Bankston we destroyed a large factory where they were manufacturing cloth and shoes for the Confederate army. Near Lodi, Montgomery County, we captured a squad of Confederate soldiers who were driving a drove of 800 or 900 fine fat hogs to be slaughtered for the use of their army. The soldiers whom we captured were quite affable and we got along with them without any trouble, but the hogs were more sullen and apparently resentful; if we wanted them to go west, they seemed bound and determined to go east. We could not take the hogs with us and as they were Confederate government property we deemed it proper to destroy them, so we shot them and left them laying dead on the ground. We then proceeded on our way to join the main command at Benton, going by way of Winona.

On the morning of January 2nd, 1865, we moved toward Benton on the Franklin turnpike, confident in the belief that our strenuous work was done and that we would soon be in Vicksburg and obtain a few days rest. We felt that

we were safe from attack by any considerable force of the enemy, as we had so successfully out-maneuvered them thus far, but we were in the enemy's country where voluntary scouts were numerous and carried news swiftly. Gen. Wirt Adams, hearing of our scattered condition, with his brigade, made a forced march with the view of overtaking and destroying some separate portion of our command. He made a night ride and, to our surprise, appeared in our front, on well chosen ground, about 9 o'clock in the morning near Franklin. Our regiment and two companies of the 4th Illinois Cavalry were together, our regiment in advance, the balance of the brigade being six or eight miles in the rear. Our advance guard was fired on, but at first we thought it only one of the small bands which we met every day. Roads crossed at this place. Our column halted and as the advance guard reported the enemy coming into our road from the left, Major Ed M. Main, who commanded our regiment on this expedition, ordered me to dismount my company, hasten across through the woods and get in rear

of the squad (?) on the road on which they were said to be coming, and capture it.

CHAPTER 7.

My company was not at the head of the column but was about 400 yards from where the roads crossed. I hastened to obey the Major's order and at once dismounted and with forty men rushed through the woods feeling quite sure I would close the intended trap and catch the supposed squad of "Johnnies" while they were toying with our advance guard at the crossing of the roads. As I proceeded through the woods I heard more rapid firing at the head of the column and became apprehensive but I rushed on. About half way from where I started to the road I expected to reach was an open strip of ground, about 30 yards wide, extending to the road I was trying to reach, and in looking in that direction I discovered the road was full of rebels. They saw me as soon as I saw them and as I was cross-

ing the open space they charged down in column on me. I was in the trap and in danger of being ridden down by a superior number of mounted men. I saw that we were being attacked in force. If I hesitated or undertook to return to the regiment they would run over me, so seeing a clump of thick underbrush on the other side, I quickened my speed and reached it, hastily placed my men and opened fire, with carbines, on the enemy as they approached. But on they came between me and our regiment, and almost surrounded my position. I was in a close place, but I knew when Major Main heard our volleys he would send help. The enemy poured volleys into the brush at us demanding our surrender, and calling us "out of our name" (as the negroes say). Soon I heard the voice of the intrepid Lieut. Calais, who charged on the enemy and started them back to their main force.

Just at this time I was struck in the right arm by a vicious minnie ball which tore a gaping hole through the flesh and slivering the bone slightly. It was an ugly wound and as the ball had severed an artery the blood flowed profusely. My arm

lay limp and useless by my side, my pistol dropped from my hand, but I did not fall. I was the only commissioned officer with the company, and as we were being hard pressed, I stayed with my men, urging them on until the enemy began to fall back from my position when I fell, faint from loss of blood. I would have bled to death had it not been that our surgeon, Dr. W. T. Beadles, soon came, stopped the flow of blood and resuscitated me. When Major Main learned that my company was now without a commissioned officer, he assigned Lieut. S. H. Petengill, acting Adjutant, to the command, but before he had been with the company ten minutes he was shot through the heart and killed instantly.

As soon as I was able to stand, the doctor and one of my men, Wesley Ware, who stayed with me, took me into a small church which stood beside the road from which the enemy had just been pressed, where he more carefully dressed my wound and administered such stimulants as he deemed necessary. A number of other wounded were brought in. The battle was raging on the outside, and close by.

When the doctor was nearly through adjusting the bandages on my arm, an alarm was given by a 4th Ill. Cavalryman who came tearing down the road yelling "get out of the way, they are charging down this road." All left me but my faithful man, Wesley Ware, who fastened the bandage and helped me adjust my clothing, and then got my horse and helped me to mount. There was no charge down the road, but there would have been had it not been for the heroic action of Lieut. Calais, who hurled his company onto the head of the approaching rebel column, meeting them at a small bridge, where he killed their leader and forced them to fall back. The man from the 4th who gave the alarm was afterwards accused of having "cold feet" that day, and he never denied it.

The battle lasted for nearly two hours when the enemy withdrew and we felt—as Gen. Taylor told a friend he felt, when the Mexicans withdrew from his front at the battle of Buena Vista —d— glad of it.

Gen. Adams' brigade outnumbered our force

engaged, and were good fighters. I believe if they had not been exhausted from their all night ride they might have defeated us. Be that as it may, we were mighty glad to be permitted to proceed on our way.

After caring for our wounded and burying our dead, we proceeded on our way toward Benton, taking the body of Lieut. Pettengill with us, which on reaching Vicksburg, we forwarded to his friends in Illinois. My wound did not pain me much until it became cold and stiff, then the pain was excruciating. I was weak from loss of blood, but was able to ride my horse, and I determined to ride, with the command, into Vicksburg, a hundred miles away. I shall always remember that ride; it was torture but with the aid of my comrades I got along. While riding along, the day after we left Franklin, my bandages became loosened and blood began to flow again. Dr. Beadles suggested that we stop at the first house, where we could get some water and where he could more conveniently redress my wound. He, Capt. Coykendall, Lieut. Geary and

myself rode up to a log house on the wayside, and as we dismounted we heard a shrill female voice from the inside hurling the most abusive language at us, and commanding that "you devilish Lincoln hirelings and marauders, get off of my premises."

Time was precious with us and as Capt. Coykendall pushed the door of the cabin open, we saw an old lady sitting before the fire place with a poking stick with which she was stirring the fire around a sweet potato which she was roasting in the ashes. She wore an old bonnet and was smoking a long stemmed cob pipe. She cast a look of venom at us as the door opened and shaking her poking stick exclaimed: "Get out of here you Yankee thieves. I wish Gen. Adams had killed the last one of you." Capt. Coykendall told her we would do her no harm, and would not have stopped but for a wounded comrade who wanted some water and to have the bandages on his wound readjusted. As I was helped in the door, the old lady looked at me, and seeing me besmeared with blood and looking feeble, she at

once pulled off her bonnet, laid her pipe on the mantle and came towards me with outstretched hands and the kindliest and most motherly look, saying: "The poor man; will he die? Handle him carefully and put him on my bed." She then got some water in a gourd and giving me to drink she bathed my brow with her hand, speaking words of sympathy and kindness as she did so. She assisted Dr. Beadles in adjusting the bandages, and seemed more expert than he. Her only son was in the rebel army and she hated Yankees, she said, but the innate goodness of woman heart prompted this dear old lady to give aid and comfort to one in distress, no matter who he was. She declined compensation, with scorn, but we left her a quantity of coffee, for which she seemed grateful.

We reached Vicksburg on the 5th and I went to stop at the Washington Hotel. As I was helped from my horse and entered the lobby, the first man I met was Mr. Riley (mentioned some time back) who insisted that I should go to his house, and he at once called a hack to take me there. I was smeared all over with blood and bespattered

with mud, and I told him it would be an outrage for any one in my plight to appear before his family. I further told him I must have my negro man, Wesley, near me. He brushed aside all objections, telling me that Wesley could stay with his negro man and be within calling reach at any time, so I went with him.

We had been in the saddle for sixteen consecutive days, riding over 500 miles, encountering all kinds of weather—rain, sleet, snow and sunshine—camping without shelter and with no opportunity to attend to sanitary conditions, this, together with my besmeared condition, incident to my wound, made me a fright. I sent to a store for some clean clothing and after being groomed by Wesley, I felt more respectable.

I remained with Mr. Riley two days. He, his wife and daughter were as kind and attentive to me as they could be if I had been one of their own family. Dr. Beadles called every day and dressed my wound, which seemed to yield to his treatment nicely. I thanked Mr. and Mrs. Riley for their exceeding kindness, but they insisted

that it was their pleasure to have an opportunity to try to repay me for courtesies extended to their family the month before.

I hoped to meet Mr. Riley when in Vicksburg last year attending the big celebration, but upon inquiry I learned, with sorrow, that the whole family had passed away.

Our regiment was ordered to Memphis, and I followed by boat. We selected a desirable camping ground, pitched tents and were promised a period of rest. I did not go to a hospital as my quarters were made cozy and comfortable and, under the careful and skillful treatment of Dr. Beadles and the attentive and constant care of Wesley, I got along nicely, my wound improving all the time. I participated in no other battles. I made my valedictory at Franklin, Miss., that 2nd day of January, 1865, and I shall never forget the scene of the audience. Both were grand, but I thought the latter was more demonstrative than necessary and not appreciative of my effort at all; they shot me.

Our regiment made two or three other campaigns in early spring of 1865, but I was not with it, because of my wound. It had built up and maintained a high reputation; almost perfect in drill, discipline, unexcelled and always good in the field. We were not always successful but whenever we found it necessary to fall back in front of superior forces we could always do so, owing to superior discipline, in perfect order, and in such a way as to make it dangerous for any following foe to attempt to rush, or attack our rear. The War Department thought highly of our organization. Capt. S. M. Budlong, Inspector District of West Tennessee, sent from Knoxville, Tenn., to inspect the cavalry regiments in the district reported as follows concerning our regiment, in his July, 1865, official report: "Third U. S. Colored Cavalry; the superior condition I find this regiment in, should entitle it to a place in active service. They are superior to any regiment I have lately inspected in regard to drill, Manual of arms, perfect, dismounted drill also superior, executed with promptness and without fault, dressing rapidly. Major Main executed all

the evolutions of the regiment in my presence, and I could not detect any fault."

My wound was so much improved that, late in February I asked for, and received a leave of absence for thirty days to visit my home in Wisconsin. It was the first and only leave of absence, or furlough I had since enrolling as a soldier in August, 1861. My visit with my dear old mother and father was most pleasant and gratifying, and my trip beneficial to my general health. I returned to my regiment in due time. We were encamped at Memphis where we remained until we were mustered out in January following.

I could mention many instances of fine soldierly qualities and heroic actions of my comrades and fellow officers in both the regiments in which I served, but to do so would make this story too long, and besides I hardly think would be germane to this subject.

The Confederate armies surrendered in April, 1865, fighting ceased and our Union was saved. The soldiers under Lee, Jackson, Johnston and

Pemberton were as gallant and brave as the world ever produced; they fought with fury and desperation for a cause which the Lord decreed should not prevail, and, thank God, the sections are united again as never before; patriotism and loyalty to our country and our flag is the watchword everywhere.

Our regiment remained at Memphis the balance of the year, making many excursions through the country in various directions, gathering up government property and mantaining order. In August I was assigned the duty of settling some disputes which arose between some planters and their ex-slaves which I did to the satisfaction of all parties and without cost or trouble to either.

We were mustered out of service at Memphis January 26, 1866, just four years and five months from the day I enrolled as a soldier.

Comrades, you have all seen similar service and endured the hardships of war. You offered your lives and gave some of your best years in the service of your country, you preserved the

Union, insured freedom to all and made it possible for a reunited people to build up the best, the richest and the most resourceful government known to man. Through your effort you made it possible for the United States, with her vast wealth and inexhaustable resources, to successfully interpose in the great world war, bring autocracy to its knees and freedom and gladness to peoples of all nations. Your government does, and should, appreciate your services and the world owes you a debt of gratitude.

Had you failed in '61 to '65, the great help we were enabled to give in this wicked world war, to compel a surrender of the autocratic Kaiser, COULD NOT HAVE BEEN GIVEN.