



Very truly yours
Geo H. Allen.

FORTY-SIX MONTHS

WITH THE

FOURTH R. I. VOLUNTEERS,

IN THE

War of 1861 to 1865.

COMPRISING A

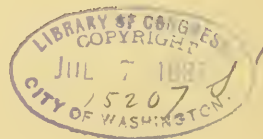
History of its Marches, Battles, and Camp Life.

COMPILED FROM JOURNALS KEPT WHILE ON DUTY
IN THE FIELD AND CAMP,

BY

CORP. GEO. H. ALLEN,
OF COMPANY B.

SOLD BY SUBSCRIPTION ONLY.
COPYRIGHT SECURED.



PROVIDENCE, R. I.: J. A. & R. A. REID, PRINTERS.

1887.

Entered according to Act of Congress in the year 1887,
By GEO. H. ALLEN,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress,
at Washington.

ES2B
3
1887

TO MY COMRADES OF THE
FOURTH REGIMENT RHODE ISLAND VOLUNTEERS,
AND ESPECIALLY OF

Company B;

TO THE FRATERNITY OF THE LIVING AND
THE SACRED MEMORY OF THE
DEAD,

THIS VOLUME IS MOST RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED BY THE
AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

I HAVE written this volume of personal history as a soldier in the rank and file of the Fourth Rhode Island Volunteers, and as a soldier's story I offer it unto all who may kindly favor it with their perusal. It is a simple, truthful story of life in the Army and Navy of the United States, as I saw it, during nearly the whole War of the Rebellion.

At the time of my first enlistment in Company B, of the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment, I began a journal, keeping a faithful record of everything that transpired under my own immediate observation that was worthy of note. From that journal this book is compiled.

I do not pretend that it is a full and complete history of the regiment. That work is left in abler hands than mine. But in the absence of a full and authentic history of the Fourth Rhode Island, it will give to the world some idea of the patriotism displayed and work accomplished by this regiment in the War of the Rebellion. The record of the Fourth Rhode Island Volunteers is unsurpassed; its services were invaluable, and it is high time that they were better known to the state, and to the country at large.

My comrades will find herein authentic data to enable them to write their own personal history, or to locate their

evidence in claims for pension, or to refresh their memory of the many reminiscences of their soldier life, and I trust it will prove to them a valuable book of reference.

It is expected that errors of omission or commission will be found in every history of the war. No such work has been found yet absolutely correct, and I do not claim that this book is exempt, but it contains nothing of a fictitious nature, and the story of our mutual experience is told only from the stand-point of the writer in the rank and file of Company B.

It also embodies the experience of our naval detachment, with whom I served on board the *Commodore Perry*, during the Burnside Expedition, and an appendix, embracing a complete roster of Company B, and the battles in which it participated.

That it may be read without unjust criticism, but with much pleasure and profit, is the only wish of the writer.

CORP. GEO. H. ALLEN,

Late of Co. B, 4th R. I. Vols.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

CAMP GREENE — THE REGIMENTAL COLORS — OUR FIRST LONG MARCH — GOOD-BYE TO HOME AND LOVED ONES — OUR JOURNEY SOUTHWARD — CAMP SPRAGUE — CAMP MUD — THE FIRST LONG ROLL — CAMP LIFE — VISIT TO THE SECOND RHODE ISLAND — REVIEWED BY PRESIDENT LINCOLN — REVIEWED BY GENERAL MCCLELLAN — COLONEL MCCARTY SUPERSEDED — ARRIVAL OF THE FIFTH NEW HAMPSHIRE — TO WASHINGTON TO EXCHANGE ARMS, PAGE 13-28

CHAPTER II.

TO LOWER MARLBORO — SECOND DAY'S MARCH, TWENTY-SEVEN MILES — SEVENTEEN MILES WITHOUT A REST — THIRD DAY'S MARCH, THIRTY MILES — VISIT OF GOVERNOR SPRAGUE — CAMP CALIFORNIA — AN INTERESTING PICTURE — NIGHT ATTACK EXPECTED — OUR FIRST PICKET DUTY — WINTER QUARTERS — CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES — AT ANNAPOLIS, MD., PAGES 29-43

CHAPTER III.

OUR FIRST PAY-DAY — STEAMER "EASTERN QUEEN" — THE GREAT FLEET GETTING UNDER WAY — STRANGE PASSENGERS BELOW — THE STORM ARISES — WRECK AND DISASTER — A GLOOMY SITUATION — GOING OVER THE BAR — LYING AT HATTERAS INLET — HARDSHIPS AND PRIVATIONS — VOLUNTEERS CALLED FOR FOR THE NAVY, PAGES 44-58

CHAPTER IV.

OUR NEW QUARTERS AND NEW EXPERIENCE — ARMAMENT AND FOOD — OUR DUTIES ON SHIPBOARD — CALLS OF THE NIGHT-WATCH — PUNISHMENTS — THE TRAVELING SPITTOON — ROANOKE — THE BALL OPENS — A SPLEN-

DID SHOT — WE GET AGROUND, AND GET PEPPERED ACCORDINGLY — A SMART LITTLE CRAFT — LANDING OF THE TROOPS — THE LINES ADVANCE — THE REGIMENT'S FIRST BATTLE — IT RECEIVES ITS BAPTISM OF FIRE — THE ISLAND IS OURS — THE "PERRY" AFTER THE BATTLE, PAGES 59-75

CHAPTER V.

ADVANCE ON THE ENEMY'S FLEET — WAITING FOR THE SIGNAL — CLOSE ACTION — TERRIBLE AND BLOODY WORK — THEY ARE OURS — AFTER THE BATTLE — CAPTURE OF EDENTON — EXPEDITION TO WINTON — THE DISMAL SWAMP — CAUGHT IN A TRAP BUT GET SAFELY OUT OF IT — CAPTURE THE PLACE — THE LAST OF WINTON — READY FOR ACTION, PAGES 76-87

CHAPTER VI.

SAIL FOR NEWBERN — SHELLING THE WOODS — LANDING OF THE TROOPS — ON THE ROAD AGAIN — A COLD AND DREARY MARCH — POSITION OF THE FORCES — CHARGE OF THE FOURTH RHODE ISLAND — GRATITUDE AND PRAISE FROM BURNSIDE — CLEARING THE RIFLE-PITS — OPERATIONS OF THE NAVAL FLEET — CONFLAGRATIONS — CAPTURE OF NEWBERN — ON THE MOVE AGAIN — CAPTURE OF BLOCKADE RUNNERS — OCCUPATION OF CAROLINA CITY — A DANGEROUS EXPEDITION — PASSING THE REBEL FORT — OCCUPATION OF BEAUFORT, PAGES 88-102

CHAPTER VII.

SURPRISE OF THE INHABITANTS — SCENES AND INCIDENTS — THE OLD SLAVE'S STORY — GREENBACKS BELOW PAR — TAKEN VERY ILL — JOURNEY TO THE HOSPITAL — EXPERIENCE IN HOSPITAL — SAD SCENES — CHANGE OF QUARTERS — BACK FOR DUTY — INVESTMENT OF FORT MACON — POSITION OF BATTERIES — THE BOMBARDMENT OPENS — SURRENDER OF THE FORT — EFFECTS OF OUR HEAVY FIRE — BURNSIDE'S CONGRATULATORY ORDER, PAGES 103-115

CHAPTER VIII.

CAMP LIFE ONCE MORE — SWORD PRESENTATION — LEFT ON GUARD — PICKETS DROVE IN BY A CALF — MARCHING ORDERS — “RICHMOND IS TAKEN” — GOOD-BYE TO BEAUFORT — ARRIVE AT FORTRESS MONROE — LAND AT NEWPORT NEWS — AT WORK AT THE BAKERY — TROUBLE IN THE REGIMENT — LEAVE NEWPORT NEWS — OFFICERS RESIGN — AT FALMOUTH — EVACUATION OF FREDERICKSBURG — RAID ON THE SUTLERS — SINKING OF THE “WEST POINT,” PAGES 116-132

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE WAY TO THE REGIMENT — HAMPTON HOSPITAL — SHORT RATIONS — EFFORTS TO GET AWAY — ARE SUCCESSFUL AT LAST — LAND AT ALEXANDRIA — FOUND AFTER MANY ADVENTURES — MARCH TO FREDERICK CITY — SOUTH MOUNTAIN — POSITION OF OUR LINES ON THE 16TH — BATTLE OF ANTIETAM — THE OLD FOURTH AT WORK AGAIN — CHANGING POSITION — THE SIXTEENTH CONNECTICUT RETIRES — NARROW ESCAPE OF OUR COLORS — OUTFLANKED AND BROKEN — MOWED DOWN LIKE GRASS — HEAVY LOSS IN COMPANY B — THE BATTLE OVER, PAGES 133-148

CHAPTER X.

AT PLEASANT VALLEY — ON THE MARCH AGAIN — LOVETTSVILLE — CAMP STARVATION — BURNSIDE PROMOTED — A RACE DOWN THE VALLEY — TIRED OF MARCHING — ARRIVE OPPOSITE FREDERICKSBURG — A MUDDY EXPEDITION — DISHEARTENING SITUATION — CONDITION OF THE ARMY — THANKSGIVING — FREEZING TO DEATH, PAGES 149-160

CHAPTER XI.

OPEN FIRE ON THE CITY — PREPARATIONS TO CROSS — POSITION OF THE REBEL LINES — THE GREAT TOBACCO CAPTURE — THE REGIMENT CROSSES THE RIVER — THAT COLD NIGHT ON PICKET — STEALING A BED OF HAY — THE BALL OPENS — TERRIBLE SLAUGHTER — “FORWARD, FOURTH RHODE ISLAND!” — DEATH OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CURTIS — AFTER THE BATTLE — SCENES AND INCIDENTS — EFFECTS OF OUR SHOT AND SHELL —

BREAKING UP HOUSEKEEPING—SPOILING OUR SUPPER—
POSITION OF OUR ARMY—TO THE FRONT AGAIN—
EVACUATION—A YANKEE TRICK—CAUGHT IN THEIR
OWN TRAP, PAGES 161-182

CHAPTER XII.

NEW ASSIGNMENT—MORE TROUBLE IN THE REGIMENT—
BIG PAY—ANOTHER MOVE—PREVENTED BY THE STORM
—DESERTIONS FREQUENT—PATRIOTISM AT A LOW EBB
—LEAVE THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC—NEWPORT
NEWS—PRESENTATION OF COLORS—LEAVE NEWPORT
NEWS—CAMP AT SUFFOLK—ADVANCE OF LONGSTREET
—BUILD A FORT—ACTIVE OPERATIONS—DOWN INTO
THE SWAMP—NO REST FOR THE WEARY—RECONNAIS-
SANCE IN FORCE—ARRIVAL OF THE ELEVENTH RHODE
ISLAND—BATTLE OF HILL'S POINT—LONGSTREET RE-
TIRES, PAGES 183-199

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE MARCH ONCE MORE—A DISAPPOINTMENT—GETTY'S
STATION—AT WORK ON THE LINE—MARCHING ORDERS
—GENERAL LEE'S ANNUAL EXCURSION—YORKTOWN—
LINES OF EARTH-WORKS—OUR REVOLUTIONARY FATHERS
—TO THE WHITE HOUSE—KING WILLIAMS—TERRIBLE
MARCHING—MEN DROP DEAD—SIX MILES TO RICHMOND
—ON THE BACK TRACK—RAPID TRAVELING—WIL-
LIAMSBURG AND YORKTOWN—HOME AGAIN IN OUR OLD
CAMP, PAGES 200-213

CHAPTER XIV.

THE REGIMENT WITH THE BIG KNAPSACKS—PADDY MILES,
THE COBBLER—CHANGE OF CAMP—FORT RODMAN—
THE LINE COMPLETED—BOWERS' HILL—POSITION OF
PICKET LINE—ADVENTURES ON PICKET—WRIGHT'S
MILLS—HALTING THE GRAND ROUNDS—COULDN'T FOOL
THE FOURTH—WATCHING FOR REBEL CAVALRY—OUT-
POST ON THE RAILROAD—THE GREAT DISMAL SWAMP
—PICKETS ALARMED—SUSPICIOUS NOISES—SOLD AGAIN
—BARRACKS ON FIRE, PAGES 214-229

CHAPTER XV.

NORFOLK — MURDER OF LIEUTENANT SANBORN — A DAUGHTER'S AFFECTION — PREPARING FOR THE EXECUTION — THE MURDERER'S DOOM — RETURN TO CAMP — THE DESERTER'S FATE — THE LAST, THE SADDEST SCENE OF ALL, PAGES 230-243

CHAPTER XVI.

RAID ON THE CONTRABANDS — A LUDICROUS SCENE — A DEMORALIZED DARKEY — GENERAL PASSES — RUNNING THE GUARD — DESERTERS — CALLS FOR REËNLISTMENT — HURRAH FOR THE VETERANS — TO RHODE ISLAND — PLEASURES OF THE VOYAGE — UP THE OLD NARRAGANSETT — HOME ONCE MORE, PAGES 244-253

CHAPTER XVII.

OFF FOR THE WARS AGAIN — EFFECTS OF RUM — A KIND PASSENGER — BACK TO OUR DUTIES — GOOD-BYE, NORFOLK — A PROMISE REDEEMED — PRISON PENS — REBEL INGENUITY — TREATMENT OF PRISONERS — A COMPARISON — RULES AND REGULATIONS — CAMP DUTIES — FEARS OF AN OUTBREAK — DEPARTURE OF THE FIFTH NEW HAMPSHIRE — THE INVALIDS — NOVEL MODE OF ESCAPE — GOOD-BYE, POINT LOOKOUT, PAGES 254-270

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT THE FRONT AGAIN — LOCATION OF OUR CAMP — DANGEROUS LIFE — THE "NINE HOLES" — OUR MEN BEGIN TO DROP — LIFE IN THE PITS — DEATH ALL AROUND US — LIVELY TIMES — FAMILIARITY WITH BLOODSHED, PAGES 271-279

CHAPTER XIX.

BEGINNING OF THE MINE — ALL READY — PLANS OF ATTACK — PREPARE FOR THE ASSAULT — THE EXPLOSION — "FORWARD, FOURTH RHODE ISLAND!" — CONFLICTION OF ORDERS — THE FORLORN HOPE — THEY MEET THEIR MATCH — RECALL OF THE TROOPS — AFTER THE BATTLE — HORRIBLE SCENES, PAGES 280-293.

CHAPTER XX.

TRYING THEIR HAND — THE BOMB-PROOFS — A SECOND DELUGE — TRADING WITH REBEL PICKETS — FIRE-WORKS — ANOTHER FUSILLADE — BATTLE OF WELFON RAILROAD — PLAYED OUT — ALL RIGHT AGAIN, PAGES 294-302

CHAPTER XXI.

ON PICKET — THE VEDETTE GUARD — OUTFLANKED — SOLD AGAIN — OUR NEAREST NEIGHBORS — TIME OUT OF THE FIRST THREE YEARS' MEN — IN A BAD FIX — BOYS GONE HOME, PAGES 303-310

CHAPTER XXII.

HATCHER'S RUN — ANOTHER BATTLE — THE CLASH OF ARMS — SECOND CORPS OUTFLANKED — THE LINE OF RETREAT — WHISTLING THEM INTO THE UNION — INDUCEMENTS TO DESERT — ELECTION DAY — THANKSGIVING — A NEW LOCATION, PAGES 311-321

CHAPTER XXIII.

FORT HELL — ARMAMENT — THE PICKET LINES — ANOTHER MOVE — TWENTY MILES ON A STORMY NIGHT — THE HARDSHIPS OF A SOLDIER'S LIFE — OUR WORST AND HARDEST MARCH — SHELLING US OUT — A SPLENDID SHOT — LIFE IN FORT HELL — A COOL ADJUTANT — PICKETS ALARMED, PAGES 322-332

CHAPTER XXIV.

ALL QUIET ALONG THE LINES — REBEL DESERTERS — MAKING GABIONS — PROSPECTS OF PEACE — OPEN TO VISITORS — ARTILLERY DUELS — CITIZENS SKEDADDLE — NEWS FROM SHERMAN — NEARLY A TRAP, PAGES 333-341

CHAPTER XXV.

FALSE ALARMS — ON THE ALERT — BATTLE OF FORT STEADMAN — LAYING FOR THEM — A NARROW ESCAPE — ACTIVITY ON BOTH SIDES — THE BALL OPENS — AT IT AGAIN — CHARGE OF THE "ZOU-ZOUS" — THE ENTRY INTO PETERSBURG — FATHER ABRAHAM HEADS THE LINE — ON THE MARCH — DEATH OF THE SOLDIER'S FRIEND — TOUGH TRAVELING — LEE SURRENDERS, PAGES 342-357

CHAPTER XXVI.

ABOUT FACE — STARVING FOR THE LAST TIME — A DARK DAY — BACK TO PETERSBURG — UP TO ALEXANDRIA — THE GREAT ARMIES BREAKING UP — MUSTER OUT OF THE FOURTH VETERANS — ALEXANDRIA TO PHILADELPHIA — LOSS OF A COMRADE — ALL HAIL, PROVIDENCE — HOME, SWEET HOME — GOOD-BYE, PAGES 358-368
APPENDIX, 369-389

September, 1861.

CHAPTER I.

OUR NEW EXPERIENCE.

OUR first camp was called Camp Greene. It was situated on the Providence and Stonington Railroad, about eight miles from Providence, and just north of the village of Apponaug. It was a fine, clear, level piece of land, just suited for the purposes of a camp.

As the different companies arrived from the recruiting stations, at various parts of the state, and aligned their company streets and pitched their numerous tents, the ground heretofore devoted to the pasturing of cattle, etc., assumed a fine military appearance, and by the time the regiment was full, presented a beautiful picture—tents, uniforms, teams, and the other paraphernalia of war, all being fresh, new, and clean.

Crowds of men, women, and children visited our camp daily. Indeed, each day seemed a holiday, and as we young soldiers were the centre of observation, in our bran new suits of blue, and on duty with our muskets and new equipments, we thought there was nothing so nice as the life of a soldier.

I had not been in camp but three days when I was taken suddenly ill with what was then called “camp fever.” Change of diet and habit of living had its effect upon me

seriously, and two weeks were spent under the surgeon's care in the hospital, I being the first hospital patient in the regiment. During this time I received kind care and treatment from those on duty at the hospital, from my comrades of Company B, and especially from Lieutenant Buffum, my company commander.

The regiment now being full, was exercised daily in squad, company, and battalion drill on the extensive parade-ground in front of the camp.

We were one day presented by the ladies of Providence with two beautiful stands of colors, state and national, and of regulation size. These were received with appropriate ceremonies and loud, ringing cheers from the long line of army blue that was destined to follow those ensigns of constitutional liberty through the fire and smoke of battle, and we will state here that never were they lost to us. Planted on the enemy's ramparts time and again in victory; borne aloft in the fiercest storm of battle's death-dealing hail; pierced and torn by the rattling grape or the hissing shell; bespattered with the life-blood of their heroic bearers, who fell with them facing the foe,—ragged, blood-stained, pierced, and torn, unfit for further service, they were at last returned to the hands that gave them, crowned with victory and honor, and were placed in the state capitol, where they stand to-day to tell to future generations their silent story of the heroic devotion of their followers, and the way that the Fourth Rhode Island Volunteers performed their duty.

A few days after the reception of our colors the regiment was reviewed by General Burnside, Governor Sprague, and other dignitaries, and made a creditable appearance; and thus, with the necessary guard duty, drills, etc., the time passed pleasantly until at last, on Friday evening, Oct. 4,

1861, we received our first marching orders, and began to make preparations to move next day.

Early Saturday morning the camp was astir, our knapsacks were packed, tents struck, the line formed on the parade for the last time, and at about 11 o'clock we embarked on a long train of cars in waiting on the Stonington road. "All aboard!" and we began our journey. Arriving at Providence we disembarked, formed the line in the old Calender lot, near Sabin Street, and with our band, led by the venerable Joe Green, at the head of the column, we marched down Cove Street to Dorrance, through Dorrance, up Broad, High, and Cranston streets to Dexter Training Ground, thence down High, Westminster, and South Main streets to Fox Point Wharf, in all a distance of about five miles, with only one halt to rest. Our knapsacks, of course, were filled to their utmost capacity, for no man would think of going to war without being provided with everything that would seem needful. I well remember the contents of my knapsack, which I took as much trouble to pack as I would a trunk for a journey across the continent.

There was a full supply of underclothing, woolen blanket, rubber, three or four pairs of socks, half a dozen nice handkerchiefs, dress coat, fatigue cap, supply of ink, letter paper, and envelopes, portfolio, photograph album, Bible, the journal in which these notes were kept, tobacco, drinking tube, comb and brush, shaving tools, two or three pipes, pins and needles, thread, buttons, etc., and other things that went to make up a soldier's kit in those days. Add to these the regulation equipments, haversack with rations, mostly obtained from home, and consisting of cold meats, bread and butter, cheese, pie and cake, and other food. Then there was the canteen, filled with — well, say coffee; and then there were the patent water filters, knife

and fork, spoon, cup and plate, shoe brush and blacking, various kinds of medicine, and flannels for sudden changes of climate or weather, a pair of warm mittens for the coming winter, and other things carried in our pockets. Everything stated here was thought to be necessary to our new life as a soldier, and we would have found no fault if our knapsacks had been large enough to carry more.

What a difference one year in the service made. Just one year from this time we were resting in Pleasant Valley, Md., after the battle of Antietam, and this was about our condition: Knapsacks—we had none. A woolen blanket and a piece of shelter tent twisted together, and thrown over our shoulders; haversack loaded with a dozen hard tack and a small piece of “salt horse”; little bag of coffee and sugar, mixed together; all sorts of hats or caps; little to eat, but *plenty of ammunition*; dirty, ragged, and with a full assortment of “gray backs.” But we were *veteran soldiers* then.

Well, to return to our departure from Providence. Our march had been a long and tedious one under our heavy loads, and we were not sorry when we reached the end of it. Throughout the line of march the streets were thronged with kind friends and citizens bidding us God speed and a safe return home.

We went directly aboard the steamer *Commodore*. At 5 o'clock, P. M., the lines were cast off, the great paddle-wheels began to revolve, and we were slowly moved away from the wharf, leaving our homes, friends, and all that was dear to us, amid the cheers and good-byes of the multitude, the booming of cannon, and the inspiring music of our band; and though we tried to be cheerful, there was yet a feeling of sadness in our hearts—a prayer for the loved ones on the shore, whose tears of parting we knew were fast falling, and whose prayers for our safety and

final return were ascending on wings of love and faith to the great Father of all.

We might never come back again; and we gave an earnest and farewell look upon the old familiar objects surrounding our native place — perhaps our last, forever — until they faded from our sight in the deepening gloom, and then resolutely turning our thoughts from fond recollections of the past to the stern realities of the present and future, we sought a place to lay our weary bodies for the night's rest.

But until after midnight sleep was impossible. Rum was aboard, and had taken possession of the wits of a number of our men, who made night hideous with their howlings, fightings, and uproar generally. As we arrived off Narragansett Pier we came in collision with a schooner, bound up the bay, doing no material damage, however, beyond tearing off a portion of our wheel-house. In the night a heavy fog shut down around us, and we sailed slowly along, the surplus steam being let off in unearthly screeches of the whistle, which kept most of us awake till morning.

At last, daylight appeared in the eastern heavens, the sun rose from its bed of heaving waters, the fog disappeared, and we found ourselves nearing the mouth of East River. As we passed Fort Schuyler cheers from the troops ashore greeted us, and were returned by us with a good will.

In passing through "Hell Gate," we found the current so rapid and strong that our steamer was brought to a halt just above the whirlpool, and although her engines were working steadily, the enormous current against her began to set her back. Her engineer then crowded on every ounce of steam she was capable of carrying, and she began to gain headway, very slowly at first, inch by inch, until

she overcame the force and suction of the current, when she regained her former rate of speed and sailed majestically up East River, towards the piers at Castle Garden, where she was soon safely moored.

Our colonel, J. I. McCarty, formerly an officer in the regular army, here came aboard, and in about an hour we cast loose from the pier, and sailing down the bay, landed at Elizabethport, on the Jersey shore.

Here we took transportation by rail. We left this place at 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon, and after many wearisome delays on the road, we arrived at Harrisburg, Penn., about midnight. We had been promised a good supper at this place, but all we got was a cup of hot coffee. We stopped here over two hours, and at last, started for Baltimore. On this road, during the day, two of our men were severely injured by falling from the cars, but we met with no other accident, arriving in Baltimore about 10 o'clock Monday night.

Disembarking, the line was formed, and marching through the nearly deserted streets, we at length arrived at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Station, and clambered into the long train of "cattle cars" that were awaiting us. After a long, cold, and tedious delay of several hours, we at length got under way. Progressing at times very slow, and never above an average rate of speed, the day passed wearily until at three in the afternoon cries of "Washington!" "Washington!" resounded through the cars, and all eyes were peering forward to get the first glimpse of our nation's capital.

We were soon greeted with the first view of the huge, half-finished dome of the Capitol building, looming high in the air not far away, and began to get our traps together, ready to disembark. In a few minutes more we rolled

into the depot yard and were soon landed, when the inevitable "fall in" was heard, the line formed and immediately marched over to a large building near the depot, familiarly known as the "Soldiers' Rest."

Here we had a good wash, and refreshed the inner man with boiled ham, bread, cheese, and hot coffee, and the amount that regiment put away astonished the natives. Our haversacks were replenished, and feeling much better, inside and out, we took up the line of march through the city to Camp Sprague, arriving there just at dark, tired of our long journey, pleased with the novelty of our situation, but much disappointed with the view of Washington that we had obtained on the march.

Being the capital of our great and glorious country, we had expected to see marble palaces, splendid gardens, and parks adorned with statuary and fountains, wide streets lined with imposing buildings, and beauty and taste displayed in the general lay out and management of the city. Fancy our surprise at seeing so few large buildings, no parks or fountains, very few of what might be called handsome blocks, plenty of low, flat, or shed-roofed houses, of all sizes, shapes, and conditions, plenty of filthy mud and pond holes, with plenty of ducks, geese, hogs, and dirty juveniles wallowing therein.

We were glad to reach Camp Sprague. It was situated a short distance in the suburbs of the city, occupying a clear space of a few acres, and named in honor of the governor of our little state. On one side stood a row of barracks, built for the accommodation of our predecessors of the First Rhode Island Regiment, and which we now occupied for our quarters. They were quite comfortable, and we spent the evening in various ways until tattoo, or evening roll-call at 9 o'clock, after which we turned in; and

by the time taps or "out lights" were sounded, were fast asleep.

Reveille, or morning roll-call, roused us from our slumber, and soon after we ate breakfast and began to look about us, when the order came to "pack up" for another move. We were to change camp. The line was formed, and marching about half a mile toward the city, halted in a vast mud hole. Mud was everywhere. The real old genuine Virginia mud that was as slippery as grease and clung to our shoes with the tenacity of glue. "By the right of companies to the rear into column," came the order. Wading, slipping, stumbling through the sticky mass a column of companies was formed, and preparations to pitch camp began.

This camp received from officers and men very unan- imously the name of "Camp Mud." To keep us here for any length of time would engender sickness and disease among us, and soon fill our hospital and the soldiers' grave- yard. Therefore, two days was the length of our sojourn here, and on Friday, October 11th, we left it cheerfully and with much gratification.

At the foot of East Capitol Hill our next camp was estab- lished, some two miles from the former mud hole, and not much of an improvement. In view of this fact it was called Camp Mud, No. 2. We worked hard from the time of our arrival until dark, getting our tents aligned and fixed up permanently. Then spreading some nice clean straw on top of the sticky, damp clay, laid ourselves down, thoroughly tired out, for a night's good rest.

About 1 o'clock, while we lay sleeping so soundly, with pleasant dreams of home and comfort and peace, we were suddenly awakened by a cold, wet sensation creeping un- der us, and on rising to investigate found our clothes,

blankets, and bed wet through, and the water pouring through the bottom of our tent in streams. A heavy shower was in progress outside, and the water rushing down the hillside close by, swept through the camp. Neglecting, from inexperience, to dig a ditch around our tents to carry off this flood of water, we now suffered the consequences. Being green in the business, and not having as yet acquired the science of keeping dry in a wet house, some of us in moving around inside the tent would happen to touch the canvas, when immediately a torrent of cold water would pour down upon us from that spot. We could not better our condition while the storm lasted, so lighting our pipes, that fountain of consolation, we sat down upon our knapsacks to smoke and meditate upon the penetrating properties of rain water. Nearly every tent in camp suffered in like manner, and their occupants were forced either to lie in the water or sit up until morning.

The long, cold, stormy hours of the night at length passed away, the rain ceased to fall, the morning sun came forth in all its splendor, and we soon had everything dry and in good condition, not forgetting to dig a ditch around our tents to secure us against floods in future.

That night, feeling ourselves comfortable, we laid down to get the much coveted benefit of a good long night's rest. Our sleep was not disturbed until about midnight, when we were startled from our slumber by the beating of the "long roll." In our extreme verdancy we hardly knew what this was meant for, and lay awake for a while listening to the rattling roll of the alarm drum, until we heard the voice of Colonel McCarty crying out in excited tones, "Turn out." "Turn out there, men, lively." "Where are these officers?" "Get your men into line quickly." We jumped out of bed, buckled on our equipments in a hurry,

and got out into line, fully expecting the whole rebel army was close upon us. As soon as the line was formed and the regiment received the colonel's reprimand for not getting out more promptly, we were given orders to pack up, strike tents, and get ready to move. In the pitch darkness of midnight this was not very cheering, nevertheless it was to be obeyed, and setting to work, down came the tents upon which we had bestowed so much labor the day before, and in an hour's time everything was prepared to vacate the premises. At four the next morning the orders were countermanded and we were under the necessity of doing all our work over again, but we strongly suspected our camp was ordered down in punishment for not answering the "long roll" more promptly. We had many lessons to learn yet, and Colonel McCarty was an experienced and an excellent teacher.

An incident illustrating the care and oversight our colonel was wont to exercise in the regiment's behalf took place a few days after. One morning about 11 o'clock, when the company cooks were busily engaged in preparing the noon-day meal, with the camp kettles steaming and sputtering over the blazing fires, our colonel took a stroll along the line of cooks' quarters, and inspected the meat, beans, rice, etc., that were cooking, tasting of each himself. In this tour of inspection, he found several quantities of unpalatable food, and ordered the whole mess dumped in the swill heap, more drawn, and the commissary to see that it was good enough for the colonel's table, at the same time remarking that what was not good enough for him to eat was not fit for the men to eat, thus showing an interest in the welfare of his men that did not pass unappreciated by them.

On another occasion the regiment was on the parade-ground, engaged in wrestling with the mysteries of "bat-

talion drill." The officers, many of them, were as little versed in field movements as the men, and often gave orders that had the effect of mixing matters in a bad way. At last the old man waxed wroth, and as the regiment "closed *en masse*," amidst a confused babel of orders, he addressed them somewhat as follows :

"Officers, go to your quarters. The men know enough to go without telling." This was said in such a sneering manner that while it made the officers feel cheap, it pleased the rank and file immensely, and raised the colonel another peg in their estimation.

We were now invited to participate in a pleasant occasion at Camp Brightwood, the permanent camp of the Second Rhode Island Volunteers, situated about three miles away, the object being the presentation of a beautiful stand of colors from California to that regiment. The day was hot, and not knowing the route to get there, we got upon the wrong road and marched several miles further than there was any need of. The roads were dusty, and we welcomed the sight of a small stream of water that crossed the road, and quenched our thirst with the muddy fluid, it being the first time in our experience that we were obliged to drink muddy or brackish water.

We arrived at Camp Brightwood about three in the afternoon, and after a short rest and stroll about the Second Regiment's beautiful camp, the line was formed to witness the ceremony of presentation. After due preliminaries, a beautiful national flag was consigned to the care of the Second Regiment, who received it with nine hearty cheers. A number of distinguished personages were present, including President Lincoln and Governor Sprague, of Rhode Island. Everything passed off pleasantly, and after the affair was over, we were dismissed and given the freedom of

the camp. Many old friends and acquaintances were found and formed among the boys of either regiment.

Several barrels of crackers and cheese were set out for our lunch, and after satisfying our hunger, the drums beat to "fall in," and bidding our brothers of the Second a hearty good-night and good-bye, (as we expected soon to go to the front,) we left their pleasant homes, and arrived at our camp about nine in the evening, well tired out, but much pleased with our visit.

A few days after, we donned our best attire, gave our equipments and shoes an extra shine, and marched up through the streets of Washington to the White House, and passing through the grounds, were reviewed by President Lincoln and Governor Sprague, and received high commendation for our neat and soldierly appearance and marching.

We were soon after inspected and reviewed by General Casey in our camp. Thus time passed with us in drills, inspections, and reviews, and the minor details of camp life until Saturday, October 26th. In the afternoon of that day orders were received to pack up and strike tents. By seven in the evening the camp was flat, and all in readiness to move. We waited two hours, when at 9 o'clock orders came to pitch tents again, so we righted our quarters once more, and turned in for the night. The next morning at daybreak down came the tents once more, and after a hasty breakfast we formed a line of march, and passed out on the road to Bladensburg, Md., a little village four miles north of Washington, on the Baltimore road.

About half a mile this side of the town we went into camp. The place had been lately vacated by some other regiment, and the ground was covered with the *debris* of

their sojourn here. By night, after a hard day's work cleaning up the ground, we had established quite a respectable looking camp, much better than either of our previous ones, and it was called "Camp Casey, near Bladensburg."

Monday, October 28th, found us again on the march, but this time in light marching order, to East Capitol Hill. Upon our arrival there, we found a very large body of troops in line, among which we took our position, and were reviewed by Gen. Geo. B. McClellan, Commander of the Army of the Potomac. As he rode down the line we had a fine chance to get a good look at him, and as he passed by, his eagle eye scanned each man's countenance, taking in at a glance the character of the men he soon expected to advance against the enemy's lines. We were pleased with his appearance, and felt that under his leadership we could overcome the hosts of our enemy across the Potomac River.

After we had passed in review, the march was taken up for camp, where we arrived in the early evening, "broke ranks," put up our equipments, and made a grand rush for the cook's tent. "Taps" found us in bed, quite wearied with our day's march and field duty.

Wednesday, October 30th, we were regularly mustered into the United States service as a regiment, although our three years' enlistment dated from September 30th, a month previous. On account of some difficulty between himself and Governor Sprague, our colonel, McCarty, who had been with us from our first organization, resigned his charge, and Capt. Isaac P. Rodman, of the Second Rhode Island Volunteers, was commissioned as colonel of our regiment.

This change was not agreeable to our regiment, and was

the beginning of trouble that culminated, a few months later, in the resignation of nearly all our commissioned officers. We had learned to love and confide in our old colonel, McCarty. Rough in his manner, he yet possessed a kind heart, and watched over the interests of his command as a father would over his family. Severely strict in discipline, he was not more so with the men than with the officers, and it was in view of this fact that the regiment, comparatively green in the service, had so soon acquired a proficiency in drill and soldierly appearance that won the admiration and applause of old fathers in the service, and secured for us the post of honor in our new brigade.

We were sorry to part with him, and he was never forgotten by us. He took no other command during the war, and after it was over settled down to his business in Washington. He had always kept track of us, and took great pride in our achievements. Every man of the old Fourth was welcome to his hearth-stone, and could count upon his help and sympathy at all times.

The new colonel was received quietly, and immediately took command. Upon the same day we were reviewed by Gen. O. O. Howard, preparatory to entering his brigade.

Thursday evening, October 31st, one of the long trains of cars which were passing our camp almost every hour of the day and night, loaded with troops and supplies for the great army now concentrating around Washington, stopped in front of our camp, and a regiment called the Fifth New Hampshire Volunteers, just arrived from their native hills, disembarked, and went into camp next to ours. They had traveled a long distance, were entirely out of supplies, tired, and very hungry, and they sat down in their new camp to wait for rations to be brought to them.

Our boys of the Fourth perceiving their distress, with the

hospitality of a Rhode Island soldier, immediately took of their own rations to give to these hungry men. All hands turned out to help get their supper, and soon the fires of each company cook in the Fourth Regiment were blazing brightly, the full complement of kettles steaming merrily away, filled with coffee, meat, beans, or whatever else we had on hand, and in a short time, with the help of our willing hands, every man of that Fifth New Hampshire Regiment was provided with a good hot supper, which they received and devoured with a keen appetite, and many thanks and blessings on the heads and hearts of our Rhode Island boys. This little circumstance knit the hearts of these two regiments in an inseparable bond of friendship, and in after years was remembered and repaid with interest, as these pages will subsequently record.

Friday, November 1st, the regiment took up the line of march for Washington. Passing through the city, down Seventh Street to the end thereof, we entered the United States Arsenal grounds. The day was very warm, the roads dusty, and we were glad to rest under the shade-trees with which the yard was well provided.

The grounds were situated on the banks of the Potomac River, and covered several acres, flanked on the east by the armories, work shops, and other large buildings. North of these stood a large building of brick, four stories in height. This was the United States Penitentiary, and the place where the murderers of President Lincoln were hung.

After passing in line through the armory, and exchanging our old bronzed muskets for clean and bright ones of the same pattern,—old “buck and ball,” smooth bore,—we fell in line again and took up the march for camp, at which place we arrived about dark, having marched about fourteen miles, our longest march so far.

We were now fairly launched on our career as soldiers of the Republic, and sometimes caught ourselves wishing we had staid at home. The marches seemed long, the burdens heavy, the drills and reviews and inspections unnecessary, the hard beds of earth and cold nights of storm very uncomfortable. Our great desire to cross the river and meet the enemy had not as yet been granted, but, after all, we realized that the school of the *soldier* begins with the A, B, C.

If this short experience was a type of that to come, we had reasons to be thankful that our lot was to be no harder, for as time proved, this service we had passed was but child's play to our subsequent experience. We were now in preparation for active duty in the enemy's front. Then, and not till then, should we find out what it was to be a soldier.

November, 1861.

CHAPTER II.

MARYLAND.

THROUGHOUT the State of Maryland at this time, the same spirit of hostility to the general government that was so publicly manifested during the march of the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment through Baltimore on the 19th of April previous, was being duly exercised in an attempt to place the state on the side of the Confederacy, and to prevent those who were inclined to remain faithful to the principles of our forefathers from expressing their opinion at the polls on the occasion of the annual state election. It was openly declared that force would be used, if necessary, to prevent known Union men from casting their vote, thereby paving the way for an abrupt withdrawal of the state from the Union.

In consideration of these facts, and to protect the right of free and independent suffrage, it was considered necessary to station a force of troops at each of the more rebellious portions of the state, to prevent, if possible, any unlawful proceedings or attempt at dictation on the part of the emissaries of the Confederate States at this election, which was to occur on Tuesday, November 5th.

Consequently, on Sunday morning, November 3d, our brigade received marching orders. Blankets were rolled,

three days' cooked rations packed in our haversacks, forty rounds of ball cartridge provided for each man, and thus armed and equipped in light marching order, we left our camp at 10 o'clock in the morning, and started on the road to Lower Marlboro, situated about fifty miles away, and noted for its rebel proclivities.

The roads were in bad condition on account of the recent heavy rains, and the long line dragged along mile after mile until dark, when, filing into the woods near a place called Centreville, we halted for the night, having made about eighteen miles. The surrounding gloom of the forest was quickly made luminous by the numerous campfires, and an hour was spent in cooking, eating, and smoking, and discussing the events of the day's march, when the bugles sounded tattoo, the roll was called, and soon the whole force, but those on guard duty, were abed and asleep, with the forest trees for a covering and the star-lit canopy of heaven for a tent.

Before sunrise the next morning we were up, breakfast cooked and eaten, and just at sunrise took up our line of march. The roads were in much better condition, only an occasional mud hole to bother us, and these *were* a bother. They would extend from one side of the road to the other, and quite a distance in length. There was only room on each side to walk single file. Now, when the head of the column reached these mud holes, they branched off on either side from four ranks to single file, consequently delaying the crossing of those behind them. After getting over on solid ground again, they would march right along at the usual rate of speed, and, of course, gain considerable upon the rear of the line which would be obliged to run quite a distance to catch up, and thus oftentimes the line would be strung out a mile in length, because the officer in command neglected to halt the head of the column at regi-

mental distance after crossing these mud holes, and give the rear a chance to "close up" without running a mile or two to do so. But all these things were learned after a while.

So we trudged along that day at "route step," hour after hour, and mile upon mile, halting now and then for a few minutes' rest, and then "Forward!" would start us up again, and on through the woods, across the fields, until our aching limbs almost refused duty, and the question was passed along, "How much farther to Lower Marlboro?" At last we observed the head of the column turning off the road and filing into the fields and woods for a bivouac. "By right of companies to the rear into column." "Company halt." "Front." "Right dress." "Front." "Stack arms." "Right face." "Break ranks." "March." The above were the most welcome orders we had received that day. One of our mess takes the canteens and goes to hunt up some fresh water; another one brings wood and builds the fire, while the other two are fixing up a place for all four to sleep comfortably. Small boughs of the pine form our bed, over which is put a rubber and a woolen blanket to lie on, and the other three woolen blankets to cover us, with the other rubbers fixed to keep the rain off. By this time the coffee is boiling, haversacks are brought out, and diving into them we fetch up a piece of pork or bacon, and impaling it upon the end of a stick, toast it over the fire, and our supper is ready. After supper, which we enjoy with an appetite sharpened by our march and constant out-door life, we light our pipes and sit around the fire in pleasant conversation until tattoo, and after roll-call crawl in between the blankets with all our clothes on except shoes, and lying spoon-fashion, four of us together, are soon asleep. During the night one of us may wake up, and, tired of lying on one side, want to turn over, but

it can't be done unless all turn at once. There is no need of waking up the rest in order to do this. Long practice has got us pretty well drilled in this respect, and all that is necessary is to sing out "About face!" and immediately all the sleepers turn over on the other side, together, without disturbing the blankets or bed. This is done several times in the night without more than one being awake.

We had marched about twenty-seven miles that day and were very tired, consequently our sleep was sound until the drums beat the reveille the next morning.

We were now within three miles of our destination, and after breakfast moved forward to a position near the town of Lower Marlboro. A detail was sent into the village to patrol the streets and prevent lawlessness or rioting. The remainder of the regiment made themselves comfortable brush huts, and remained within call of headquarters all day, in readiness for an alarm, should we be needed in force. But no trouble occurred other than a few pugilistic encounters, which were quickly suppressed, and the day passed off quietly.

Our object in this direction being accomplished, Thursday morning at 8 o'clock we formed line and started back toward camp. Colonel Rodman led off on his fast stepping horse, the line of men stretched their legs far and fast to keep up with him, and mile after mile was passed without halting. For the first ten miles or so the boys kept together very well, but nevertheless showing the effects of their march. Ahead of us were a few houses composing a small village. We should probably stop this side of it: but we kept on; then we should stop the other side of it: but the colonel kept his horse's nose to the front, and we plodded on. We were now going into camp a mile or two ahead: but we still kept on past that place. The boys were now pretty well "tuckered," and began

shouting "Halt. give us a rest!" "Give the *horse* a rest, never mind the *men*," etc. Over twelve miles had been passed, but our colonel still ambled over the road as if he was bound for a country fair. Seeing no signs of a halt the men began to give out, and straggle along the road in the rear. Adjutant Curtis, with his rear guard, had his hands full to keep them moving.

Comrade Whitehead, myself, and one or two others, watching our opportunity, left the line while passing through a piece of woods, and hid ourselves away from the prying eyes of the rear guard.

After resting an hour or so we started on, and espying a house over across the fields, went over to see what we could find in the way of food, etc. We knocked on the door and a frowzy-headed woman appeared, when the following conversation took place :

"How far is it to Centreville?"

"'Bout nine mile, I reckon."

"Is your husband at home? We would like to see him."

"He's done gone to Marlboro, *but the dogs is hyar*."

"Will you give us something to eat?"

"Aint got a thing in the house. You uns has done cleaned us all out."

"What will you take for that roast chicken on the table in there?"

"'Clar' to goodness, I done forgot that chicken. Gen'lemen, that's all there is. If I give you uns that, I shan't have no mo' tell ole man gits home."

"Well, we will give you two dozen soda crackers for the chicken," and it was passed out and we left the house and its mistress, and amidst the barking of the dogs, who did not molest us, however, made our way down the road, and finding a spring of water, sat down and devoured the chicken.

At length, after a distance of seventeen miles had been traveled, the colonel's *horse* gave out, and he was *obliged* to stop, and looking back down the road, perceived but a few men comparatively that had been able to out-travel the horse, the greater part of the regiment being straggled out for several miles in the rear. An hour was spent here to enable them to "close up," and then the order forward was given, and we started on again.

On account, we suppose, of the colonel's *horse* being in bad condition, our periods of rest were a little more frequent, and the regiment kept together very well. Late in the afternoon we began to make inquiries of people we met on the road, as to the distance to be traveled before reaching Centreville, our objective point. The answer given depended on the manner in which the person so asked was traveling. Here comes a man in a light team. He has passed over the road in a short time. His answer is, "Right smart five miles, I reckon." Here is another, an hour after, with a heavy team plodding slowly over the road. He "reckons it's a right smart nine miles." The longer they had been upon the road the further it seemed.

An old darkey leaning on the fence near by, and bowing and grinning all over his face, while his mouth resembled a country grave-yard, reckoned it was "right jam 'bout yer somewhar." Another had it "bout two sights and a jam bye," which being interpreted, means that if you traveled as far up the road as you could see, and then as far again, you would find it near at hand.

At last, towards evening, we passed a group of twenty or more darkeys standing at the gateway of a plantation, near by, and these informed us that it was "right over yonner, massa," and an hour later found us at halt for the night in the woods at Centreville, having marched about thirty miles that day.

Friday morning early we again started, rather stiff and sore at first, but we soon got limbered up, and shortly came in sight of the great dome of the Capitol building far away, and, nearer by, the village of Bladensburg, and the tents of our camp glistening white in the sunshine. At noon we arrived at camp. We were nearly all footsore from our hard and protracted travel, and a few were taken to the hospital unfit for duty. Colonel Rodman told us before being dismissed that we had done exceedingly well for a green regiment, having made about one hundred miles in four consecutive days.

But all that concerned us was to know that the colonel's *horse* was all right, and to get our well earned rations of coffee, pork, and bread.

We were soon rested and recruited, and time passed in the ordinary duties of camp life until Wednesday, November 27th, when we were honored by a visit from Governor Sprague, of Rhode Island. He inspected our camp and the condition of the regiment generally, and in the evening, in response to a serenade given him by our band, made a short speech to us, assembled at headquarters, during which he said that the people of Rhode Island had not forgotten the noble body of men sent out under the colors of the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment, and they placed implicit confidence in this regiment to sustain the honor and integrity of our little state when the hour of trial should come. That arrangements had been made to send us a supply of turkeys, chickens, and other "fixin's," that we might, upon the coming Thanksgiving Day (to-morrow) enjoy a feast of good things such as we had been wont to enjoy in years past at the home fireside.

Three cheers were given for Governor Sprague, of Rhode Island, and our prospective Thanksgiving dinner, but more especially for the dinner. The governor retired,

the crowd dispersed to their quarters, and the promise of a good dinner on the morrow filled the hearts of the regiment with joy and gladness.

Alas! Alas! Thanksgiving Day dawned upon us with a clear sky. We did not eat much breakfast, saving our appetite for those turkeys, etc., going out to the road occasionally to see if they were coming, and debating whether we should take our chicken cold, roast, fricassee, or *a la Delmonico*, when our pleasant meditations were cut short by the sergeants, who were shouting "Pack up," "Strike tents," "Fall in here lively." Now it occurred to us as civilians to answer, "See you blowed first," or "Hold on, what's your hurry," but we remembered that we were nothing but soldiers, and were bound to obey without hesitation.

In an instant the scene was changed. Down came the tents. Every one was soon busily engaged in packing his knapsack, and various suggestions were made as to the reason of this order. But it isn't for the private soldier to know, or even to ask the reason for anything. Many thought it a ruse to show how quick we could break camp, but the next regiment to us, the Fifth New Hampshire, was also packing up and that idea was abandoned, and soon the drums beat to "fall in."

About 9 o'clock, in heavy marching order, we started on the road to Washington. Passing through the city to the Potomac River we reached Long Bridge about noon, and crossing over set our feet for the first time on the "sacred soil of Virginia," and soon after the line was halted, and we sat down to eat our Thanksgiving dinner which consisted of a few "hardtack," a piece of "salt junk," and some water, scooped up from the ditch by the roadside.

Then resuming our march we arrived, late in the after-

noon, at a point about two miles from Fairfax Seminary, and encamped for the night, after a march of about twelve miles. The next morning we started on again, and after a tedious march through the mud until about noon, went into camp near the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, and about three miles distant from Alexandria.

This camp was prettily situated at the foot of a high hill, covered an area of over one hundred acres, and was occupied by the Fourth Rhode Island, Fifth New Hampshire, Forty-sixth Pennsylvania, and Sixty-first New York regiments, constituting the new brigade commanded by Gen. O. O. Howard. It was named "Camp California." These regiments were now established as a brigade of the great Army of the Potomac.

A visit to the top of the hill in the rear of our camp well repaid one for the toilsome ascent, and presented a picture new and novel to our admiring gaze. Afar off on the north stretched the everlasting hills of the Blue Ridge and South Mountain ranges, with the broad Potomac winding like a silvery thread between them, and pursuing its ever onward course to the sea. On the east, the city of Washington, with its pinnacle of marble, glistening white, and its Capitol dome rising high above the long white mass of buildings below, and the Long Bridge with its never ceasing train of wagons, troops, and batteries crossing and accumulating around us. Close by us on the shore, lies the old town of Alexandria, but lately the death scene of one of the first heroes of this war. Camps without number are spread around us, on all sides, dotting hillside and plain with thousands of white tents. On each hill-top, for miles around, stands one link of the mighty chain of fortifications that surrounds the heart of our nation. Vast improvements were in progress to strengthen the line, revealing new works and defenses of all kinds.

We look to the southward and see nothing but dark and frowning hills and forests. The clouds of a coming storm are hovering over that portion of our prospect, and all nature seems hushed in dismal solitude. But those dark woods and hills conceal thousands of our nation's enemies, and ever and anon from their depths, not many miles away, comes the deep and mournful boom ! boom ! of the guns of our advance batteries, as they watch the movements of the rebel line.

The sun is sinking in the west, the drums and bugles far and near are sounding the "retreat," and we leave this pleasant spot to return to our camp, and answer to our names at evening roll-call.

Saturday night, December 7th, we laid under arms all night, prepared for an attack, as it was expected that a large force of rebels were moving in our front ; but no disturbance occurred, and we slept peacefully till morning.

The Monday following, one of Professor Lowe's balloons passed on the road to Fairfax, being confined to the earth by stout ropes attached to a wagon loaded with heavy material, and destined to take observations of the enemy's movements. On the evening of the same day a party of ladies and gentlemen from Rhode Island visited our camp and were serenaded by our band.

Tuesday night following, just after tattoo, when we were snugly laid away under the blankets for the night, and the camp was getting still, the regiment was silently alarmed. The sergeant poked his head into the tent, with the order, "Turn out, here. Turn out, every man. Don't make any noise, and fall in quick as possible." In a few minutes the whole regiment was up and dressed, and formed line on the parade, our guns and ammunition were examined, and we started out on the road to Edsall's Hill.

A short distance from camp we were halted, and loaded our pieces. We were then ordered to march as silently as possible. Not an order was given in a loud voice. Now this was a *new* experience. This was exciting, and looked like *business*, but we wished it were in daylight, when we could see where we were going, and not have to grope our way forward in the semi-darkness. It was moonlight, and this fact made our expedition seem all the more perilous, as we imagined we could see a lurking foe in every bush or shadow of the woods.

There was doubtless a good deal of patriotism in our midst, and a desire to get into action with our enemies, and there was also, doubtless, a good deal of the "wish I was at home" feeling pervading our ranks, as we stumbled along the road that night, peering here and there to detect the first signs of an enemy, and with our ears open to catch the sound of rifles or artillery that we expected every minute to open upon us.

Reaching a position about four miles from camp we halted and laid low for a while, but soon arose and advanced again up the hill, on top of which we halted and stacked arms.

The rest of our brigade and a battery of artillery soon arrived and took position on the hill. But although an attack was expected that night, there was none made, and finding a soft place in some old tobacco sheds near by, we managed to get a few hours' sleep before morning.

The next morning we moved further up on the brow of the hill, and sent back to camp for rations, which arrived about noon. In the afternoon we were ordered back to camp.

Saturday, December 14th, our regiment rolled their blankets, took forty rounds and three days' rations, and again marched out to Edsall's Hill. Arriving there, we relieved the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania of picket duty.

This was our first picket duty in front of the enemy, and was attended with that unusual degree of care that marked the experience of the newly fledged soldier. A line of posts extended across the railroad, about half a mile in advance of the reserve post.

A code of signals was established, whereby friends in possession of the key could pass through the lines. We were ordered to challenge every one approaching or crossing the lines within gun-shot distance.

The signals used the first day were as follows: The gun was held at "present," and then waved back and forth in front of the body several times. Should the person challenged answer by stretching out the right arm horizontally three times, he was a friend and allowed to pass.

Upon the second day the signals were changed. The musket was grasped by the right hand at "small of the stock," and by left hand at "middle band," and in this position lifted above the head horizontally several times. The answer was made by raising the right hand perpendicularly from and above the shoulder.

Three companies were required to fill the number of posts, and each company stood twenty-four hours on duty, the reliefs being, as in camp, two hours on post and four hours off. No sleep was allowed during the night, and to only the reliefs off duty during the day. The weather was pleasant and mild, and nothing occurred to disturb us. Every now and then the sullen boom of a gun in our front told us that others beside ourselves were on the alert for any advance movement of the enemy.

On Wednesday morning, we were relieved by the next regiment of our brigade, the Sixty-first New York, and marched back to camp.

We now began to build winter quarters. Parties with

axes were sent into the woods. Logs were cut, brought in, and laid the length of two tents, and the width of one. They were fitted closely and the tents placed on top, thus affording a room 6 x 12 feet on the inside, capable of accommodating eight persons. Berths were arranged along the sides, and other additions made, as the fancy of the occupants dictated, while a chimney and fire-place provided warmth and comfort.

Camp life progressed quietly, its monotony being relieved by brigade, battalion, and squad drills, guard duty, etc., until Father Time brought around December 25th, Christmas Day. This day all unnecessary duties were laid aside, and the indulgence of a holiday granted us, which we were allowed to enjoy in any manner we saw fit, within the bounds of discipline and good behavior.

In the morning religious services were held in camp and attended by the regiment, after which a field-glass was presented to Colonel Rodman in behalf of the officers of the regiment, and was graciously received and acknowledged.

In the afternoon a programme of sports was given in the presence of the whole brigade and hundreds from the neighboring camps. Foot-races, sack-races, wrestling matches, and chasing a greased pig, claimed the attention of a delighted audience, and received much well-earned applause.

During the day a present from Rhode Island to each soldier of our regiment, consisting of a pair of socks and warm woolen mittens, arrived, and thus we passed our first Christmas in the army pleasantly and with much profit.

Tuesday, December 31st, a regular inspection of our regiment by General Howard took place. This foreboded a movement of some sort, and we were not much surprised

when at 2 o'clock Thursday morning, an orderly from brigade headquarters rode into camp with orders for us to move immediately. In half an hour the camp was waked up and astir. We packed up, struck tents, and at 8 o'clock the line was formed and started out on the parade. Here General Howard, whom we had learned to love and reverence during our short connection with his brigade gave us a few words of parting and bade us good-bye, and success in our future encounters with the enemies of our country. We gave him three rousing cheers, which were answered by the other regiments as we left the grounds and bade Camp California, with all its pleasant associations, farewell forever.

About noon we reached Long Bridge, and crossing, passed down Seventh Street to the United States Arsenal, where we exchanged our old "buck and ball" muskets for new Belgian rifles. After a short rest we proceeded back through the city to the "Soldiers' Rest," near the Baltimore and Ohio depot, where we quartered for the night.

Friday morning we arose early, got a good supply of rations, and clambered aboard a long train of cattle-cars in waiting for us. After some delay we left Washington, passing our old camp at Bladensburg, now occupied by other troops, and after an all day's ride reached Annapolis, Md. Disembarking, we marched toward the point, and inside the grounds of the United States Naval Academy, encamped. At this place were concentrating the great sea and land forces that were to constitute Burnside's Expedition, and for this purpose we had been transferred from the Army of the Potomac to follow the fortunes and flag of our noble state's hero, Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside.

Here were also a new regiment, just arrived from home,

called the Fifth Rhode Island Volunteers, and the boys of both regiments soon intermingled, and friendly hand-shaking was, for a while, the order of the day.

Full of that glorious enthusiasm that pervades the heart of the new volunteer, the happiness of these boys was great, and was only marred by one sad disappointment, and that was, according to their own statement, that "they had not had any butter or cheese since they left Rhode Island, three days ago."

Self-denial found heroes in its practice here, and though they suffered for the want of these simple luxuries of life, yet they consoled themselves with the thought that these hardships they were called upon to endure were for the good of their country, and "worketh in them a far greater crown of rejoicing."

January, 1862.

CHAPTER III.

THE OLD "EASTERN QUEEN."

DURING our stay at Annapolis our pay-master appeared and supplied us with a desirable quantity of hard cash, and as a natural result much "fire-water" found its way into our camp, many were affected thereby, and the camp became the scene of drunken fights and brawls.

The guard-house was soon filled, and in several of the company streets could be seen one or more drunken soldiers tied hand and foot to the front pole of their respective tents, and singing, shouting, or cursing, as their fancy dictated. Fights in camp were frequent, and but little sleep was enjoyed that night.

Occasions like these were rare among our boys, and considering the hardships and privations of a soldier's life, it cannot but be expected that such scenes should occur under such circumstances. But all this passed away shortly, and the regular routine of duty went on as before. We were put in good order; new clothes, new shoes, and equipments were drawn and all preparations were made for a sea-voyage and a lively campaign. Various speculations were indulged in as to our destination, but it was known only to those high in authority in the councils of the government, and all we could do was to await developments.

On Tuesday, January 7th, we received orders to pack up and strike tents, which was soon accomplished, and forming the line we marched down to the wharf and aboard the steamer *Eastern Queen*. This vessel was formerly employed as a passenger steamer on the line between Boston and Portland, and had now been chartered by the government to transport troops on this expedition. It was fitted up between decks with tiers of berths, and could accommodate about nine hundred men with their usual traps and baggage. A certain portion of these quarters was assigned to each company, and we stowed away our knapsacks and equipments in the berths allotted to us, and then went up on deck to see the steamer get underway. In a short time the lines were cast off, and we swung out into the stream, and dropped anchor among that portion of the fleet that was already loaded and ready to sail.

There were so many regiments to transport, and so many vessels to get ready for the voyage, that Thursday, January 9th, dawned upon us still at anchor off the piers. At last, at half-past seven on the morning of that day the report of a signal gun from General Burnside's headquarters was heard, and immediately that portion of the fleet constituting the first division, weighed anchor, and steamed away down the bay amid much cheering and music of the various bands. It was a novel and beautiful sight to watch this great fleet of vessels get under way, and with colors flying and bands playing, follow one another, as if in a grand triumphal procession, and it filled our young hearts with enthusiasm.

At 8 o'clock another gun from headquarters started the second division, who, in like manner, were soon parting the waves in the wake of their predecessors.

Two hours later and at 10 o'clock, at the report of the gun, ours, the third division, weighed anchor, and we broke

out into cheers and shouts, while our musicians of the band blew to the extent of their lungs, and our steamer proudly swept on down the bay with all colors flying. Nearly every steamer had one or more sailing vessels in tow, loaded with supplies, and attached to our steamer was a bark and a schooner.

As night drew on apace, we retired below to our berths, but not to sleep, for it had been discovered that other passengers besides ourselves were aboard, and seemed by inspection of our clothing and blankets to be making themselves entirely at home. As we subsequently learned, this boat had been previously loaded with a regiment of men who were so plentifully supplied with vermin that they were unable to carry them all away, and a great number were left here to breed and accumulate. Having had their rations cut off for some time, they were the more savage and blood-thirsty, and the moment we laid ourselves down in the berths, they advanced their forces and speedily found access to our flesh, of which they took hold with a vengeance.

Candles were in great demand that night. Searches were instituted, and in every part of the boat men were seen hunting up the little rascals and killing them off by scores, but all to no purpose. Without fresh water to wash our clothes or bodies, without a semblance of cleanliness about the lower deck, where we were obliged to sleep, without proper ventilation, the air foul and hot, they gained upon us, and soon every man, from the private to the colonel, had a full supply of these vermin, of all sizes, shades, and nationalities, and the "game of itch and scratch" was indulged in by all.

It was in vain to try to get rid of them. They were possessed of more lives than a cat. During our term of service we made their acquaintance many times, and many

were the methods adopted to rid ourselves of these pests. Clothes were boiled in hot soap suds by the hour, but that was no good. The old and infirm members of the tribe would succumb to this operation, but the young ones seemed rather to enjoy it, and appeared as lively as ever. Build a fire and burn the clothes up, and when the coals had burnt out and became dead, you could see these little rascals skirmishing around among the ashes, looking for something to eat. Their appetite was enormous, and they fed about forty times a day on an average. To crush them between the thumb nails was a favorite pastime, but even then, with their head and fore paws they seemed to make faces at you. They were, indeed, an irrepressible party, and stuck to one closer than a brother. They were of various sizes and tribes, and always colonized together in various parts of the clothing. There was the big white louse, about an eighth of an inch or more in length, and a savage biter. Another of about the same size with a black mark on his back was called Roman Catholic. A little red louse was a lively and unscrupulous enemy, and a big black fellow would make a man squirm when he exercised himself. Their number on the boat was estimated up into the millions, and was not reduced to any great extent while the boat was occupied by troops. Many stories of our acquaintance with these little fellows might be recorded here, but, we fear, would not obtain credit, except among old soldiers, who, each and all, have such circumstances impressed upon their memory by actual experience. But one story we will relate which is too good to be lost.

A certain regiment received a number of recruits, and these men, coming from some "camp of distribution," were covered with these vermin. The day after their arrival they were placed on the picket line, the enemy not being within ten miles of them. In the afternoon of that

day one of them fired his piece. Immediately everybody was up and in arms, and the other pickets also began firing. The reserve picket hastened out to the line while the regiment mustered on the parade in readiness to support them ; but when the line was reached, nothing that looked like a rebel could be seen, and still those pickets kept loading and firing to the front. The officer of the picket advanced, and being an old veteran himself, stepped in front of one of them, and while asking him what he saw to fire at, gazed closely into his face and discovered the whole cause of the trouble. The lice from the man's eyebrows had crawled down to the end of the eye-lashes and hung down in front of his eyes, creating the impression that he saw gray-backed rebels in front of him, at which he thought it his duty to fire. It is needless to say that man was sent to the rear in a hurry.

But to continue on our journey. During our first night underway, we lost our tow of sailing vessels in the fog by the parting of the tow line, and they soon drifted out of sight. After ringing the bell, and blowing the whistle for some time, we dropped anchor, and lay to until daylight. In the morning the fog cleared up, we found our missing charges, and steaming up to them the cable was again made fast, and we sped on our way, arriving off Fort Monroe Saturday morning, January 11th. Here we found the whole expedition ready to start for their final destination.

This great fleet, now prepared to strike a telling blow at some point of the Confederacy, was composed as follows :

“The land force was divided into three brigades. The first was composed of the Twenty-third, Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth and Twenty-seventh Massachusetts and the Tenth Connecticut regiments of infantry, and was under the command of Brig.-Gen. John G. Foster.

“The second was composed of the Sixth New Hampshire,

Ninth New Jersey, Twenty-first Massachusetts, Fifty-first New York, and Fifty-first Pennsylvania regiments of infantry, and was under the command of Brig.-Gen. Jesse L. Reno.

“The third was composed of the Fourth Rhode Island, Eighth and Eleventh Connecticut, Fifty-third and Eighty-ninth New York regiments of infantry, a battalion of the Fifth Rhode Island Infantry, and Battery F, First Rhode Island Light Artillery, and was under command of Brig.-Gen. John G. Parke.

“A naval brigade recruited in New York by the name of Volunteer Marine Artillery, under the command of Colonel Howard, was also especially organized for this expedition.

“The regiments were full, and the command numbered twelve thousand strong. For the transportation of the troops and their material, forty-six vessels were employed, eleven of which were steamers. To these were added nine armed propellers to act as gunboats, and five barges fitted and armed as floating batteries, carrying altogether, forty-seven guns, mostly of small calibre. These formed the army division of the fleet.

“A fleet of twenty vessels of different sizes, mostly of light draft, for the navigation of the Albermarle and Pamlico sounds, but carrying a heavy armament of fifty-five guns, accompanied the expedition under command of flag officer Louis M. Goldsborough.

“The names of the vessels composing the army division were as follows :

Picket,	. . . .	4	Guns.	Capt. Thos. P. Ives.
Hussar,	. . . .	4	“	“ Frederick Crocker.
Pioneer,	. . . .	4	“	“ Chas. E. Baker.
Vidette,	. . . .	3	“	“ John L. Foster.
Ranger,	. . . .	4	“	“ Samuel Emerson.

Lancer,	4	Guns.	Capt. U. B. Morley.
Chasseur,	4	"	" John West.
Zouave,	4	"	" William Hunt.
Sentinel,	4	"	" Joshua Couillard.

" The barges were :

Rocket,	3	Guns.	M. Mate James Cake.
Grenade,	3	"	" Wm. B. Avery.
Bombshell,	2	"	" Downey.
Grapeshot,	2	"	" N. B. McKean.
Shrapnel,	2	"	" Ernest Staples.

" The gunboats of the naval division were the :

Philadelphia (flagship), .			Act. Master Silas Reynolds.
Stars and Stripes,	5	Guns.	Lieut. R. Worden.
Louisiana,	5	"	" A. Murray.
Hetzel,	2	"	" H. K. Davenport.
Underwriter,	4	"	" Wm. N. Jeffers.
Delaware,	3	"	" S. P. Quackenbush.
Commodore Perry,	2	"	" Chas. W. Flusser.
Valley City,	5	"	" J. C. Chaplin.
Commodore Barney,	4	"	Act. Lieut. R. T. Renshaw.
Hunchback,	4	"	" E. R. Calhoun.
Southfield,	4	"	" C. F. W. Behm.
Morse,	2	"	Act. Master Peter Hayes.
Whitehead,	1	"	" Chas. A. French.
J. N. Seymour,	2	"	" G. W. Graves.
Shawsheen,	2	"	" T. G. Woodward.
Lockwood,	3	"	" C. L. Graves.
Ceres,	2	"	" John McDiarmid.
General Putnam,	1	"	" W. S. Hotchkiss.
Henry Brinker,	1	"	" John E. Giddings.
Granite,	1	"	Mate E. Boomer."

The *Commodore Perry's* armament was increased two guns after the battle of Elizabeth City, Feb. 15, 1862.

" The naval division was under the general command

of Commander S. C. Rowan, second to the flag officer. Most, if not all of these vessels were improvised men-of-war, fitted from ferry-boats, propellers, river steamboats, canal boats, etc."*

Saturday night the fleet weighed anchors and put out to sea. As we passed Cape Henry light and were fairly on the "bosom of the briny deep," the weather grew much warmer and the wind began to strike us in fitful gusts that to old seamen portended a gale, and on Sunday morning rapidly increased, while the sea lifted its foaming crests higher and higher, and this beautiful and powerful fleet, that had but yesterday flaunted defiance to all its opposers, was soon scattered over the face of the heaving waters and tossed about at the mercy of the winds and waves, each vessel striving to hold its own.

Our own steamer bravely bowed herself to the seas, which running to an enormous height, threatened with each succeeding wave to engulf us all in those awful depths. As she rose on the crest of a mighty wave and poised a moment, we would cast a hasty glance around us and see perhaps fifty sail of vessel, on all sides of us, and then plunging down, down, till it seemed as if we were really going to the bottom, another huge wave would roll up toward us, towering high above our decks, and our vessel would strike it, keel over almost on her beam ends and rise to its crest, and rolling over on the other side plunge down into the trough of the sea to rise again as before. Each time we lifted we could see sometimes a dozen, sometimes more sail of our fleet, who, like us, were rolling over the great seas.

Most of our men were suffering from sea-sickness, and those of us who were not thus affected were posted about

* From Woodbury's *Burnside and the Ninth Army Corps*.

the ship as guards, and in all exposed places were securely lashed to prevent being washed or flung overboard.

All Sunday night we wallowed in the midst of this hurricane of waters, and at 3 o'clock on Monday morning, the bright glare of Hatteras Light, looming up on our starboard quarter, gave us a hope that we might pass safely over the bar into the smoother waters of Hatteras Inlet.

We here annex a copy of J. T. Headley's account of the condition of our fleet at this time :

“ The largest vessels had been contracted for to draw only a certain depth of water that was known to exist on the ‘Swash,’ but now they were found to draw more, and hence they were totally useless to the expedition.

“ Burnside had reasons to expect the storm, for this part of our coast, at all times dangerous to navigation, is especially so in midwinter,— but not this deception respecting the draft of his vessels. His great heart was overwhelmed at the magnitude of the disaster that had overtaken him, yet it did not yield to despair. A religious man, and believing in the righteousness of his cause, he felt confident that the Supreme Governor of the universe would overrule it for good.

“ The propeller *City of New York* foundered on the bar, and for forty-eight hours lay at the mercy of the sea, the waves making a clean breach over her. She was laden with ammunition, tents, blankets, and valuable stores, and her loss would be a terrible blow to the expedition. But though thirty vessels lay in sight, they were unable to afford any relief, and all Tuesday and Tuesday night she wallowed among the breakers — a helpless wreck. All her boats but one had been carried away or crushed, and her despairing crew lashed themselves to the rigging to prevent being swept away by the seas that incessantly rolled over her. Their destruction seemed inevitable, when two mechanics from Newark, N. J., William H. and Charles

A. Beach, volunteered the desperate undertaking of launching the last remaining boat and pulling through the surf to the fleet. They succeeded with the aid of three others, and obtaining surf boats saved the entire crew. The vessel, however, was a total loss.

“The steam gunboat *Zouave* sank at her anchorage, and a transport laden with stores went down on the bar.

“The Ninth New Jersey Regiment lay outside, aboard the *Ann E. Thompson*, and Colonel Allen and Surgeon Weller took a boat and pulled over the bar, through the inlet, to report their condition. Having accomplished this perilous undertaking successfully, they attempted to return, when the boat swamped in the heavy seas, and they both perished.

“Other vessels got aground; one transport was blown to sea, and for five days was without fresh water. The *Pocahontas* (the vessel containing the stores, rations, clothing, teams, and horses of the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment) was wrecked, and out of 123 horses on board all but seventeen perished.

“The situation in which Burnside now found himself was enough to fill a less resolute heart than his with despair. The magnificent fleet, that but a few days before had crowded after his flag as he moved over the ocean was now scattered and wrecked, his ammunition and stores at the bottom of the sea, while his best vessels lay tossing outside, unable to cross the bar. To lighten these, so that they could be got over was the first object to be secured, and after incredible labor was accomplished.

“But even then he could do nothing, for the weather was terrible, even for this inhospitable coast, and storm after storm swept him with a fury that threatened to make a complete end of the destruction that had begun. The immense pains that had been taken to keep the precise point against which the expedition was to operate a secret

had all been in vain. The elements had revealed it to the enemy, and ample time was now given him to prepare for his defense. Surprise was out of the question, and if anything was to be accomplished it must be by hard fighting. At all events, this imposing land and naval force must lie idle the remainder of the month."

Our steamer struggled bravely with the swift running seas as we approached the bar, and all hands were called to keep in the centre of the boat to steady her as she went over; the dangerous surf swept her from stem to stern, and now and then she would strike heavily on the bar. But a few moments of suspense and we were safely over, and soon our ponderous anchor was hove and found a resting-place in the shifting sands of Hatteras Inlet.

But even here we were in constant danger of being stove by collision with vessels which were dragging their anchors and drifting about almost helpless in the fierce gales that succeeded one another for several days. But this storm, like all others, at last blew over and we set to work to repair damages, and to get ready to proceed to our destination, which now, we were aware, was Roanoke Island.

During the month that we laid here, the monotony of our life on shipboard was relieved at times by many funny incidents, a few of which I will relate.

Owing to our rations on our supply steamer being for the most part lost in the storm, we were put upon a daily allowance of one pint of water, which tasted strongly of kerosene oil, for it had been stored for our use in kerosene barrels. Added to this we received two pints of weak coffee per day, twelve hard tack, and a small piece of meat, either pork or salt junk. Fresh water was so scarce that guards were put over the barrels, to keep the men from stealing enough to quench their thirst engendered by eating our salt food.

There was a condenser in operation for turning sea water into fresh. But at last our supply of water got so low that even this would not supply the demand, and we could not get enough to cook with. The boys would crowd around the condenser at such a rate, that a guard had to be stationed to keep them from stealing the water.

Comrade James Kenney, of Company B, was placed here on guard one night, and being tired of standing up all the time, began to look around for something to sit down upon. A barrel of molasses was near at hand, and offered a good seat. As it stood upon end, Jim was obliged to jump up onto it, but no sooner was he comfortably seated than the head of the barrel caved in, and down went poor Jim into the barrel until nothing could be seen of him but his long legs and arms thrashing about, and the molasses flying in all directions. Help was soon at hand, but he was wedged in so tight and being the largest man in the company, it was with much difficulty, and pulling and tugging, that he was at last liberated. He was covered with molasses from head to foot.

Colonel Rodman, hearing of the accident, ordered the molasses to be dealt out to the boys, and every man received a supply, none the less acceptable on account of Jim's baptism therein, and the next day we enjoyed a feast of molasses and hard-tack. There was plenty of it, and being half starved on short rations, the boys filled up with molasses.

The effects of this change of diet can be imagined. About midnight the boys began to crawl out on deck, and such a sight never was witnessed before or since. It is safe to say that no more molasses was eaten by that regiment for one while.

When the weather would allow, a party of our cooks were sent ashore, and managed to cook a kettle or two of beans, and when they returned we had a feast.

One day Company B received a supply of rotten pork that left to itself would almost travel alone. Poor food was the rule, but this was a little too much for human endurance. Placing it in a cracker-box, the boys formed a solemn procession headed by the drum and fife playing the dead march, and the box of pork, carefully borne by two bearers appointed for the solemn occasion, and followed by nearly all of the company as mourners, marched slowly through the ship, up past the officers' quarters up on the hurricane deck, to the side of the vessel, where, after due preliminaries, the departed was tenderly placed on the end of a board and slid off into the sea.

Captain Buffum made his appearance, and with a scowl on his countenance demanded to know what they were doing. He was told by "Shoemaker" Chace, that we were paying our last respects to an old friend, and impressed with the solemnity of the occasion, and the manifestations of grief upon all sides, he put his hands to his face and wept aloud.

The procession wended its way back to its quarters, and a council of war was held.

It was well known that the officers' mess had been supplied with many stores from the sutler's headquarters, consisting of canned goods, whiskey, cheese, butter, etc., and that some of these luxuries were stored away in the bulk-head just forward of our company quarters. It was decided to make a raid, and an hour in the night was selected when most of the men between decks would be asleep. Noiselessly our party made its way to the "bulk-head," and after a short time loosened the doors and got inside. Whatever stuff they could get their hands on, was quickly passed out and secreted among the blankets or berths. The boys worked lively, fearing the appearance of the guard every moment, and secured quite a store of good things.

The members of this gang of raiders kept pretty quiet

for a while, but in a few days the effects of their raid began to appear. Pineapple cheeses seemed to be plenty, and were cut up in chunks and sold at a very large margin. One individual was the happy possessor of a bottle of pepper sauce, and dealt it out to his less fortunate comrades at "ten cents a squirt." Whiskey commanded a high premium, from five to ten dollars a half pint; but money was plenty, and the boys had no way to spend it except by circulation among themselves.

Many spent hours in playing "bluff," "poker," or "shoemaker lou," and much hard cash changed hands again and again over the cards.

Many employed their time in writing to their friends at home, watching the fleet from the upper deck, and in various other ways, while not a few could be seen night or day stripped to their waist, and busily engaged hunting down and murdering a few of those little fiends, that roamed at will over the boat and persons therein confined.

One day while quite a number of the boys were so engaged, skirmishing after "gray-backs," who should make his appearance below but General Parke who was on a tour of inspection. Feeling rather ashamed to be caught by our general in that plight, they began to put on their clothes in some confusion, when the general smilingly remarked, "Don't be alarmed boys, *I find one occasionally, myself.*"

In this connection I hold Comrade Collins, of Company B, responsible for the following:

A vast number of these graybacks had formed a sort of colony in the seat of Sergeant Hunt's breeches. Upon inspection of the same the sergeant became horrified. It was impossible to get rid of them by any ordinary means, and after many plans had been discussed, he at last cut the whole seat out of his pants, graybacks and all, and cast the piece overboard to drown them all at once. What was

his amazement to see them shoulder the whole piece of cloth, and in spite of the heavy sea that was running, walk ashore with it. The sergeant's surprise found expression in but four words :

“ *Well, I'll be d — d.*”

But a rift in the clouds appeared at last, and a ray of sunshine lighted the dismal gloom of our prison-ship. One morning we heard the cry, “ Volunteers wanted for the navy.” Nine men of each company were called to volunteer as “ marines,” to serve aboard the two gunboats, *Commodore Perry* and *Commodore Barney*.

We jumped at this offer like a hungry fish at the bait. In a few minutes the following squad of volunteers were accepted and detached for duty on the *Perry*, from Company B :

Corporal CHARLES LARKHAM.

Privates GEO. H. ALLEN, (the writer,)`

“ CHARLES BUDLONG,

“ DANIEL KELLY,

“ GEO. W. PRESTON,

“ HENRY ROBERTS,

“ CHARLES TURNER,

“ ARCHIE A. WILLIAMS.

We immediately packed up and fell in line on the main deck, and soon the *Commodore Perry* steamed alongside, and forty-five men, including the above, passed on board, bidding good-bye to our comrades and the old *Eastern Queen*, but not without some regrets at leaving our old quarters, where we had spent some happy hours among the many miseries that had surrounded us. The *Commodore Barney* then steamed alongside, and took off the remainder of the detachment.

February, 1862.

CHAPTER IV.

ROANOKE ISLAND.

AS soon as we had anchored at some distance from the *Eastern Queen*, we were formed in line aft, on the quarter deck, and introduced to Captain Flusser, commanding this boat. He addressed us in a few words to the effect that in our new position as marines aboard this gunboat, it was expected that we would do our duty, and he hoped he should have the pleasure of rendering a good report of us when we were discharged from this detached service and returned to our regiment. We were then dismissed and sent forward to our quarters.

Captain Flusser was a man of about thirty or thirty-five years of age, slight in build, with a pale, stern countenance, with but very few words, and never a smile for any one; a man who seemed to brood over some deep-seated trouble or affliction, and who kept within himself, seldom mingling with the other officers, and seldom outside his cabin except for exercise or on duty; courageous to a degree of foolhardiness, we foresaw that under his command we should be likely to get close-handed with the enemy whenever the opportunity offered.

His lieutenant, Mr. Thomas, was as far to the other extreme: nearly or quite six feet in height, and broad in pro-

portion, with a big red nose and florid face, indicating a strong appetite for gin. Grouty, ugly, and cowardly, he was at last dismissed the service in disgrace some time after we left the boat.

There were also master's mates, and other petty officers, more or less imbued with importance, gauged to the size of their shoulder straps.

On the 19th of March, 1864, Captain Flusser, then in command of two wooden gunboats, attempted the fool-hardy venture of sinking the ironclad rebel *Albermarle*, and, as a result, his vessel was sunk and himself killed.

After our introduction to Captain Flusser, as above stated, we stowed our traps away in the room assigned for them, and immediately went aft to a large wooden tank called the scuttle butt. This was filled with fresh water for the use of the ship's crew. It was the first clean fresh drinking water we had seen since leaving Annapolis, and we drank our fill of it. We were then divided into watches, the ship's crew forming the first watch, and the rest of us the second and third watches. This steamer formerly plied as a ferry-boat in some of the northern ports, and was a double-ender. She was plated on the sides with half-inch iron, and was provided fore and aft with swing plates that could be swung outside her guards in time of action, leaving her decks clear for gun work.

Her armament consisted of two one hundred-pound shell guns, one mounted on the forward deck, and the other aft, besides a full supply of ammunition, cutlasses, revolvers, boarding pikes and axes, grappling irons, etc.

We slept in hammocks swung from the cross beams in the gangway amidships.

Our food consisted of salt beef, pork, beans, and hard-tack. We were also allowed a quantity of flour which was made into "duff" twice a week. Lobscouse was also served up now and then.

At seven bells, or half-past 6 o'clock in the morning, and at seven bells, or at half-past 11 at noon, the "Jack o' the dust" appeared at the scuttle butt, aft, with his pail of grog, and the "bos'n" piped all hands to "splice the main brace," after which, with an appetite sharpened by the sea air and healthy exercise, we could devour our pork and bread with a good relish.

Our duties ran something like the following :

At the sound of the boatswain's whistle each man is expected to give his attention and listen to the order which is to follow, and which is uttered in the well-known drawling, sing-song tones of an old man-of-war's man.

At four bells in the morning,—that is four strokes upon the ship's bell,—or 6 o'clock, after one or two long blasts upon the bos'n's whistle, the cry is sounded, "Down all hammocks," and we tumble out lively, dress, unlash our hammocks, and stow them away in their proper places.

Five bells strikes, and "Holystone decks" is the call. Then commences the disagreeable work of scrubbing and washing down decks. This lasts nearly an hour. Brooms, pails, and swabs are brought into requisition. Everything is wet and cold, and everybody disgusted.

Seven bells, and the call is sounded, "Splice the main brace." Now we look alive. No hiding or shirking now. Every man is found promptly in his place, and anxious to be foremost in his duty.

Eight bells, 8 o'clock, "Breakfast" is called, for which we are allowed one hour.

Two bells, 9 o'clock, "Gun's crew to clean bright work" resounds through the ship, and those composing the crew of each gun go to work under the supervision of a petty officer, to polish more brightly the brass work of the gun.

An hour's drill at the guns, and seven bells again strikes.

The "main brace" needs splicing, after which dinner call is sounded.

With the exception of an hour's drill at the guns in the afternoon, the time is spent in various ways, or in getting the ship ready for any action for which she may be called.

At three bells, or half-past 5 P. M., supper is called. At four bells, or 6 o'clock, the "dog watch" is set. At five bells, or half-past 6, "Up all hammocks." We take our hammocks from the "chest" and lash them in their proper places below, and the rest of the evening is spent by those not on watch in spinning yarns, singing, smoking, etc. This was the only time we were allowed to smoke, and were obliged to light our pipes from a lantern that was lit and hung in the gangway for that purpose, none of us being allowed to carry matches.

At seven bells, or half-past 7, we begin to retire, and at eight bells, or 8 o'clock, the call is sounded, "Put out all lights, pipes, and cigars," and every man not on watch is required to be in his hammock, quiet reigns over the ship, and swinging in our comfortable beds, as the boat gently rolls with the sea, we are rocked to sleep as sweetly as in the days of our babyhood.

At each succeeding bell through the night the watch on post is required to sing out the number of his post, time of night and state of affairs, commencing with No. 1. At the stroke of five bells, for instance, the watch cries, "Post No. 1, half-past 10, and all's well," and so on, to the last post, which is situated in front of the captain's quarters, thus assuring him of the safety of the ship at each half hour of the night.

At eight bells, midnight, the second watch relieves the first, and at eight bells again, or 4 o'clock, the morning watch, composed of those who held the "dog-watch" the evening before, relieves the second.

At four bells, 6 o'clock, the bos'n's whistle sounds through the ship, starting all to go forward in the duties of another day.

Cleanliness of food, quarters, and clothing, was strictly enjoined. One half-hour before serving each meal, the ship's cook was obliged to carry to the captain a portion of each article cooked. This the captain inspected by tasting himself of it, and if he considered it good and healthy, it was served out to the crew. If he found it otherwise, it was ordered to be thrown overboard and better food furnished.

Punishments for offenses sometimes occurred, one mode of punishment being the "trice and guncap." It consisted in having the two thumbs tied together tightly with a rope yarn. A rope was then passed over a beam, and the whole body was hoisted till the toes just touched the deck, the whole weight of the body hanging by the thumbs. To drown the sufferer's cries of torture, a black canvas bag, called the guncap, was drawn over the head and fastened down. Thus he was left to hang as long as his sentence permitted, or his strength held out, sometimes two hours, or even longer. This mode of punishment was so severe that the men often, while enduring it, fainted dead away. One of our men was thus fastened up one day, and fainted before he had hung five minutes. He was let down, restored to consciousness, and hauled up again. Again he fainted from the fearful torture, and was taken down, ironed, and cast into the "dark hole" below decks, to live on bread and water for so long a time. Other modes of punishment were used, but were lighter and more humane, such as walking the deck, loss of grog, confinement in the dark hole, etc. To be sure discipline must be observed in every branch of the service, but this mode of "tricing up" must be classed among those barbarous pun-

ishments which were once inflicted on our poor sailors,—as flogging, towing astern, lashing to the yard-arm, or any other barbarity that a hasty or impassioned officer might choose to inflict, all of which are now condemned by the United States government.

One punishment, and a just one, was inflicted upon any one who was caught spitting on the clean decks. A small tub was fitted with straps to go around the wearer's neck and hang in front of him about waist high. He was required to travel from one end of the deck to the other and receive the expectorations of all hands in his tub. As most of us were tobacco-chewers, he was kept quite busy in going from one to the other and presenting his tub for them to spit in. He was obliged to perform this menial service until he caught some one else spitting on the deck, when the tub was at once transferred to that person. Much amusement was created by this simple but effectual mode of punishing indecency.

And now the fleet being repaired, and prepared for more dangerous work, we welcomed the report of a signal gun at 8 o'clock on the morning of February 5th from our flag-ship. A long line of flag-signals ran up to her mast-head, and immediately this great mass of vessels that had lain so quietly for the past month, became a scene of activity and animation, as the crew of each vessel heaved at the windlass or brought their anchor home on the run.

The graceful moving of the various vessels to their place in the line of advance, the music of the bands enlivening and cheering our hearts, and the beautiful weather, at once inspired us with feelings of patriotic fervor, and all we desired was a chance to strike a blow in behalf of our country's flag.

The fleet formed in three divisions, as on the start from Annapolis: the gunboats in advance with their guns frown-

ing from deck and port-hole, the transports crowded with troops, the store-ships and other vessels, all with colors flying and bands playing their liveliest airs, formed a scene that will ever be impressed on our memory and one which "presented the embodiment of awful power."

About sun-down, having arrived within twelve miles of our destination, the signal was set to "cast anchor" and in a short time this beautiful fleet was at rest for the night. If the scene was pleasant to view by daylight, it was doubly so at night. The moon looked down upon us, shedding its silvery light over the face of the waters, which reflected also the lights from the vessels of the fleet, and inspired by its calm influence and the splendid state of the weather, the boys of the various regiments broke forth into song, the band's soft music floated over the sea, and the hours of evening wore peacefully away, in pleasant contrast to the day of conflict so close upon us.

Towards morning dark clouds began to cover the face of the bright moon, and at daylight it was evident that another storm was likely to impede our progress. At 8 o'clock we were again under way, and proceeded very slowly until 11, when the storm that had been gathering all the morning burst upon us in furious gusts of wind and rain, and the fleet dropped anchor once more.

The next morning, February 7th, broke pleasant, and soon all were astir. The fleet once more advanced, and in a couple of hours entered Croaton Sound. Now the gunboats sail ahead through the Narrows, while the transports follow more slowly in the rear.

"Roanoke Island, situated between Albermarle and Pamlico sounds, and completely commanding the channel between them, had been carefully fortified by the rebels. Two strong works mounting twenty-two heavy guns,—three of them being 100-pound rifles,—four batteries of

twenty-two guns, eight supporting gunboats, and formidable obstructions across the channel, together with a garrison of 3,000 men constituted the means of defense relied upon by the enemy, and were deemed quite sufficient to repel any attempt of Burnside's fleet to pass up the sound."

About 11 o'clock we are within a mile of the rebel works and fleet, and for the first time see the three-barred rebel flag floating in the breeze from various works on the shore and from their gunboats, which are formed in line of battle across the sound. Our signal gun booms forth, and all eyes are turned toward our flagship. Up to the masthead runs a little ball of bunting, and as it unfolds to the breeze we read our commander's message: "*This day our country expects that every man will do his duty.*"

With a ringing cheer the order is given: "Clear the decks for action." "Cast loose and provide." Down goes our iron bulwarks, open flies the hatches, out moves the ponderous gun, and, ready for the fray, we stand waiting the orders to fire.

Just at 12 o'clock a white puff of smoke bursts from the side of one of the rebel gunboats, and a round shot comes skipping over the water toward us. Another one from the battery ashore; one in return from our fleet, and now is heard the voice of our captain, "Are you ready?" "Ready," is the response from our gunner. "Then fire" shouts the captain, and with a crash that almost deafens us and shatters the glass windows of our vessel, our great Columbiad sends its 100-pound shell hurtling and roaring on its way to the rebel fleet.

And now the action becomes general. Our gunboats are hard at work, and soon we are surrounded with the thunder crash of the huge guns, the hissing, flying shot from the enemy's works and fleet, the rolling clouds of smoke, and the roar and cries of terrible battle. Orders

come thick and fast through the noise and confusion; shell and shot fly shrieking through the air; and the smoking guns bellow forth their thunder crash in quick succession.

This is our first battle. It is glorious. Our great nine-inch shells describe a half circle in the air and fall plump into the enemy's fort. A second later and they burst, and a vast jet of sand flies upward to the height of fifty feet. Our gunners at both ends of the ship vie with each other in trying to cut down the rebel flag that floats defiantly over the battery ashore. Again and again they sight their pieces carefully, and watch the huge shell as it falls down, down, and bursting, throws up a cloud of dust and sand; yet as the smoke clears away, still can be seen that hated "tri-color" waving defiance at our efforts.

At last Captain Flusser steps down on deck from his post of observation, takes the sight, and at the right moment fires, but the flag is still there. Something must be the matter with the gun sight, and going to his cabin he studies awhile upon it. In a few minutes he returns with another sight, whittled out of a piece of wood. He adjusts it to the breech of a gun. "Are you ready?" he cries. "Ready," is the response. Not a man stirs. The lanyard is pulled taut; but a slight twitch will send the shell to its destination, and all wait in silence for the next word. As the ship lifts on the swell of the sea, and gains the exact range, it comes: "Then fire." And away goes the shell, hissing and roaring up into the heavens, and then falling, falling, until, with a crash, it strikes the flag-staff, and down goes the rebel "stars and bars," trailing in the dust.

And now what cheers resound throughout the fleet, while our captain walks back to his post with a look of pride and gratification. For a moment the fleet ceases fir-

ing, for the rebel flag is down ; but soon two brave men of the garrison are seen with the flag in their arms mounting the ramparts of the fort and, planting it there, amid a terrible storm of shells from the entire fleet, that strike or burst all around them, they waved their hats at us and jumped down to their guns, and the fight goes on with renewed energy.

Captain Flusser is impatient. He rings for the engineer to go ahead, and directs the pilot to "head her for the battery."

In a few minutes we are fast in the mud, directly in front of the southwest angle of the fort. This angle worked a powerful gun, and speedily getting the range, they direct the fire of that single gun on our boat alone, and shot comes skipping and bounding toward us, now and then crashing through our hull, or cutting through the light works, shattering our upper deck forward, and keeping us on the alert every minute.

Now one man is stationed forward to watch the fire of that gun. As he sees it flash he cries out, "Down," and every one drops to the deck, until the shot has struck or passed over. "Over," he cries, and we spring to the work again.

One heavy shot bursts through our rail, cuts its way through a huge coil of rope, and passes out through the hurricane deck.

Another one cuts our flag-staff off as clean as a knife, but before the old Stars and Stripes can touch the deck in its fall, two of our men jump for it, and carrying it up on the hurricane deck, lash it firmly there, and it again floats over us through the smoke of battle.

Another shot strikes our bulwarks and knocks off a splinter about six feet long, which, impelled by the force of

the blow, flies across the deck, over into the sea, breaking the leg of one of our men, but that is all.

We are working our guns for all they are worth, and are giving as good as we receive. The engineer is forcing his wheels to back us off of that mud bank, for we shall be destroyed if we don't get off that stationary position, where all the rebel gunners have to do is to load and fire at us.

We have got over our first excitement and are working calmly and coolly, and endeavoring to make every shot tell.

Another shot strikes us below water-mark with a heavy thud, and another one pierces our magazine. Plugs are ready and the men at work below decks are quick to set and drive them in the holes thus made. Two more strike us below water-mark and we shall be as full of holes as a sieve if we stay here much longer.

Another one pierces the ship's upper works fore and aft, passing through the armory where lay our wounded comrade, and by its concussion knocking down in one confused heap the pistols, cutlasses, axes, boarding pikes, etc., which were placed in racks around the room; but by a miracle none of the revolvers exploded, though all were loaded, ready for instant use, and our wounded man, though in the midst of them all, suffered no further injury.

At last we succeeded in getting back into deeper water out of the range of that gun, and there worked the remainder of the day.

Considerable interest was excited during the day by the manœuvres of a small sloop mounting one gun and manned by as brave a crew as could be found in the fleet. This little vessel, being light of draft, would run in close under the fort, and at the right moment let fly her shot at the enemy, and gaily swinging her head around, she flaunted her colors in his face, and was off out of range in a moment. In vain did the rebels depress their guns to sink this

little craft. As soon as she was loaded and got the wind abeam, she would glide swiftly in, come about, and let fly another reminder, and then off again as before.

As I was thus busily engaged at my post on the gun-boat *Perry*, it was, of course, impossible for me to note the movement of the regiment with the troops ashore, and as I have no history of the regiment to quote from, I can only give the details as they have been related to me by my comrades who were there. On the 7th, our regiment, leaving their old quarters on the *Eastern Queen*, were taken aboard the steamer *Union* and landed on the island at a place called Ashby's Harbor, having in charge one brass howitzer. They marched a short distance from the shore and stacked arms in a sweet potato field, just outside the edge of a swamp, and a detail was sent down to haul up the gun, which they accomplished by dint of much hard labor, through the soft, marshy ground.

A detail was sent out on picket a short distance to the front, and the rest of the boys made their beds in the cold wet potato field, and with the rain pouring in torrents upon them tried to get a little sleep in preparation for the morrow's work.

“The interval between them and the enemy's works was covered by a swampy forest and traveled by a single half-worn cart road. The fortifications consisted of an earth-work with three sides surrounded by a ditch eight feet in width and three deep, filled with water. In front, the woods had been cut down for the distance of three hundred yards to give their guns a clean sweep, while the trees lay piled in every imaginable direction over the marshy ground, through which the advancing force would be compelled to work their difficult way, exposed at every step to a devastating fire.”

The next morning as soon as it became light enough to

distinguish objects at a distance, the pickets of the Fourth Regiment opened fire, and immediately the whole camp was astir. Drums beat their "long roll," bugles called to arms, and the day's work of driving the enemies of our government from the island commenced.

"The ranks were soon formed, and the centre column, under General Foster, composed of three Massachusetts regiments, and the Tenth Connecticut, moved off, a battery of six twelve-pound howitzers at the head. The second column under General Reno was to make a flank movement on the enemy's left, and the third column, under General Parke, a similar one on his right." This column included the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment. Advancing a short distance upon the cart path, before mentioned, the order to "file right" was given, in order to flank the left of the enemy's works, and the boys scrambled through the underbrush briers, sometimes jumping from bog to bog, or wading waist deep through the swamp.

The Fourth was followed by the Ninth New York who, before they had proceeded half the length of their regiment upon the flank, received orders to charge. The companies of this regiment who had reached the flank movement, charged "front forward," while the rest of them, still on the road, being somewhat confused by this order, charged directly up the road. The Twenty-first Massachusetts and Tenth Connecticut on the left of the road charged home at the same time upon the right flank of the fort, while our regiment came in on the right of the Ninth New York.

The rebels seeing themselves pressed so closely on either flank, where they had not supposed it possible that troops could manœuvre, on account of the thick obstructions of the swamp, fled in dismay, leaving this battery, called

Fort Defiance, in our hands, with three guns and a few prisoners.

Immediate pursuit was made, and the regiment advanced in rear of the Fifty-first and Ninth New York regiments some distance up the road, when the order was given to halt, and filing into the woods, arms were stacked and fires built. The men were soaked to the hide by the night's storm and flanking movement through the swamp, but in a few minutes General Burnside appeared, and told them there was yet one more job to be done before resting, and he wanted the Fourth to do it.

"Fall in," came the order, and was cheerfully obeyed, and they started on the "double quick" for about a mile, to the other side of the island, and soon reached Fort Bartow, at which we of the naval force had been battering away so long. But the rebels had skedaddled, and our regiment immediately took possession. A long pole was procured, our flag attached to it, and planted on the ramparts of the fort amid the cheers of the regiment, which were answered by the crews on board the gunboats, who immediately sent their small boats ashore.

An aide from General Foster now arrived with the report to Burnside that the rebel force at the northern end of the island had been brought to bay, and asked for terms of surrender. These were sent back with the aide, and a short time after, we received news of the surrender of the whole rebel force. General Burnside ordered Colonel Rodman to stack arms. So the boys built their camp fires, and after a good supper turned in for the night.

Some of the boys, unable to sleep, started out about midnight upon a foraging expedition, and returned about daylight, loaded down with pigs, hams, and other food. Pots, pans, and kettles were in demand, and the boys enjoyed a feast of good things that morning.

Sunday morning, February 9th, some of the boys found half a dozen rebels who had been hiding away since the capture of the fort, and from them learned that a large quantity of rebel quartermaster's stores were concealed at a place down on the shore, and a detail was sent from the company to secure them, but found the Ninth New York in possession, who cheerfully divided the spoils with us, and after much labor they were transferred to camp.

Meanwhile our company had taken possession of another earthwork farther down the island (Fort Blanchard?), and the flag was raised by the fifer, Henry S. Brown, of our company. We were now prepared to stay at Fort Bartow, as a permanent camp, and were well provided with forage and subsistence, but were much disappointed when, Sunday afternoon, we received orders to reëmbark on the dirty old *Eastern Queen*, and were forced to leave the greater part of the provision we had labored so hard to collect, to the benefit of the Sixth New Hampshire Regiment, who took our place in the fort.

We remained in the miserable old hulk about a week, and then landed and camped. Our life while we stayed here was passed in the exercise of usual camp duties, broken only by the sad occasion of the death of two of our comrades, John Ready, a good soldier and kind friend, and Jonathan Card, the drummer of the company, a genial associate and faithful comrade. They were taken sick aboard the *Queen*, by reason of the accumulation of miseries and privations that continually surrounded us, and were removed to the hospital ship where they died,—Ready at Hatteras Inlet, and Card at Roanoke,—and were buried on the island, under military honors, by a squad commanded by Corp. Albert R. Collins, of Company B.

Here the Fourth remained until the movement upon Newbern, and regretting that our story of their experience at

Roanoke Island must necessarily be incomplete, we will now turn back to the detachment on board the *Perry*.

The battle is over. The firing has ceased, and we have a chance to rest from our labors and look about us. We have been hard at work at the guns, pelting away at that rebel stronghold and their fleet, who have just disappeared from view around Northwest Point.

All around us our ship bears evidence of the noble part she has taken in this battle. The decks are strewn with the cast off shell-boxes, pieces of glass from the shattered lights of the ship, splinters, broken cables and hand spikes, and all the accumulated *debris* of the fight. Her forward cabin, caboose, and light work are cut through, broken and shattered by that rifled rebel gun on the angle of the fort. Great pieces are knocked off her bulwarks, her flag-staff is shot away, and here and there below decks we can see where the enemy's shot found their way into her hull, now plugged up tight to keep the sea out, which otherwise would, in a few minutes, send her to the bottom of the sound.

Her crew with their sleeves still rolled up, their clothes torn, hands, arms, and faces black with the smoke of battle, stand gazing with a triumphant look of pride and gratification at that rebel fort where now floats the Stars and Stripes, the colors of the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment, and heartily and joyously congratulate each other on the successful issue of this, the first battle of the expedition.

The bos'n's whistle now calls us aft to splice the main brace. A double ration is allowed us, after which we perform our ablutions and eat our evening meal. This done, we light our pipes, and spend the evening in the gangway talking over the incidents of the day, until eight bells strikes, when we all turn in except those on duty, the watch is set, and discipline once more asserts her sway.

During the evening, our attention was attracted to a rebel steamer on fire at Red Stone Point, about three miles away across the sound. As the fire reached the magazine, she exploded, and then all was dark again. It proved to be the rebel gunboat *Curlew* which had been disabled in the fight, and was now set on fire and blown up to prevent her falling into our hands.

Night, still and starry, settled its dark curtain on friend and foe alike, and the battle of Roanoke Island passed into history.

Our loss was about two hundred and fifty, all told, while the enemy lost all their guns and munitions of war, and about twenty-five hundred prisoners, besides the killed and wounded.

The wounded of both sides were cared for, the dead buried, and the dawn of another day began preparations for further action, for while under the command of our beloved old General Burnside we could not expect to lay idle in the enemy's front, as long as a rebel flag floated over the coast of North Carolina.

February, 1862.

CHAPTER V.

ELIZABETH CITY AND WINTON.

BUT one night's rest, and preparations were made to immediately pursue and capture the rebel fleet that had escaped up the sound.

Sunday morning, February 9th, the decks were cleared and we weighed anchor and sailed slowly up the channel through the blockade of sunken vessels that had been placed by the enemy across the sound, to the point of land known as Red Stone Point, near which we descried a fort over which the rebel flag was flying. The guns' crews were called "to quarters," and sent a shot or two over into it, but receiving no answer, two of our small boats were lowered, manned, and pulled ashore. But no enemy was there to repel them. Everything about the place betokened the haste with which the rebels had deserted their standard and stronghold.

The rebel steamer *Curlew* that we had seen on fire the night previous, lay near the wharf, a perfect wreck. An old schooner, still in good repair, lay alongside the landing. This was taken possession of and anchored out in the stream as our first prize. The rebel colors were hauled down and the Stars and Stripes run up in its place, and our boats reporting aboard soon after, we moved toward the rest of the fleet that were now forming for the advance.

The same afternoon our expedition in search of the rebel fleet started up the sound. It consisted of our own and thirteen other gunboats, and was under the command of Commander S. C. Rowan. We sailed smoothly along until night, and came to anchor a few miles above the mouth of the Pascotank River.

Monday morning, February 10th, soon after sunrise, the fleet again got underway, and the decks were cleared for action of a far different type than our last. About 8 o'clock we discovered the rebel fleet ahead of us, taking position in line of battle to receive us. On their left flank lay a schooner close up in shore, called the *Black Warrior*, mounting two guns, while their right flank was protected half a mile in advance by a fort mounting four heavy guns, located on what was known as Cobb's Point. Between these two batteries lay the rebel fleet, composed of the steamers *Ellis*, *Beaufort*, *Fanny*, *Sca Bird*, and two others whose names I could not learn, commanded by Captain Lynch, whose flagship was the *Sca Bird*.

We were now about three-quarters of a mile from them, and running slowly along waiting for orders. As we neared them a puff of smoke and a shot from the schooner gave us our challenge. Another shot from the old hulk followed the first. Then one from the fort on Cobb's Point. No reply from our fleet, the men of which gazed anxiously in the direction of the *Underwriter*, which was acting as our flagship, to see the signal, "commence firing," run up.

Suddenly a gun from the flagship sent a shot on its fiery path, and at the same moment up went the signal, "*close action*." This was all we were waiting for, and immediately a full head of steam was put on, and we were flying through the water at full speed towards the rebel fleet.

This was to be a new experience to us of the land ser-

vice, and one calculated to try our mettle to the utmost. Captain Flusser now called our attention to a few instructions and words of advice about boarding the enemy's vessels. That no man was to cry "quarter," no matter in what circumstances he might be placed. That he would shoot the first man that did so like a dog. That the guns' crews were to remain at their posts and work the guns for all they were worth, never leaving them except at the orders to "repel boarders," or "boarders away." That those not employed at serving the guns should arm themselves with rifles, station themselves about the decks, and endeavor to pick off the enemy's officers, and especially his pilots, and that all were expected to perform their whole duty, coolly, calmly, and devotedly.

The first cry of "quarter" while engaged in close action does more to discourage and demoralize the rest of the crew than if they were beaten off many times in succession, and it is well that the captain gave us this caution, as perhaps in the heat of the fight, some of us, overpowered, might have given that cry, instead of laying down our arms and surrendering quietly.

In the few minutes that elapsed before reaching the enemy's fleet, while each man stands silently at his post of duty, ready to deal death and destruction into the enemy's ships, the memory of stories we had read in our boyish days of pirates,— the boarding of vessels, and the bloody scenes enacted on such occasions,— the thought of home and loved ones so far away,— the thought of the future life, whose invisible veil was about to be lifted for some of us. to reveal the beginning of eternity,— these and many kindred thoughts rush through our minds faster than our boat is rushing through the water, when a thundering crash startles us from our reverie, and we are in the midst of the rebel fleet.

Crash,—Crash,—Bang,—Whirr. We dash past the fort on shore, and amidst a storm of shot, shell, and grape, make straight for the rebel *Sea Bird*. The guns of both fleets are sending their huge charges across each other's decks at short range, and belching forth their thunder peals with a noise as if the earth had met its final dissolution. Shrieks, cries, and curses are heard on every hand.

Down comes the rebel *Fanny*, swift as an eagle upon us. Crash, crash, go the huge one-hundred-pound guns, within twenty feet of each other. She throws her grapplings, misses us, and drifts swiftly by, while we empty our revolvers and rifles in the faces of her crew, and a minute later she is boarded by the *Delaware* in our wake, and the *Fanny* finds a watery grave. Her crew jump overboard and swim for the shore, while the shot from our guns plows the water around them.

Down comes the *Ellis*, rebel, on our port quarter, but also missing us, she drifts away, to be in turn boarded by the *Ceres*. The troubled air resounds with the quickly succeeding peals of the big guns, the screech of the shot, shell, and grape, the smoke of burning vessels, the clash of steel, as foe meets foe hand to hand, and the rattle of the marines' rifles, together with the cheer of victory and the yells of defiance. Our decks are slippery with blood. Our voices are hoarse with the cries of battle; still through the path of destruction our steamer rushes on, and pouncing upon the *Sea Bird* rebel, crushes her amidships like an egg shell.

“Boarders away,” yells our captain, and armed with our cutlasses, rifles, and revolvers, we leave our guns and rush after the captain, who, with a revolver in each hand, leaps upon the *Sea Bird's* deck and demands a surrender. There they stand ready for us, armed with double-edged

swords, cutlasses, pikes, and axes, but it is useless for them to resist, and but few blows are struck when their commander surrenders his sword.

One of the Fourth Rhode Island boys runs quickly to the flag halyards, cuts them, and down comes the rebel stars and bars. With loud cheers of triumph we return to our own decks. The *Sea Bird* is all afire below and sinking. In a few minutes all of her crew,—thirty-five in number,—except the dead, are transferred aboard our ship, and we back away from the burning, sinking wreck of what was, a few moments ago, the pride of the rebel fleet.

Of the rebel navy, all the vessels were taken or destroyed, except one, which escaped up the Elizabeth River. Another tried to follow suit, but being of heavier draft, stuck in the mud and was deserted by her crew, who, setting her on fire, made tracks overland, pursued by the screeching shells of our fleet. It was a hard and hotly fought battle, lasting only half an hour. We took thirty-five prisoners, and lost two of our men,—killed.

After leaving the wreck of the *Sea Bird*, we ran up toward the city, and found the ship-yard—in which was a new vessel on the stocks—on fire, as was also the rebel gunboat, *Forrest*, which had been lying at the wharf, repairing injuries received at Roanoke. The rebels in their hasty retreat had also set the town on fire in several places, and men from the fleet were immediately sent on shore to extinguish the flames, which after much hard labor they accomplished.

We now dropped down to an anchorage a mile or so below the city. The prisoners we had taken were looked after, the men ironed at the wrist, and the officers allowed the privilege of the quarter deck. These officers were, of course, very indignant, and did not scruple to take advantage of their privilege by making themselves obnoxious in

their deportment toward our officers and men, but they had the wrong man in the person of Captain Flusser to deal with, and were speedily given the choice between keeping their mouths shut or going below in irons.

Our decks presented about the same appearance as after the battle of Roanoke, with this sad exception : that the life blood of two of our brave men, who lay dead upon the deck, ran in streams under our feet.

Thomas O'Mara, of Company A, Fourth Rhode Island, was killed while leaving his gun to get his rifle.

Frederick Wayland, a member of the ship's crew, was standing by my side at the time the *Fanny* swept past us, and we poured a volley into her crew. His revolver missed fire, and coolly taking a pin from his jacket he pricked the tube, and was putting on a fresh cap, when some rebel drew a bead on him, and a ball passed through his head just below the left eye. He fell against me,—his blood spouting out in a stream over my clothes,—and then struck heavily upon the deck. He was a pious man, and for several days previous to the fight had attentively studied his Bible, and seemed to have a presentiment of his fate.

They were both buried in the rear of the battery on Cobb's Point the next day, and there we left them to sleep, where no sound of strife and bloodshed would trouble their rest any more.

Tuesday morning found us with clean decks, and prepared for another fray. With three other boats of our fleet we weighed anchor and started down the river. The squadron consisted of the *Perry*, *Louisiana*, *Underwriter*, and *Lockwood*, under command of Lieutenant Murray.

On our way we sighted an old schooner endeavoring to beat across the bay. She was soon brought to by a shot across her bows, and we took possession of her. Her

crew was composed of one man, one woman, and a boy, and she carried a cargo of corn. She was taken in tow by our steamer, and a watch sent aboard of her, who by constant pumping managed to keep her afloat.

Arriving off a little place called Edenton, we cast anchor, and a party was sent ashore to take possession of the town. They found a vessel on the stocks and several guns mounted, which they destroyed. Two schooners were also captured without much opposition from the rebel element thereabouts, and our work being accomplished, we returned to our anchorage off Elizabeth City.

Our life during the next week while lying here at anchor, was spent repairing the damage done us in battle, and in target practice with the guns. We also raised two beautiful thirty-two-pound rifled guns from the wreck of the *Sca Bird*, and they were soon mounted on our decks, one forward and the other aft, to speak thereafter in the cause of justice, right, and freedom. We also raised from the wreck many other articles of value, among which were several boxes of excellent navy tobacco, and each man received a plentiful supply of the same.

One of our prisoners, a rebel gunner, received a terrible wound during the battle here, his fore-arm being shattered from the wrist to the elbow. He was suffering dreadfully from it, and the rebel surgeon, also a prisoner, was requested to amputate the arm, and by that means save the man's life, or, at least, alleviate his sufferings; but for some reason unknown to the writer, this was not done, and the poor fellow was kept oblivious of his pain in some degree by frequent doses of morphine and whiskey.

The influence of this treatment would occasionally wear away, and at such times it was pitiful to hear his shrieks and screams of agony, until lulled again to sleep by the stupefying mixture. At last, after three days of terrible

suffering, death came to his relief, and ours also, for it was hard to see a human being in such agony, and to hear his heart-rending groans day and night.

The day following our expedition to Edenton all of our prisoners, except this wounded one, were transferred to the gunboat *Morse*, and carried to Roanoke Island.

Wednesday, February 19th, we received sailing orders, and joyfully heaved away at the anchor, for we had got tired of lying in this place so long; besides, we were anxious to hear from our regiment, not having any news from them since we left Roanoke Island.

The whole fleet was soon under way, sailing all that night, and on the next afternoon arrived off the mouth of the Chowan River. Here a portion of the fleet came to anchor. The *Delaware*, flagship of this squadron, the *Perry*, and two others whose names I have forgotten, proceeded slowly up the river towards a place called Winton.

This river is a narrow, sluggish stream, entering a portion of the Great Dismal Swamp. Along its wooded shores could be seen at times some wild beast or bird, which, frightened by the splash of our paddle-wheels, would scurry away into the recesses of the swamp. At one place a wild crane, not so easily frightened, however, stood on one foot at the edge of the bank, and stared solemnly at us as we went by.

At times a rude hut and landing were observed, probably the headquarters of some fisherman, but no other signs of human life were visible until late in the afternoon, as we rounded a bend in the river, we discovered a high bluff on our port quarter, and standing gazing through the trees on its top were three rebel pickets, who mounted their horses and rode off in hot haste.

We had on board with us at this time two companies of the Ninth New York Regiment, Hawkin's Zouaves. The

other boats with us were supplied with a like number of the same regiment, who were to land and coöperate with the fleet in an assault upon the enemy's works, wherever we might find them.

Winton was a pretty little Southern town, situated upon a bluff that rose thirty or forty feet from the Chowan River, and was composed of a number of fine residences, plantations, stores, churches, and other buildings. It did not seem to be of much military importance, except, perhaps, to facilitate the building or fitting out of blockade runners, and doubtless for this reason, was ordered our reconnoissance in this direction.

As we sailed slowly up the narrow river, the *Delaware* being ahead, our steamer next, and the two other gunboats following, the guns' crews were called "to quarters," the military stationed themselves at different parts of the boat, under cover, and all eyes were bent upon the thick groves and woods that lined the shores, to detect the first signs of an enemy.

We had arrived at a point within an eighth of a mile of the town, when suddenly from the top of the bluff on our port quarter a stunning fire of musketry burst upon us, with the roar of two field pieces.

We were ambushed. Quick as a flash we jumped to the guns, and backing water, sent our compliments at short range up into their midst. Peal after peal of our huge guns rent the air, sending their thundering echoes miles into the recesses of the swamp, and their screeching missiles sweeping the brow of that bluff, lined with rebel troops, and crashing over into the town beyond.

Along the edge of the bluff for over five hundred yards in extent was a constant line of fire and smoke, and though we could not discern any large portion of them from our decks, yet by their constant and heavy volleys, we judged there were not less than three thousand of the enemy.

Evidently we were getting the worst of it. They were so high above us that they completely commanded our decks, while we found it very difficult to elevate our guns to a proper degree. Night was coming on, and after a short fight the *Delaware*, flagship, headed down the river. As she passed us, Captain Flusser hailed to know if he should continue the fight. He was ordered to draw out and cease firing. The other two boats received the same order, and in a few minutes we were all steaming down the river, while the rebel troops made the shores resound with their yells of triumph and defiance.

The *Delaware* was pierced like a sieve by the storm of bullets that flew down upon her like hail, but suffered immaterially. Our boat also bore evidence of attention from the enemy, but fortunately without loss of life.

On our way down the river as we passed an opening in the woods, we espied a rebel picket, standing, leaning on his horse, and watching us very closely. He was somewhat out of range of our rifles, but our mate trained his gun on him at short range and let fly. The great shell seemed to burst in his face, and when the smoke cleared away, nothing of him or the horse could be seen. The next day, some colored people told us that both he and the horse were blown to atoms, and pieces of horse flesh could be seen scattered in every direction.

About eight miles down we met the rest of our fleet, who, on hearing our firing, and supposing we had fallen into ambush, were advancing to help us out. We all now came to anchor for the night. Vigilant watch was kept, lest we might be surprised, and the next morning soon after breakfast the cables were slipped, the decks cleared for action, and our fleet followed its commander once more up the windings of Chowan River, towards the town of Winton, which must be ours to-day at any sacrifice. As

we gained sight of the place where we had met with such a warm reception yesterday, each boat commenced a desultory fire, training their guns on every building, cover, or place that could conceal a rebel.

But our valiant rebels had fled, together with nearly all the inhabitants of the place, and without opposition we hauled up to the wharves and landed our troops, the Ninth New York Regiment. These rushed up the heights and over through the town.

Orders were given to remove those who had been left behind by the inhabitants, and to sack and burn every unoccupied house or building. As the people had left in great haste at our second approach, taking with them only such articles as they could conveniently carry, of course the boys found plenty of everything, and soon came flocking back to the boats loaded down with household goods, books, articles of food, and anything they found that suited their fancy.

One or two old and infirm people, and one woman, sick with a new born child, left by their friends to the more tender mercies of their conquerors, were carefully transported aboard one of our gunboats, and the troops began their work of destruction.

Soon great volumes of thick, black smoke rose in the air and drifted slowly over the face of the heavens, and the crackling of the seething flames as they spread from house to house, the showers of sparks and falling cinders, and the fast increasing heat of the atmosphere, told us our work here was done, and the total destruction of the town assured. Our troops came aboard; we were soon steaming down the river, and that night arrived at our old anchorage off Elizabeth City.

The next day three of our transports, having on board twenty-six hundred paroled rebel prisoners, arrived, and

were landed at the city wharves. Saturday night a rebel officer came off to our boat, bearing a flag of truce, and boarded us, with the request that we would not shell the town, as it was now full of sick and wounded men from Roanoke. He was informed that no proposal to that effect was entertained by our fleet so long as no offensive demonstration took place among the large number of paroled prisoners now in occupation of the city, and receiving this information he put back in his boat.

From this time until March 10th, we were employed in cruising around the Albemarle and Pamlico sounds on a sort of patrol duty, watching for blockade runners or anything worthy of our shot and shell, and making our headquarters at our old anchorage ground, off Elizabeth City.

At length, at about dark, March 10th, we received sailing orders, and bidding our old stamping ground good-bye, steamed swiftly down the sound. On the 11th we arrived off Roanoke Island, and found the troops breaking camp and going aboard the transports again, steamers getting underway, tugboats flying around with orders, and everything in active preparation for another move.

We hauled alongside a store-ship, took in a supply of coal and ammunition, and reported ourselves ready for anything in the way of a trial of our strength with the enemy, and to follow our old General Burnside wherever he might lead us.

March, 1862.

CHAPTER VI.

NEWBERN AND BEAUFORT.

IN common with the rest of the troops, our regiment embarked on their old friend, the *Eastern Queen*, which now weighed anchor, and with the rest of the fleet steamed away. It was a pretty sight, as, late in the afternoon, that vast concourse of vessels were bowling merrily along over the rippling waters of the sound, with the gunboats in the lead, with bands playing and colors flying, and soon reaching Hatteras Inlet, the signal to "heave to," brought all to anchor for the night.

The moon gilded the waters with its tranquil beauty, the night was mild and calm, and music and song floated over the waves, cheering us by its inspiration, and giving us renewed confidence for the work that yet lay before us. About the second watch in the night dark clouds began to cover the face of the moon, and a little later the rain fell thick and heavy until after sunrise, when the clouds broke.

Another day's sail brought us to the Neuse River, up which we proceeded a short distance, and anchored for the night. As soon as the morning's meal was disposed of, we of the navy got underway, leaving the transports with land forces to follow. The decks were cleared for action, guns served and run out, crews stationed, and we moved slowly up the Neuse River.

In a short time the enemy's batteries appeared in sight, and the thunder of our big guns woke the echoes of the dismal woods, as shot after shot went hurtling and shrieking over towards the earth-works and camps of the rebel army.

Moving slowly and cautiously forward, now and then uncovering a rebel battery near the shore, we received their fire without material damage, and sent back in return our heavy shot and shell, which soon made them scatter for the cover of their inland works.

At one point a large house was discovered about half a mile from the shore, in an open piece of land, and it being very prominent, and an excellent mark for our gunners, one of our guns was immediately trained upon it, and sent a nine-inch shell straight through it. The house proved to be full of rebels who were watching the operations of our fleet, and the way those Johnnies piled out of that house was a caution. They "stood not upon the order of their going," but leaped from the windows, or any place that seemed to afford escape, and traveled over the fields as fast as their long legs could carry them, hotly pursued by our shot and shell.

And now the troops on the transports began to land for their share of the day's work, and I will here follow the fortunes of the old Fourth as far as I have been able to learn them from my comrades who were not with me in the naval action of this movement.

There was an old steamer named *Union* in the fleet of transports. She was capacious enough to carry a thousand men, and being very light of draft, was found the most useful boat in the fleet for landing troops, as she was generally able to run quite up to, or within a few feet of the shore. She was painted white, had a large paddle-wheel on her stern, and from her general appearance was called

the "Old Wheelbarrow." From this boat many troops were landed.

Our regiment went ashore at Slocum's Creek, eighteen miles from Newbern, wading up to their waists in water. As soon as all were safely on shore the line was formed, and the regiment marched up towards the main road. The rest of the force being landed, the whole line advanced, and were soon plodding along towards Newbern. About an hour's march brought them suddenly upon a rebel camp, and the troops charged through the sandy plain to reach it. But no enemy was found, and a halt was called. The camp fires were still burning, and tents in good order, blankets, equipments, and rations strewn about, indicating that it had been deserted but a short time, and that in great haste.

The bugles sounded the "forward." The weather had changed since they started, and now the rain came down upon them in torrents, drenching them to the skin. Still on they marched, over the muddy roads, until noon, when a halt was ordered, and the advance skirmishers came in with the report that the rebel works were just ahead.

All this while, we of the naval fleet were sending our shells over into the woods and fields in advance of our comrades on land, clearing the path before them, and cleaning out what batteries we could discover on their flank.

Burnside now sent forward a party to reconnoiter the position, but they found the works abandoned, and the "forward" was sounded. On the other side of these works lay the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad, leading to Newbern, and beyond where the main road crossed the track the troops filed into the low meadow lands, a halt was called, arms stacked, and haversacks inspected.

After a short rest, and recruiting of the inner man, the

order to "fall in" was given, and the men, though tired and wet, and wishing much for a longer rest, started on again over the muddy roads.

Reaching the junction of the main road and railroad, the column split into two sections, one proceeding along the railway, and the other the turnpike road. Further on, the roads again formed a junction, and the two columns were thus brought together once more and halted. A few minutes later, the advance was sounded and they started on. Night drew its curtain of gloom about them, but still they kept on their way until about 8 o'clock they turned off the road, halted, stacked arms, and bivouacked for the night.

A few farmhouses, barns, and tobacco sheds afforded protection from the storm to as many as could crowd into them, while the rest of the troops had no alternative but to lie down on the wet and muddy fields and endeavor to get a little sleep and rest in preparation for the arduous duties of the coming day. "No fires" was the order from headquarters, but nevertheless fires were built. The night passed without special incident, and at daybreak on the 14th, preparations were made to attack the rebel force in our front.

Not long after the troops were astir, and began to get ready their frugal breakfast, when the picket line opened a rapid and continuous fire, telling all that the day's work had commenced. Immediately our regiment, with the rest, were alarmed, equipments strapped on, rifles loaded, and the men got into line quickly, and we moved forward, a strong line of skirmishers in advance.

The river, the turnpike, and the railroad here ran nearly parallel with each other. The enemy's line lay at right angles from the river, where his left was protected by a thirteen gun battery. A strong breastwork extended from

here to the railroad. Near the railroad was posted a battery of two thirty-two pounders, and beyond the railroad was a strong line of redoubts, "thirteen in number, and a mile in length, erected upon six little mounds or hills, which rose conveniently to the main works. Along this fortified line were mounted forty-six guns of different calibre." The right of their line ended in a swamp, impassable for troops.

"Against these formidable works of the enemy, garrisoned by 8,000 men under the command of Gen. L. O'B. Branch," the following forces of General Burnside were to operate :

The naval fleet at work upon the river was composed of the gunboats *Philadelphia*, *Stars and Stripes*, *Hetzl*, *Delaware*, *Commodore Perry*, *Valley City*, *Underwriter*, *Commodore Barney*, *Hunchback*, *Southfield*, *Morse*, *Brinker*, *Lockwood*, and *Louisiana*, fourteen in all, under command of Commander S. C. Rowan.

A battery of six howitzers from the naval fleet was commanded by R. S. McCook, of the gunboat *Stars and Stripes*.

"Two twelve-pound guns manned by sailors from the transports were under command of Captains Bennett, of the *Cossack*, and Dayton, of the *Highlander*.

"The line of battle was formed with General Foster's brigade on the right, consisting of the following regiments in order: Twenty-fifth, Twenty-fourth, Twenty-seventh, and Twenty-third Massachusetts regiments, with the Tenth Connecticut.

"General Reno's brigade on the left, as follows: Twenty-first Massachusetts, Fifty-first New York, Ninth New Jersey, Fifty-first Pennsylvania.

"General Parke's brigade in the centre, in the following order: Fourth Rhode Island, Eighth Connecticut, Eleventh Connecticut, and Fifth Rhode Island.

“ On both sides the number of assailants and defendants was about equal, but the advantage clearly lay with the enemy, who was emboldened by his sense of security behind his defenses.

“ Burnside immediately ordered General Foster to advance along the road to the enemy’s left ; General Parke to follow him up until opposite the enemy’s centre, while General Reno was to keep along the railroad and attack his right.” *

Amid the crashes of the enemy’s guns, the screech and whistle of grape, and the sweeping storm of bullets, our brave troops advanced on the left, and a portion of the Twenty-first Massachusetts being first to reach the enemy’s works, dashed up and over them with a ringing cheer. But they being small in number and unsupported, were soon overpowered and driven back. Our brigade was now ordered forward. Under a heavy fire the old Fourth made its way through the brush and timber, and reaching the railroad lay low, waiting for orders. Lieutenant-Colonel Clark, of the Twenty-first Massachusetts, had now brought his men near the railroad, after his heroic charge and failure to hold the fort, and advancing to meet Colonel Rodman, informed him of the situation and advised him to assault with the Fourth Regiment.

Our colonel immediately decided to advance the regiment without orders, taking the responsibility of the movement on his own shoulders ; and, dispatching an aide to General Parke to inform him of what he was about to do, gave the order “ Fourth Rhode Island fall in.”

The boys were ready for the work. Moving by the right flank for a short distance to a slight rise of ground, and then “ on right by files into line ” they advanced at a quick step on the rebel line.

* From Woodbury's *Burnside and the Ninth Army Corps*.

Shot and shell, grape and minie-balls greeted their approach, and the men began to drop before the murderous fire; yet never swerving from their onward course, they steadily advanced, loading and firing as fast as possible, till within a hundred yards of the works, when, with a cheer, they charged home, and planting their colors on the ramparts, swarmed over the breast-works. A short, fierce struggle, and the fort was ours, and the beaten and dismayed rebel host fled to the rear, leaving many prisoners in our hands.

It was a grand charge. Totally unsupported, they had secured the key to the whole rebel line. The Eighth Connecticut and the Fifth Rhode Island, sent to our support by General Parke, now arrived, but too late to share the glory with us. The Eighth Connecticut, however, planted their state colors on the ramparts. At this instant General Burnside rode up and seeing two colors floating over the battery, inquired "What regiment captured this battery?" Our colonel, Rodman, replied: "The Fourth, General, the Fourth." Taking off his hat and slapping his hand on his knee with emphasis, the old hero remarked, "I knew it, I knew it. It is no more than I expected. Thank God, the day is ours."

A lull in the battle, occasioned by our success, now occurred, during which our boys ransacked the fort they had so nobly won. In the rebel officers' quarters quite a quantity of whiskey was found. This was most acceptable after the wet and cold march of the last two days, and they took immediate possession in the name of Uncle Sam. Not having vessels wherewith to carry it away, they poured most of it down their throats.

The action on the left was not yet over. General Reno's brigade was still hotly engaged. The Eighth Connecticut and Fifth Rhode Island were now sent out as skirmishers,

and found the enemy yet in full possession of the redoubts and rifle-pits on the other side of the railroad, and firmly holding their ground.

Orders came from General Parke to "Forward the Fourth Rhode Island and drive them out." "Fall in," "Counter-march," and "Forward," was the order, and with a ringing cheer that boded a second victory for the Fourth Regiment, the boys started.

The works and rifle-pits, their objective point, were filled with the enemy, who held their fire until the regiment was within 200 yards of them, at the railroad, when they poured in a terrible storm of musketry.

The boys dropped on their faces to avoid, as much as possible, its effects, and then up and at them. "They quickly cleared the rifle pits, stormed the redoubts, and carried away everything before them."

Thus, the second time that day, were the colors of the Fourth Rhode Island planted in triumph on the enemy's works. Alone and unaided they had charged the rebel line at these two points without defeat, and now with victory perched upon their banners, they prepared to pursue the flying enemy towards Newbern.

The whole force now started in pursuit, one column taking the main road and the other the railroad. All along were seen evidences of the haste the panic-stricken rebels had made in their retreat. Guns, equipments, knapsacks, and wounded men were strewn over the road, and a thick, black cloud of smoke rising and curling up into the heavens directly in range of the city, told our pursuing columns that the enemy had set fire to the bridge over the river, and that for the time being, their pursuit was at an end. They reached the smoking, blazing bridge about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Here a short halt was made, when the troops were ordered to encamp.

Our regiment took possession of the deserted camp of the Twenty-seventh North Carolina (Wild Cats) Regiment, where they found an abundance of stores of all kinds. Here they lived in ease and luxuriance for the next three days, when orders were received for another move. And now, having chronicled the experience and part taken in this battle by the Fourth Regiment as a regiment, let us go back aboard the *Perry*, and detail the experience of the writer and his comrades in the naval detachment.

With the morning light of the 14th we resumed our work of shelling the woods and enemy's batteries ashore, all the time advancing slowly up the river, until we came to a line of obstructions, consisting of sunken vessels rigged with spar torpedoes, through which we endeavored to force our way.

The *Perry* in going through, struck one of these torpedoes, which pierced her hull, breaking off the spar, and carrying away the torpedo with us. Fortunately it did not explode. But the retreat of the rebels had been too hasty for us, and before we could reach the bridge and cut off their retreat they had crossed over and set it on fire in several places.

The bridge was a very long, well made structure, and was now a heavy, crackling mass of flames. Great, black clouds of smoke rolled up to the skies, and joining the thick columns from the city, which had been set on fire by the demoralized rebels, spread like a huge black mantle above us, completely hiding the sun from view.

Another prize in the shape of a new three-masted schooner fitting out for a blockade runner, was taken from the vicinity of the bridge by a boat's crew from the *Perry*, and several other vessels were also captured by others of our fleet.

We now anchored off the city, and boats from the fleet immediately put off, and landing, their crews took posses-

sion, and set at work putting out the fires, which were spreading rapidly and threatened to destroy the whole place.

After nightfall the illumination from these fires was grand. The great arches of the bridge, with every post, rail, and brace, all ablaze, and ever and anon, great timbers falling with a hissing crash into the water below, sending up showers of golden sparks scintillating in the great black cloud above them, the huge fires in the city and the innumerable camp fires of our victorious troops on the other side of the river, all combined to form a scene of grandeur, that, once witnessed, can never be forgotten. Towards morning, the fires in the city were got under control, and at daylight, troops landed, and henceforth occupied the place till the end of the war.

The total loss in this battle on our side was ninety-one killed, and 466 wounded and missing, of whom our regiment numbered twelve killed, and twenty-two wounded. Of my company, B, Samuel Myrick was killed, and Robert Kenworthy, Reuben Healey, and Rhodes Matteson wounded. Kenworthy died the next day of his wounds.

Samuel Myrick was the eldest of three brothers in Company B, the other two being Cromwell P. and Solomon. He seemed to have a strong presentiment of his coming fate. Naturally of a cheerful disposition, and well liked by all his comrades, his thoughtful and sober manner as we approached the day of battle was remarked by many of his company. He was in the habit of taking snuff, and often presented his box among us to take a pinch with him. During the battle while lying at the railroad, he suddenly took out his snuff box, and invited the boys to take a pinch with him "for the last time." It was accepted, and a little later the leaden messenger came, and poor Sam dropped dead. This was the first man Company B ever

lost in battle, and we felt that there were other men whom we could better have spared. A little over two years later his brother Cromwell was killed in front of Petersburg, Va., and only Solomon was left to come home to the grief-stricken family. Colonel Rodman was slightly wounded and Captain Tillinghast was killed.

On the 17th of March the regiment broke camp and went aboard the *Eastern Queen* for the last time. On the same day orders were received by Captain Flusser, of our boat, to return the naval detachment to the regiment. Accordingly we packed up our duds, bade Captain Flusser, the old *Perry*, and our shipmates good-bye, and joined the regiment on the *Eastern Queen*, after about eight weeks' experience in the navy of the United States.

The regiment being all together again on their old friend and transport,—with the exception of a few who were left on the *Perry* a while longer, and others sick and wounded in the hospital ashore, and those others who slept the sleep of the brave in their cold, narrow beds of earth,—the steamer weighed anchor, and moved down the river to Slocum's Creek.

Here we bade good-bye forever to the old *Eastern Queen*, and with all our baggage, embarked on board the old "Wheelbarrow," and after a sail of twelve miles up the creek, landed and went into camp.

The Fifth Rhode Island and Eighth Connecticut landed here, and it was evident that our old commander, General Burnside, was about to strike another blow at the already shattered Confederacy on this coast. After having stopped here two days, we moved on towards Carolina City, halting that night at a deserted rebel post, known as Newport Barracks. The next morning we again took the road, and in the afternoon arrived at Carolina City, on the shores of Bogue Sound.

Here we struck the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad, and encamped. A large hotel, turpentine works, and a few other buildings composing this city were destroyed by the rebels shortly before our arrival, and all that remained of them were black, smoking ruins.

A mile or two further on lay another small collection of houses and a large railway station and wharves, the railroad terminating at this point. This place was called Morehead City. Being situated on an inlet from the sea, it was a fine resort for blockade runners, communicating as it did with the interior of the Confederacy by a direct line of railway, and protected by the guns of Fort Macon, just at the entrance of the harbor.

At the wharf, in front of the railroad station, lay a large bark, just unloading, while out in the harbor another bark was discovered at anchor, *both flying the English colors*, having successfully run the blockade of our fleet outside, with large and valuable cargoes; but had now, to use a homely expression, "jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire."

The night before our arrival here, our advance guard reached the place and quietly took possession of this vessel at the wharf. As for the other, it lay beyond our reach. The night after our arrival, the crew of the latter vessel finding their consort captured, and themselves in rather a tight place, deemed "discretion better than valor," and just after dark set their ship on fire as she lay at her anchorage, and escaped to the fort in their boats.

We watched the burning ship with much interest, and as the flames grew brighter and flashed aloft among her rigging, throwing a bright reflection over the waters, suddenly there came a low rumbling explosion, as the flames reached her magazine, a bright glare, a lifting high up in the air of her decks and spars, a falling of the *debris*, and all

became once more dark and still, and the shattered hulk sank to the bottom.

Directly opposite, and easterly from our camp, lay a long strip of sand and woods called Bogue Banks. On the northeast end of this strip was located a large government fort of the first class, called Fort Macon. It was taken possession of in the early part of the war by a body of rebels, and where the Stars and Stripes had floated for so many years, could now be seen the rebel colors waving defiance in the morning breeze. The fort mounted sixty-seven guns of large calibre, and was garrisoned by 500 men under command of Col. Moses J. White.

It was evident that this fort was the objective point of Burnside's movement in this direction, and that sooner or later that hated flag must come down. General Parke immediately demanded the surrender of the fort. It was refused; and operations against it by siege lines at once commenced.

In a northwesterly direction, and across the bay, about two miles distant, was situated the town of Beaufort, once famous as a watering-place for the aristocracy of the South, and now under the ban of Confederate rule. Between the fort and the town lay a long and narrow marshy island, composed mostly of mud, sea grass, and oysters, but from its peculiar situation, in the middle of the harbor, it created a channel flowing from Bogue Banks to the town. The eastern point of this marshy island was within 300 yards of the fort, thus preventing any approach to Beaufort by water from Morehead City, except it be directly under the guns of the fort. At flood-tide a passage could be made past the western end of this island, but then within easy range of the enemy's guns. But once the other side of this mud bank, it was good water and clear sailing up to the wharves of the city.

In order to regain possession of the fort it was necessary

to first take possession of Beaufort, as well to have a base of operations as to cut off the enemy's retreat, and also to stop communication between the fort and their friends on shore. This was rather a difficult and dangerous operation, and required much skill and cool courage in the undertaking.

A dark, wet, and foggy night was selected for this expedition, as it was obliged to pass by the fort in boats, directly under its guns, and two companies, A and B, of our regiment, together with two companies of the Eighth Connecticut, were detailed to accomplish this perilous job. Of course, no other than row-boats could be used and these were prepared and moored close under the wharves at Morehead City.

At midnight of March 21st, these four companies were quietly drawn up in line, and as silently as possible proceeded down the railroad to the wharves, where the boats lay, and embarked on their perilous enterprise. All being ready, we noiselessly cast loose from the wharf and moved out in the channel, the boats being manned by colored fishermen, who were thoroughly conversant with these waters, and were faithful guides. Drifting with the current, now setting out to sea, we sailed directly down towards the fort.

The time was most propitious, for the night being dark and misty, and a thick fog settled around us, we were effectually screened from the watchful eyes of our enemies.

As we slowly sailed along, each boat following the leader, in which was our pilot, we almost held our breath, and, lying low in the boats, preserved the utmost silence, as the gray walls and dark bank of the fort loomed up through the fog, on our starboard side.

The least noise — a cough, the splash of an oar — would have discovered us to the sentry on the parapet, not a hundred yards from us, and would have been the signal for

our destruction under the merciless fire of those huge, black dogs of war, that now we could just see, looking grimly forth from their embrasures.

We heard the sentry on the parapet pacing to and fro, dreaming, perhaps, of home and loved ones, or speculating on the unrequited hardships and dangers of a soldier's life, yet in blissful ignorance of the near presence of us, his deadly enemies.

But our hearts leaped to our throats and we grasped our arms more firmly as we heard the sentry's voice in a sharp, quick tone, cry, "Halt! who comes there?"

Were we discovered at last? Hush, lie still; not a sound, not a breath — but in the next instant we heard the sound of many feet, and the answer to the sentry's challenge, "Relief," in the voice of the rebel corporal, as he was at that moment passing around to relieve his guard.

We were not discovered, thanks to our Protector above, and to the thick, dark fog around us, which, had it lifted then would have betrayed us to the enemy. In a few moments more we had drifted past the fort, and soon the muffled oars were put to work. The colored oarsmen pulled for all they were worth, and we drew a long breath of relief as we rounded the eastern end of the island and moved swiftly over the waters toward the city.

It was near two o'clock when we reached the wharves of Beaufort, and landing as silently as possible, advanced through the dark and deserted streets.

Guards were posted on all the wharves, and in rear of the town a line of pickets was established, and the remainder of our little expedition that had so narrowly escaped destruction, took up their quarters in some of the deserted houses, — of which there were many in the place, — and tried to get a little sleep after our exciting, dangerous, but successful adventure.

March, 1862.

CHAPTER VII.

FORT MACON.

FANCY the surprise of the inhabitants as they arose the next morning to find the town in full possession of the United States forces. Although they had retired to rest the night before with the knowledge that the enemy were but two miles away, yet they had full confidence in Colonel White and his rebel troops at the fort to defend them against the approach of the "Northern hirelings," and knowing there was no other way to reach the town but by passing under his guns, they had slept in blissful consciousness that the "cowardly mudsills" would never dare attempt such a feat.

But alas for human calculation, and especially that part pertaining to Beaufort's inhabitants. Here they were, those hated "bluebellies," about one hundred or more, stalking about the town as if they owned the whole place and had always lived here. Little knots of people assembled at the street corners and discussed the situation. The women folks, who had been instructed by the rebel authorities that the most outrageous and barbarous conduct would be observed upon the occupation of the town by these Yankee troops, kept themselves well in doors, only now and then yielding to woman's curiosity, and peering through the blinds or doors to see where and when the devastation commenced.

But to their surprise, they saw only a few soldiers patrolling the streets, dressed neatly, and in every respect behaving themselves like gentlemen.

A few Union people were found here, who, to the great disgust of the rebel element, freely mingled with our boys, shaking them by the hand, rendering them all the aid and information in their power, and joyfully accepting the situation as relieving them from the petty persecutions of their rebel townspeople and from the odium attaching to the Confederacy in North Carolina.

The negroes, for a wonder, kept aloof at first. We had expected they would be the first to greet us, in view of their long-prayed-for freedom from slavery. But it was not so. We could not get them to come near us, unless through fear of their lives. Now and then one or more could be seen staring at us from behind some corner or building, but on our approach would dart out of sight in an instant.

The reason of this conduct on their part was soon made known to us by one of the old colored men of the town, who had been a slave all his life. The old fellow got cornered by some of our boys, and seeing that no harm was likely to ensue from contact with us, was drawn into conversation, and something like the following colloquy took place:

“Uncle John, what makes all the niggers so afraid of us?”

“Well, marster,” replied the old fellow, with a grin that stretched his mouth almost over his shoulders, “I specs it’s cause dey reckons you uns is debbils. See our young marser done gone way to de fort, fo’ to fight de Yankees, an’ our ole marser he done say mo’ as dem Yankees hab cotched Newbun, and dey kill all ole nigger lak me, marser, and dey done eat all de little pickaninies up, like as if dey was roas’ pig. And he say you-uns hab horns in de head, and split huff, lak as de good book say de debbil look, and mo’

as dem Yankees burn up eberyting dey come 'cross. Ise po' ole nigger, marsers, an' doan know nuffin, but I doan see but you uns has head and fut lak white folks, bress my Lord."

And here the old fellow seeing his master approaching, humbly put his hand to the top of his head, and bowed reverently, and at his master's gruff command, "You, John, get out of this, and mind you now," quietly hobbled away to his quarters.

But he doubtless spread the news among his colored friends "mo' as dem Yankees was jus' lak white folks," for they soon became quite tractable and told us all we desired to know of the town and its inhabitants. These ignorant people had been really taught to regard us as nothing less than devils, who had all the appurtenances of his satanic majesty, including the power of burning everything we touched. This idea was doubtless exemplified and impressed upon their minds by the burning of Newbern, Carolina City, Elizabeth City, and the blockade runners out in this vicinity, which, though done by the rebels themselves, were no doubt credited to us by the simple-minded colored population.

In the flush times before the war this town contained some three thousand inhabitants and was a favorite resort for the Southerners during the heat of the summer, being situated nearly open to the sea and enjoying all the facilities of boating, bathing, and fishing, and the exhilarating sea breeze. But by its proximity to the sea-coast and its liability to attack, as an important military post, it had, since Burnside struck this coast in force, been deserted by nearly all its inhabitants. Those that remained seemed to do nothing but fish or congregate in the few little stores in the place to talk over the affairs of their beloved Confederacy.

There were several large hotel buildings, the largest of which, at the northern end of the town, was subsequently

appropriated to our use as a general hospital. The others furnished excellent quarters for our troops.

Several small stores were open to catch what little trade remained in the place. To one of these stores, kept by two old men, dressed in the inevitable rebel gray, I went one day to purchase some letter paper and other small articles, and in payment therefor, tendered a United States Treasury note. It was refused with the contemptible remark, "We uns don't take such stuff here. Ef you want to buy goods you will have to git that changed into good money. We don't take nothing but *Confederate* money here." And so I had to do before I could purchase anything from these people. But after a short time they were glad to change their tune, and would not refuse to take "greenbacks," and stow them away also, for their future value over Confederate scrip soon became apparent.

The night of our expedition to and capture of this place I took a severe cold, from wet and exposure, which soon extended to my lungs and began to assume serious proportions, inasmuch as I was hardly able to breathe and could not speak above a whisper. There being no surgeon here at this time, and my case growing rapidly worse from want of proper care and medicine, my orderly sergeant found passage for me in a small boat going over to Morehead City one morning, in charge of four men of the Eighth Connecticut Regiment.

The tide being at flood, we could easily pass around that end of the before mentioned island, farthest from the fort, and we started. As we came within easy range of her guns, she let fly two solid thirty-two pound shot, which, however, did us no damage, and in a short time we were landed at the wharf, at Morehead City.

Here I found myself in a very unpleasant situation for a sick man. The Connecticut boys went off about their business and left me alone. I had over a mile to walk to get to

our hospital at Carolina City, with hardly wind enough to go ten feet. Sick and feeble, I started up the road, but that was the toughest journey I ever made. I was forced to stop at every hundred yards and lie down and rest, and in this manner, disheartened and exhausted, I finally reached the surgeon's tent.

There was only the steward in attendance. From him I learned that the surgeon had gone over to Bogue Banks that morning, and it was not possible for him (the steward) to give me permission to enter the hospital without orders from the doctor, or to prescribe anything for my relief. Sick and discouraged, hardly able to breathe, and suffering intensely from the distressed condition of my lungs, I slowly moved away toward a piece of woods across the railroad, hoping to reach them and lie down to sleep, not caring much whether I ever awoke again in this world or not. Had I reached these woods unobserved there never was any doubt in my mind but that it would have been my last resting-place. All I had with me of my possessions was a little Bible my dear old grandmother gave me upon leaving home. I earnestly desired to get into the woods unobserved, read a few chapters of that Holy Book, say my prayers, lie down, and go to sleep — forever. Hugging my book to my breast, I crawled along slowly, when suddenly I heard voices, and presently the hospital nurse, James P. Gardiner, of my company, and another one, whom I had not life enough at the time to recognize, hastened up, and perceiving my condition, carried me to the hospital without waiting for orders from any one, undressed me, gave me a warm drink, and put me to bed.

The doctor came immediately upon his return from the banks, and pronounced my case congestion of the lungs. With good doctoring and the best of care, and being naturally of a strong constitution, I soon began to mend under the hands of my faithful old nurse, and while I was convalesc-

ing, a few little incidents of hospital life that came under my personal observation may be worth noting here.

This ward contained the sick and wounded of the Fourth Regiment, together with two or three wounded rebels, who received the same care and treatment as our own men. We occupied about twenty cot beds, ten on each side. Nearly all of these were filled with men in various stages of disease or wounds. Several died during the few days of our stay here, and nearly every other evening at sunset could be heard the muffled roll of the drum and mournful notes of the fife as some poor victim of disease or the enemy's shot was slowly borne by his comrades to his last, long home.

Next cot to the writer lay a young man of the Fourth Regiment, by the name of Charlie Bibbs, very sick with a fever, and during the few days of our acquaintance which ripened into friendship, I would often, at his request, take the full care of him, giving him his medicine from the nurse, or hobbling out to the sutler's to get him some little nicety, such as oranges, can of preserves, etc.

As he drew near his end, he seemed unable to recognize any one except the nurse and myself. He had a father and brother in the same company. The day before he died they came over to see him, but he was unable to recognize them.

The next evening, I awoke from a short nap to find him getting out of bed. I asked him where he was going. He replied "I am going home. I ain't going to stay in this place any longer." After much persuasion he was put back into bed but in a short time began a hard spell of vomiting. I held him in my arms until he seemed better, but upon laying him back upon the bed I noticed a change, and calling the nurse, I felt of his heart. It was still, and the nervous twitching of his mouth told us his spirit had forever fled.

Poor Charlie! In the long and weary hours of his sick-

ness he had often spoken to me of his home and his dear mother, and longed for the day to come when he should receive his discharge, hoping at every entrance of the surgeon that he had come to bring him his papers, but, like thousands upon thousands of others who might have been sent home to die among friends and relatives, he was suffered to lie here day after day and week after week, until hope yielded to despair, and he gave up his young life a sacrifice upon the altar of his country, with no mother to fold him to her breast, with no kind sister or friends to ease his dying hours, without even a man of God to console the last few moments of life with the blessed promises of the Gospel; and at sunset he was borne away upon the guns of his comrades to his narrow bed of earth, and there left to sleep until the Resurrection morn.

A death in the hospital casts a spirit of gloom and despondency over the rest of the inmates, and especially when one seemingly so full of the promises of life as was this, our young friend, is taken away. But after a few days this feeling wore away, other things claimed our attention, and orders were received for the removal of this hospital to better quarters at Beaufort. We were transported in boats across the bay, and arrived without accident at the wharf of our new hospital. We occupied the largest building in the place, formerly used as a hotel, and situated at the northern end of the town. It commanded a beautiful view of the bay and ocean beyond, was plentifully provided with good rooms, walks, and fresh air, and was doubtless the best place in the state for a general hospital for our sick and wounded men.

The supply of food given us was very meagre, not near enough to satisfy the craving appetite of those who were just convalescing, and the writer, having a little money on hand, was forced to repair to a bakery near by, and invest

his scrip in molasses cookies at forty cents a dozen, and sweet potato pies at fifty cents each.

As my appetite increased in proportion to my ability to get about, so in like manner did my scrip decrease, until at last I left my last shinplaster at the baker's, and devoured my last molasses cookie and sweet potato pie. My friend, the baker, refused to trust me for any more, so I made up my mind to leave this hospital with or without orders and go up to the company cook-house and get one good square meal.

So, one morning, after I had attended sick call and thrown away, as usual, my ration of physic, I went up to my room, packed up my duds, and passing the guard unobserved, made tracks for my company quarters. Arriving there, I went straight to the cook-house and filled up my empty stomach with boiled pork and beans, and then marched up to Captain Buffum's quarters and reported myself for duty. He gave me a scolding for leaving the hospital, but upon my telling him of our starving condition down there, he allowed me to remain in the quarters until I got strong enough for duty. But imagine my chagrin when he informed me that if I had staid a week longer I should have received my discharge and been sent home, as my papers, with those of two others in the hospital from our company, Corp. William B. Starkey and Augustus T. Thornton, were made out and all ready to be signed,—another illustration of the good luck that has clung to me through life. But my feelings were somewhat appeased when I learned that the other two had also forfeited their discharge. Starkey felt so pleased at the prospect of discharge that he got drunk over it, and thus spoiled his chance. Thornton gave himself away in some manner, and that was the end of his opportunity to see home, as the poor fellow was killed in battle two years subsequently.

Meanwhile, Fort Macon had fallen into our possession.

Three days after our arrival at Carolina City, as recorded in the previous chapter, Company K crossed over to Bogue Banks, and after destroying the large salt works erected there, encamped near by. A few days subsequently Companies B and H crossed, and these three companies joining forces, formed a skirmish line extending across the island, and drove in the rebel pickets belonging to the fort, establishing our picket line in place of theirs.

This position was held until the rest of our regiment crossed, when another advance was made. Being reënforced by the Fifth Rhode Island Regiment, which now crossed from our old camp, a final advance was made toward the fort, and after some little skirmishing, we drove the rebel pickets inside of their works, and established our line one-third of a mile in front of Fort Macon. And now began preparations to reduce the fort. A graphic account of the manner of procedure, I beg leave to quote from Headley :

“ The heavy siege guns and other material to reduce this strong fort must be brought from Newbern, and there being no locomotives on the road between Carolina City and Newbern, they must be carried by steamer fifteen miles to the head of Slocum’s Creek, and then hauled one mile to Havelock Station.

“ At the latter place they were placed on platform cars, and by the aid of mules slowly hauled to Carolina City, the headquarters of General Parke. Here there was a turnout and short track leading to a wharf on the edge of Bogue Sound, where the guns, mortars, and ammunition were received on board flat-boats and conveyed across the sound to Bogue Beach, a distance of a mile and a half.

“ When these heavy guns and other ponderous material were on board the flats, the labor of transporting them to the desired place had but just been commenced. The sound is so shallow for more than half the distance across that it

can easily be sounded by wading knee deep, a narrow channel containing only five or six feet of water intervening.

“Having reached the opposite shore at a point about four miles due west from Fort Macon, a wide marsh was to be crossed, in which the wheels of the artillery carriages sank to the hub, and when this obstacle was crossed, a continuous line of sandy knolls was reached, extending to the fort. These sand hills were covered by a stunted growth of brush and brier, in which the wheels sank to the axle, requiring a great force to move the massive guns.”

During the time occupied by this slow and tedious work of getting these batteries into position, our boys kept up a fire upon the rebel pickets near the fort and on the garrison as often as one could be seen.

The fort at this time mounted sixty guns, and was garrisoned by about four hundred men under Col. Moses J. White. The batteries with which we hoped to reduce this stronghold were three in number, two of mortars, and one of siege guns. The first battery was built under cover of the sand hills, and about fourteen hundred yards from the fort. It consisted of four ten-inch mortars. The second battery was located 1,300 hundred yards from the fort, and nearly in the centre of the island. Its armament was three long rifled thirty-pound Parrot guns. The last battery, consisting of four eight-inch mortars, was placed about twelve hundred yards from the fort. Trenches and rifle-pits connected one with the other, and also formed a defense and shelter to our men.

As soon as our object was descried by the garrison of the fort, they commenced a lively cannonade of our position, but without injury. During a lull in the firing, one facetious individual in our lines cried out to the Johnnies, “Eat your eggs if you like, but stop throwing the *shells* at us.”

On Wednesday, April 23d, everything being in readiness to open fire, Burnside sent a flag of truce to the fort with a

demand for its surrender. The flag returned. The fort would fight ; and at half-past six Thursday morning, the first gun from our batteries sent its heavy shell screeching through the air over into the doomed garrison. Peel upon peel followed. The mortars joined in the assault, while the guns from the fort answered shot for shot, but our batteries being so low and almost hidden in the sandy hills, little damage was done us.

The battle's roar increased for the first hour or two, our shot falling wild at first, but as our gunners gradually got their range, its destructive work was soon perceived. The floating batteries on the coast outside the fort were now passing over their shot and shell, but a brisk breeze springing up, the swell of the sea prevented them from holding a range, and in a short time they withdrew, leaving the job for the land force to accomplish.

The floating batteries consisted of eight vessels, as follows : Steamer *Daylight*, which received one shot, wounding two of her men ; *State of Georgia*, and *Chippewa*, also the gunboat *Ellis* and bark *Gemsbok*, together with the mortar vessels, *Grenade*, *Grapeshot*, and *Shrapnell*, all under the command of Commander Lockwood.

So accurate was our fire that by 3 o'clock in the afternoon all of the guns of the fort were either dismantled or silenced, except two, which now and then replied to us to let us know they were still at home to visitors. About 4 o'clock, the firing from the fort ceased, and a white flag was seen to float from its flag-staff.

A long, rolling cheer of triumph greeted this signal of victory from our boys, and preparations were at once made to receive the surrender. Colonel White, commander of the fort, went on board the steamer *Alice Price*, where he met General Burnside, and the terms, of which the following is an official transcript, were signed :

“ARTICLE 1.—The fort, armament, and garrison to be surrendered to the forces of the United States.

“ARTICLE 2.—The officers and men of the garrison to be released on their parole of honor not to take up arms against the United States of America until properly exchanged, and to return to their homes, taking with them all their private effects, such as clothing, bedding, books, etc.”

Immediately after Colonel White's return, there was a great bustle inside the fort; the men hurrying to and fro, and all who had been watching our movements from the ramparts were seen to gather inside the fort. In a short time the sally-port gates were opened, and the whole rebel force marched out, and forming a square on the green, stacked arms, and went back to take a final farewell of their late stronghold.

The Fifth Rhode Island Regiment was now ordered to vacate the trenches and form line on the beach, and with the band of our regiment at their head, marched into the fort, up and around the ramparts, and took formal possession.

“The pitted walls, cracked and shattered stone work, broken coping, yawning ditches in the slope outside, dismounted and disabled guns, sand-bags scattered in confusion, all testified to the accuracy of our gunners and the weight of their material.

“One of our Parrot shot struck a gun carriage, killed one of the gunners, crossed over, killed two more of the garrison, and wounded several.

“The rebel loss was seven killed and eighteen wounded. About three hundred and twenty prisoners were put aboard steamers and carried to Wilmington and Newbern. Fifteen guns were dismantled by our batteries, while theirs dismounted one siege gun for us, killing one man and wounding two.

“Of 1,100 shot thrown by us at the fort, 560 struck and did good execution. The rebels fired, it is stated on

good authority, 1,600 shot and shell. The rebel ordnance officer surrendered 20,000 pounds of powder, 150 ten-inch shell, 250 thirty-two pound shot, and 400 stand of arms."

The following is an official copy of General Burnside's orders, congratulatory of this great and important victory :

HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF NORTH CAROLINA. }
BEAUFORT HARBOR, April 26th, 1862. }

The General com'd'g takes peculiar pleasure in thanking General Parke and his brave command for the patriotic labor, fortitude, and courage displayed in the investment and reduction of Fort Macon. Every patriotic heart will be filled with gratitude to God for having given to our beloved country such soldiers. The regiment and artillery companies engaged have the right to wear upon their colors the words

"Fort Macon, April, 26th, 1862."

By command of

MAJOR-GENERAL BURNSIDE.

LEWIS RICHMOND, A. A. G.

And thus fell Fort Macon. The brave men who fought so nobly in its defense were now sent to their homes. A portion of them were taken by steamer over to Beaufort, where some of them lived.

Crowds of the inhabitants, who had watched the progress of the fight from the house-tops, wharves, and every available place, with anxiety for the fate of their loved ones, now rushed to the wharves to search with eager eyes among the prisoners for some relative or friend. Many were the hands-hakings and embracings, and many poor people looked in vain among them, as they landed, for some beloved form, and as they heard the sad tidings from the lips of their comrades, slowly turned away to their homes, now desolate, with hearts and heads bowed down with sorrow and mourning.

But such is the inevitable result of war, and we, as well as these poor people could only bewail the fate that plunged our country into civil strife, and earnestly pray for the speedy end of this unnatural conflict that has set brother against brother, and father against son.

May, 1862.

CHAPTER VIII.

BEAUFORT TO NEWPORT NEWS.

AND now having done our part in the subjugation of this coast, we were left in its defense, and settled down to camp life, thus affording us a much needed rest after the activity of our three months' campaign. Guards were posted around the town of Beaufort, and the regular routine of camp duties was observed.

The blockade of the port was removed, in pursuance of general orders from Washington, commerce opened, and soon vessels from the North began to arrive, bringing us a regular mail and much needed supplies. We drilled four hours a day, and every evening went through the evolutions of "dress parade" on the main street of the town. This ceremony always drew together a large assembly of the townspeople,— who were now quite sociable,— as spectators.

By our gentlemanly conduct we soon gained their respect and allayed their fears, and they freely mingled with us in conversation. Under our influence stores began to open again; vessels laden with merchandise from the North, and at northern prices, soon landed at the wharves. Business of various kinds began to be resumed with cheerfulness and profit, and they at last acknowledged that we had

wrought a very great and acceptable change in their affairs, and many of the most rabid among them soon dropped their patriotic allusions to the Confederacy, and began to consider themselves as part and parcel of the United States Government once more.

The regiment took up its quarters in some of the deserted hotels in the place. About the first of June a cargo of ice, sent by our kind friends at home, arrived for the regiment. It being extremely hot weather at this season of the year, this was a most acceptable present, and many thanks were returned for their kind interest in our welfare.

June 3d, Colonel Rodman having received a commission as brigadier-general, left us for a short visit to Rhode Island.

June 17th, Adjutant-General Mauran, of Rhode Island, arrived on a visit to us, and we were reviewed by him that afternoon. He had brought with him a beautiful sword, voted by the General Assembly of Rhode Island to General Burnside. On the 20th the presentation took place at Newbern, at which our regiment was present. Of all the troops of this expedition in line at the grand review on this happy occasion, the Fourth Rhode Island received the praise from General Burnside as being the "best looking, best drilled, and best disciplined regiment in line," a fact of which we might well feel proud.

I would like to give here a detailed account of this review and presentation, but being unfortunately one of the camp guard left back to guard the town of Beaufort during the absence of the regiment, I made no note of it other than the above. I will relate, however, an incident or two that happened to the guard left behind, as coming under my personal observation.

There were but few of us, comparatively,—possibly one hundred, including guards, cooks, sick men, prisoners, dead beats, etc.,—that now held possession of the town, and

each one being provided with arms and ammunition, it was expected that in case of an alarm, the small army of non-combatants would, for the sake of their own preservation, be ready to reënforce us of the regular guard detail, though they were not required to perform duty unless in a crisis of our defense,— to “ fill the breach,” as it were.

The very night after the regiment had left for Newbern, about 11 o'clock, the pickets commenced a rapid fire. Immediately the drummer at the guard-house beat the “ long roll,” which was the signal for the cooks, convalescents, dead beats, and other non-combatants, to rally at the guard-house, and soon from all quarters these men came on a dead run, some without shoes or hats, and all half-dressed, and collected in an excited group ready to hold the *guard-house* at all hazards.

The officer, or rather sergeant, in command was drunk and as full of fight as he was of commissary whiskey. Forming into line, we marched bravely out toward the picket line, that now, on the edge of the town, was keeping up a continual fire.

Fully expecting from the noise they made, that some large rebel force had taken advantage of the regiment's absence to gain possession of the town again, we were surprised, upon investigation, to find nothing of a warlike nature in front of our pickets, and after stopping their foolish firing, we reëstablished the line and marched back again to headquarters.

It was amusing, now that the danger of an attack was over, to listen to the remarks of some of those non-combatants,— men that never go into a fight, always finding some way to keep out of range: how bravely they would charge the enemy; what plans of flanking, and other movements they suggested, in case of attack, were worthy the brain of a Scott or McClellan. And in all these plans

it was noticed that they had, with true generalship, arranged a *safe line of retreat* in the small fishing smacks, to Morehead City, across the bay.

On the second night of our watch, one of the pickets discovered a stray calf in his immediate front, and being the biggest calf of the two, took it to be a rebel cavalry-man, and, of course, fired. This alarmed the other pickets, who, in turn, alarmed the town. Again was the "long roll" beat, again the guard and their concomitants turned out, and at double quick, with the drunken sergeant at their head, shouting "Forward,—hic—on to victory," proceeded to the picket line and advanced a short distance beyond, when one of the men stumbled over the dead calf, which at once gave rise to an investigation, a general cursing, reestablishment of the line, and safe retreat to the guard-house.

We will not conjecture what foolish thing would have happened the third night, as the regiment returned from Newbern next day, greatly to the relief of our noble band of defenders.

With the exception of the desertion of two of the regiment, nothing of importance occurred until the 30th of June. We can never forget our life in Beaufort, or the pleasant relations sustained with its inhabitants. Every man of our regiment who was there, could furnish incidents and experiences enough to fill a volume in itself, and the writer must leave each one to tell his own story, in his own way, only endeavoring to furnish in these pages the data of noteworthy experiences, that will help his comrades who read these lines to refresh their memory of those happy days of long ago.

On June 30th we received marching orders. A large transport lay off the fort, waiting to take us aboard; and packing up everything, we prepared to take a final leave of old Beaufort and all its pleasant associations.

The next day, July 1st, the old "Wheelbarrow" hauled up alongside the wharf; and leaving our quarters, equipped in heavy marching order, we embarked, and put off from the wharves, but had not proceeded half a mile when the orders were countermanded. We sailed back to the wharf, landed, and returned to our quarters.

It was evident that a grand move was contemplated in some direction, for we were still under marching orders. The quartermaster's and commissary stores were put aboard the transport that lay out in the stream, and many were the conjectures of the boys as to our next destination.

On the morning of July 3d, the signal corps transmitted a dispatch to us that caused our hearts to leap for joy. It was in these three words,

"RICHMOND IS TAKEN."

The excitement when this news gained circulation was immense. In a few minutes the streets and wharves were filled with soldiers and citizens, cheering, shaking hands, and congratulating each other on the joyful event. The band came out in force, and the inspiring notes of "Hail Columbia" and the "Star Spangled Banner," floated joyfully in the morning air, and were echoed by a rousing salute of twenty-four guns from the fort across the harbor.

The excitement continued all day, and in the evening the boys gathered in knots here and there and discussed the situation with light hearts; and the prospect of our returning home to Rhode Island in the same transport that was to carry us to the battle-field seemed most bright.

But what an array of sober faces and disappointed hopes greeted the eye the next morning, as the announcement was made, officially, of a mistake, a false report, and that McClellan was *beaten*, was *retreating from before Rich-*

mond, and that we were to proceed immediately to his relief.

Words cannot picture our disappointment. It was a great fall,—from the heights of accomplished victory down to the depths of disastrous defeat, and a call to the bloody field of battle again. This day, the 4th of July, which we had calculated to celebrate in a manner worthy of the great event we had so joyously hailed the day before, passed off dull and lonesome enough with us. In the afternoon we formed line, and marched up on the main street, where we halted and formed a hollow square.

The Declaration of Independence was then read to us, and its grand words of inspiration renewed in our disappointed hearts the fire of patriotism, and we again consecrated “our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor” to the cause of our beloved land, resolved to fight until the Sun of Peace should again arise in glorious and triumphant majesty over a once more united country.

After the reading was over, we formed into a column of companies and marched through the principal streets of the town to the inspiring music of our band. In the evening the band closed the exercises of the day by turning out in antique costume, and marching through the town, playing all sorts of—anything but music—to the great amusement of soldiers and citizens, and the uproarious delight of the colored population: and thus ended the day.

July 6th we again packed up, and marching down to the wharf, where lay the old “Wheelbarrow” in waiting for us, went aboard with all our bag and baggage. And bidding good-bye to Beaufort and its inhabitants, who congregated in crowds to see us off, amid the waving of handkerchiefs from the ladies, the cheers of the Fifth Rhode Island Regiment, that had come over from the fort the day before to relieve us, and the music of our band, which had

been a source of great pleasure to the people during our stay, we moved slowly off into the channel, and soon were alongside the transport *Empire City*, which was to take us to our new field of action, and which we now boarded.

We laid here at anchor all night, and at 2 o'clock the next afternoon the anchor was hove home, the great paddle-wheels began slowly to revolve, and we moved gracefully out past the fort, over the bar, and into the open sea beyond. The city, the fort, and all their familiar surroundings soon faded and dropped beneath the horizon of our view, and at sunset we were well out to sea, heading east northeast. We rounded old stormy Cape Hatteras that night, and being favored with calm weather this time, we experienced none of the discomfitures of our preceding voyage.

July 8th, at four in the afternoon, we entered Hampton Roads, and dropped anchor off Fort Monroe. Our campaign in North Carolina was now ended. It was there we were first initiated into the mysteries of battle and received our "baptism of fire." It was there we first began to realize the hardships and perils of a soldier's life, and it was there we left many of our brave comrades, who, when last we were in these waters, were as full of life and hope as we now were, but who now lay sleeping in the cold embrace of death on the sandy shores of old North Carolina.

The next morning after our arrival in the "roads," we weighed anchor and sailed up the James River, and landed at Newport News, about eight or ten miles distant from Fort Monroe. It was off this place that the battle between the rebel iron-clad, *Merrimac*, and our frigates, *Minnesota*, *Cumberland*, and *Congress*, was fought but a short time before.

In the middle of the river lay the ill-fated *Cumberland*,

the sea reaching up to her "caps," and all her spars and rigging standing just as she went down.

As we sailed slowly around her to get into the wharf, a feeling of sadness came over us as we thought of the hundreds of brave men who now lay still in death beneath those dark waters, and turning our gaze down the river to Craney Island, we beheld with some satisfaction the shapeless wreck of the ponderous engine of her destruction, the *Merrimac*, disabled forever by the bravery of our powerful little *Monitor*. The wreck of the frigate *Congress*, destroyed at the same time as the *Cumberland*, lay stranded on the beach a short distance away, her charred and blackened timbers standing out of the sand and sea,—a monument to the bravery of her devoted crew.

We were soon moored to the wharf, and went ashore. The day was one of the hottest we ever experienced, and as we toiled up the hill from the landing, and tramped along the dusty road to the place of our encampment,—a mile or so up the river,—for this short distance many dropped out of the ranks and sought the shade of the trees to rest and cool off.

As we arrived at our camping-ground, we stacked arms, and were forced to wait till evening before pitching our tents. Many of us went down to the shore and indulged in the luxury of a good bath, and then sat down in the shade on the river bank and tried to keep cool until the evening approached and the burning sun sank to rest; and relieved from its scorching rays we began to build up our encampment. The next day began the regular duties of camp life.

The writer, together with Comrade James Vizard, of Company K, was now detached from the regiment for service at the government bakery at this post. Both of us being bakers by trade, we were set at work getting out

fresh, soft bread for the large body of troops now at this place. There were two large, fourteen foot brick ovens at the bakery, and two gangs of men to work them night and day, relieving each other at the end of every twelve hours. We received forty cents a day in addition to our regular pay as soldiers, and double rations, the surplus of which we traded for milk, eggs, butter, and other luxuries, and though our work was hard and hot, still we lived well, and were content with our lot.

With sixteen hands in each gang, we turned out, on an average, seventy-two hundred loaves of bread every twenty-four hours, and thus kept the troops supplied with good, fresh, nutritious food during their stay at this place. We were relieved from all military duty, and subject only to the orders of the major commanding this post, but, of course, were liable to be sent back to the regiment for duty whenever they should leave this place.

And now trouble arose again in the regiment. Since the promotion of Colonel Rodman as brigadier-general, the regiment had been under command of Lieut.-Col. George W. Tew, and we had confidently expected his promotion to the full colonelcy. He was a man very well liked by the entire regiment, and nothing would have pleased us better than to see him wear the silver eagle as our commander.

Fancy our surprise when one day an officer, Lieut.-Col. W. H. P. Steere, from the Second Rhode Island Regiment, made his appearance in camp commissioned as colonel of this regiment. He was received by officers and men with much displeasure. The climax was reached when, at dress parade that evening, he took his place in front of the regiment as its commander, while our beloved Lieutenant-Colonel Tew retired to his subordinate position in the line. To see him who, since Colonel Rodman re-

linquished command had held his position in front of the regiment, give way now to a perfect stranger, a man whom we knew nothing of, was more than we could stand.

Were not our own officers eligible and fitted for the command? Had they not experienced as hard service and won their promotion as faithfully as any other? What reason could Governor Sprague give for the appointment of this colonel to our regiment, over the head of Tew, who had been lieutenant-colonel from the first formation of the regiment, whom he had jumped once by placing Rodman over him, and now again by commissioning Steere as colonel?

There was much dissatisfaction manifested by the entire line at dress parade that evening. It was shown in the manner the men obeyed the orders of Colonel Steere during the execution of the manual. It was evident from the looks and the sly remarks of the men in line, which could be plainly seen and heard by the colonel. In his orders he called attention to the fact that the promotion was not of his own seeking. He had been *ordered* to the command of the regiment by his superiors, and his first duty like that of every other soldier was to obey orders. He was their colonel and as such he intended to remain.

The parade was dismissed. The men went growling to their quarters. The officers likewise. One of the officers refused to receive the orders of Colonel Steere or to serve under him, and was, in consequence, court-martialed and dismissed the service. A storm was brewing in camp. It needed but one more incentive to create an eruption. Fortunately, or unfortunately, it was soon furnished.

A large lot of boxes arrived from home for the regiment. It had been the custom of our officers to inspect these boxes and to remove the greater part of the liquor that was sure to be found in them. The boxes were not inspected this time,

and in consequence the boys obtained a large supply of liquor.

In their present state of mind this fact foreboded much trouble. The men — most of them — indulged freely, and the effects were soon manifest. Company E seemed to have obtained the largest supply, and was the noisiest of the whole regiment. Captain Buffum was officer of the day. He did his best to keep the men quiet. He would go into one company's street and quiet the men. By this time another company would be singing and howling. He entered Company E's street and ordered them to keep quiet, or he would put the whole company under arrest. He was received with jeers, groans, hisses, sticks of wood, stones, old shoes,—anything they could lay hands on. They made it warm for him, and he beat a hasty retreat to the guard-house. Mustering his guard, he advanced again to arrest the company. They charged upon him and his guard and drove them back in a hurry.

Colonel Steere now came down to quiet them, but this added fuel to the fire. They pitched into him, but he held his ground. A billet of wood scraped acquaintance with the side of his head, but the old man *held to them* and succeeded, after arresting several of the worst of them, in quieting the company down, and after awhile the camp was still for the night, but the trouble was not over by any means.

The next morning marching orders were received. The regiment struck tents and packed up. The drum beat to fall in and form a line. The men refused to budge. The other regiments in the brigade had been paid off, while ours had not. The reason of this discrimination was because the colonel feared if the men received their pay while in such a condition, they would indulge more freely, and make matters a great deal worse for all concerned, and it was de-

cided not to pay the regiment until they were aboard the transport, or when they next encamped.

This might have been a good reason, but it had the effect of throwing the regiment into a state of mutiny. They refused to obey orders or to leave camp. The Eighth Connecticut Regiment was ordered to surround the camp as guard. For some reason they did not come. It was well they did not. Orders were sent for the Ninth New York. They formed line in their camp, were ordered to march, but refused to obey the order, and were sent back to their quarters.

But after awhile better counsels prevailed, and our regiment fell into line, and with the rest of the brigade marched down to the wharf and embarked on the steamer *West Point*. She was a worthless old craft, but managed to carry them safely to Acquia Creek, where they landed August 4th, and went aboard the cars for Falmouth, where they encamped.

Most of the officers now sent in their resignations to General Burnside, determined that they would no longer serve under Steere as their colonel. Burnside delayed action upon the matter, hoping that the prejudice against Colonel Steere would wear away, but at last found it necessary to consult with Governor Sprague, and he was sent for.

Meanwhile, the day after our encampment was established at Falmouth, the regiment was detailed for picket duty and marched across the river, through the city of Fredericksburg, and established a line covering the approaches to the city from the west and south. They remained on duty one week, and were relieved by the Ninth New York.

Governor Sprague had now arrived and was in consultation with General Burnside at his headquarters, and according to reports, the discussion waxed rather warm. It resulted, however, in Burnside's decision to accept the

resignations of the officers, and accordingly their papers were made out and sent to them.

The officers were not long in packing up, and the different companies fell in line in their company street to bid them good-bye. With a few words of good advice and a hearty shake of the hand they left us, amid the cheers and good wishes of the regiment.

They were fourteen in number, as nearly as we have record, as follows :

Lieutenant-Colonel Tew, Quartermaster Smith, Captains Kenyon, Lapham, Wood, Hopkins, Simons, and Kent, and Lieutenants Baker, Drown, Starkweather, Monroe, Smith, and one other, whom I have forgotten.

Shortly after they had left, Governor Sprague made his appearance in camp and passed through and went over to the headquarters of Colonel Steere. He was saluted by the regiment with groans, jeers, and hootings, supplemented by a fusilade of old pieces of brown-bread, potatoes, and other missiles, but not heeding them, he passed on, and arriving at Colonel Steere's tent, held with him a consultation on the situation of affairs.

After he had left camp the regiment was called in line, formed hollow square, and was addressed by Colonel Steere in substance as follows: That he hoped, now that the officers had gone, the regiment would settle down to its accustomed good behavior; that he would use every effort in their behalf, but wanted they should understand first and last that *he* was *their* colonel; that the vacancies left by these officers would be filled, as far as possible, from the most deserving in the ranks, and he hoped, as their colonel, his experience with them would be a source of lasting pleasure to him during his life.

The regiment was then dismissed, and the non-commissioned officers ordered to report to the colonel's quar-

ters. After a short speech to them, during which he told them that he should hold them responsible for the conduct of the men, they were also sent back to their company quarters, and the discipline and routine of duty progressed without further interruption.

In his subsequent course of action, and by the kindness and the fatherly care he manifested towards us, the old colonel at last won the respect and esteem of the whole regiment, and they were willing to do his least bidding, and ready to follow him anywhere in the face of death he might lead them. Never did such a change of heart toward any one man occur as was experienced in time by that regiment, and there is not a man living to-day of the veterans of that old rough and ready Fourth Rhode Island but loves to honor the name and revere the memory of our faithful old colonel, William H. P. Steere.

The whole rebel army at this time was passing up the Valley toward Pennsylvania, with the intention of invasion before McClellan's army could reach there. One night shortly after the regimental "unpleasantness" had passed away, and while they were on picket outside of Fredericksburg, three officers of Burnside's staff advanced to the picket line, with the information that Pope's forces had prevailed against the rebels, and were driving them toward Richmond. We were advised to keep a sharp lookout to the front, as it was expected they would come this way.

At daylight heavy firing was heard, but it appeared to be receding in the direction of Washington, instead of coming nearer to us. About 10 o'clock a cloud of dust was seen rising on our right front, and we supposed it was the advance of the rebel forces. Arrangements were at once made to close in upon the city, when it was discovered that the approaching cavalry were of our own army, who

brought us tidings that Pope had been sadly defeated, and was now falling back toward Washington.

About noon we were relieved by the Ninth New York, and returned to camp. Our band met us at the edge of the city and escorted us back to camp.

On account of the threatening attitude of Lee's army, and the demoralized condition of Pope's forces, orders were sent from Washington to Burnside to advance his whole force by the way of Acquia Creek and Washington, and that as speedily as possible. The immediate evacuation of Fredericksburg was ordered, and that we might move more quickly, the surplus stores that could not be easily transported were to be destroyed, to keep them from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Tents were struck and the men warned to be in readiness to move at once. Vast piles of rations and other stores, together with the government buildings, were set on fire and consumed. The two large bridges crossing the river were also destroyed, and clouds of black smoke rolled up into the heavens, as the flames darted to and fro among the dry buildings, and their valuable contents.

And now an incident happened that served to put the troops in very good humor for the long journey that was before them. There were many sutlers scattered among the camps who had taken advantage of the situation, and charged the soldiers the most exorbitant prices for everything they sold them. Orders had been given every one of them to leave the department, but avarice had overcome caution, and they staid yet a while longer, determined to get every cent of the men's money that they could. At last, finding that no transportation had been provided for them, and alarmed for the safety of their goods and personal effects, in the sudden change of affairs that were now taking place, they began hurriedly to pack away their

goods, but found much difficulty in doing so, as the men began to crowd around their wagons and tents, demanding more goods for their money.

This continued for a while. The sutler down at the station resisted the demands of some of our regiment and shut down his store, when immediately the boys charged home upon the shanty, tipped it over, and such a rush as then ensued. Piles of canned preserves, oranges, lemons, cookies, pies, cakes, beer, tobacco, etc., etc., went down with a crash to the ground, while the poor sutler struggled to get clear with his life, and the men loaded themselves with whatever they could get hold of, and with hands and pockets full, made for their quarters.

Other sutlers shared the same fate from other regiments. Only one of the lot escaped. He was the sutler of the Ninth New York, an old member of that regiment, who had lost his leg at Roanoke. His comrades had set him up in business, and many of our men went over to protect him from the general raid, and woe be to the one who would do harm to this old veteran. He furnished the men with two barrels of cider and other things, for their kindness and friendship, and went safely away with his stock.

That morning the regiment left Falmouth and took the road for Acquia Creek, where they arrived next morning. Here we will leave them waiting for transportation to Washington, and go back for a while to record our personal experience at Newport News.

It will be remembered that the writer, together with Comrade Vizard, of Company K, was detached from duty with the regiment at Newport News to serve as bakers at the post bakery.

When the regiment left for Acquia Creek on the 3d of August, we two were left behind, subject only to the orders

of the post commander. McClellan's army was passing this point, both by road and river, and at last they had all gone by, the fleet of gunboats bringing up the rear, and Newport News became quiet and lonesome, nothing being left there but the sick and wounded, and the small garrison of the post. To provide bread for these required but little labor or time. In fact, time hung heavy on our hands, and we soon became home-sick to be again with our regiment.

Wednesday, August 13th, the old steamer *West Point*, that had carried our regiment to Acquia Creek, returned here, and taking on board the sick and others of our corps, started back. When near Acquia Creek she came in collision with another steamer bound down the bay, and sank in ten minutes afterwards. Seventy-three of her passengers were lost.

Although boats were put out, and everything done that could be done to save them, yet many a poor fellow found a watery grave with the wreck of that ill-fated and totally worthless old hulk. As she went down amid the whirl of waters, one poor fellow was heard to cry, "Oh, save *me*, save *me*, I'm a corporal," which, after the disaster had passed, caused much merriment among the survivors. He probably thought that the "stripes" entitled him to higher consideration than his luckless comrades in the ranks.

And now the time drew near when Jim and I, the last representatives of the Fourth Regiment at Newport News, were to leave this post for duty at the front.

August, 1862.

CHAPTER IX.

WASHINGTON TO ANTIETAM.

MONDAY, August 18th, Comrade Vizard and myself received orders to report to our regiment for duty, there being no further work for us here. Armed with a "general pass" from the post commander, which required all guards and patrol to pass us from one point to another, and all provost marshals to provide us transportation and subsistence during our journey, and which further stated that the regiment was supposed to be at or near Fredericksburg, Va., we drew our extra pay, packed up, and started.

We at once took transportation for Fort Monroe, but on our arrival there, found there were no vessels going up the Chesapeake just at present. Food and a place to sleep we must have, and we proceeded to the provost marshal's office and handed him our pass.

He returned it to us with an order on the Medical Director of the Mill Creek Hospital, at the large hospital camp near Hampton, and about one and a half miles from the fort. And so we shouldered our traps and trudged thither, where we soon found quarters in one of the convalescent wards, and were told to get our rations at the cook-house attached to this camp.

The general hospital for the Army of the Potomac was located here, and covered several acres of ground. All of the wards were full, being recently recruited from McClellan's late campaign on the Peninsula.

In the midst of the camp and extending the whole length of the grounds, was an open parade-ground, at one end of which was located two long buildings used as the cook-houses. Here were eight large, iron set kettles, each capable of holding thirty or forty gallons. At each kettle during the day, would be seen several cooks engaged in preparing our humble meals.

Our food was served up three times a day, and consisted of soup, made of fresh beef, boiled, with a little salt to season it. It was not unlike the "shadow soup" so often served up in hospitals, and which the boys used to say was made in the following manner: A chicken was provided, and hung up in the sun where its shadow would strike into the kettle. A quantity of water was put into the kettle and the shadow boiled therein. Salt, pepper, and other spice were added to make it palatable, and it was then served out to those poor sick men who were so weak as not to be able to know the difference, or to care if they did.

There were so many convalescents here that it took some time to feed them. A line was formed at meal time, and each in single file marched up to the delivery office, and presenting his plate received a piece of boiled beef,—always boiled,—and a thick slice of bread. Passing along to the next window, his cup was filled with a black decoction that the cooks called coffee. He was then at liberty to go away and enjoy his meal in peace.

As every one wanted to be first to get their meals, they would commence gathering on the parade two or three hours before meal time, the line extending from the cook-house down the parade, across and up the other side, increasing

in length as each recruit arrived, until, when the call was sounded, it reached the length of half a mile, and those on the left of the line would be likely to get their dinner about the middle of the afternoon.

Myself and Comrade Vizard being obliged to wait at this place until transportation could be furnished to our regiment, often varied the bill of fare by catching crabs down on the shore; and cooking them, made out quite a good meal.

Each day we made it a point to go down to the fort and provost marshal's office to see if there was any conveyance or means of reaching the regiment. But each day we received about the same answer: "No, you will have to stay where you are until next week, when there will probably be a transport going up."

One day while down at the fort, we observed a schooner loading with horses, and found she was ordered to Acquia Creek. After a short conversation with her captain, he agreed to take us to the creek if we would work our passage; and he would wait for us to go after our traps and return.

We joyfully accepted the proposition, willing to do anything, almost, to get away from this place, and back to our regiment. So hurrying back to camp, we packed up, shouldered our knapsacks, and were speedily on our way to the fort again, highly elated at our good fortune, and reached the dock just in time to see the schooner under full sail, half a mile away, heading up the Chesapeake. We stood and cursed that captain till it was a wonder his vessel did not sink from under him, and then we meandered back to the old hospital once more.

After getting back, I sat down and wrote a long letter to Captain Buffum, of my company, fearing our prolonged absence might be construed as desertion, and telling him

how we were situated; and that letter, no doubt, saved us much future trouble.

A day or two after this, observing a line of men drawn up in front of the hospital headquarters, we came to the conclusion that they were to be sent back to their regiments, and determined to go with them. So packing up again, we went out and took our place in the line with them. As the officer called the names, each one stepped to the front, thus, of course, leaving us two standing alone. The officer stepped up to us with "What are you men doing here?"

"We want to go to our regiment."

"What regiment do you belong to?"

"The Fourth Rhode Island."

"How came you here?"

We showed him our pass, and explained the matter, when he told us he had nothing to do with our command, and sent us back to our quarters; and the men moved off, while we returned to our ward much disappointed.

The next day, September 2d, we observed another line of men forming at the same place, and profiting by our experience of yesterday, decided to make a flank movement, so we packed up ready to start, and waited till they had got outside the grounds and then caught up with them, and on the way down to the fort fell in on the rear of the line, marched down to the wharf and aboard the steamer *South America* without being detected by the officer in charge.

The vessel cast off, and steamed away from the wharf. We knew not whither she was bound, or where she would land us, neither did we care, so long as she took us away from that hospital camp. There were 150 men on the officer's list, and 150 rations drawn for them. We knew there were no rations drawn for us two, so when the line was called to "fall in for rations," we managed to get near the head and

received one ration of meat, bread, and coffee each. What the two at the left of the line did for their rations we did not care to inquire.

That night we passed Acquia Creek without stopping, and the next morning landed at Alexandria. Soon after getting ashore we slipped the rest of the line, and went down to the rear of an old brick warehouse near the wharves, where we made our headquarters. We then sauntered out on the street, and chanced to meet a man who told us that he was captain of a schooner lying out in the river, and had brought a load of boxes for our regiment.

He also informed us that the regiment was about leaving Acquia Creek for this place, and after kindly assisting us to find the "Soldiers' Rest," where we could get our food, he left us to watch for the coming of the regiment up the river. We spread our blankets under the lee of the old warehouse and slept soundly till morning.

The next morning we started early to see if the regiment had landed during the night, and in the course of our wanderings came across Battery B, of Rhode Island. We received quite a welcome hand-shake from many of our old acquaintances in that battery, and upon learning our situation, two of them offered to look around with us, to see if we could find the regiment encamped. But after traveling about twelve miles, in all, without success, we returned to our headquarters by the wharf.

The next morning we again met our Rhode Island friend who told us that the regiment was coming up the river on one of the many transports that were passing now and then. So we kept watch at the end of the pier, and hailed every steamer that passed, but in vain, until the steamer *State of Maine* came plowing along, loaded with troops, and as she got just opposite us, we hailed, "What regiment is that?" "Fourth Rhode Island," came the answer back, and

we started on the run up the wharf and down through the streets, passing guards, patrol, and everything else, till we reached the upper end of the town, expecting she was going to land somewhere, but she kept on her way up the river, towards Washington, and we must perforce bide our time and lay over another night.

Sunday morning, bright and early, we were up, and took the boat for Washington. But on our arrival there could find nothing of the regiment, or any one who had seen them land. Thinking we might have been fooled by some other regiment when we hailed them, we concluded to go to the "Soldiers' Rest" for the present, and apply to the quartermaster there for information, as we supposed they might have taken the cars on the Baltimore road.

He told us that our regiment was at Edwards' Ferry, on the Potomac. About tired out with our fruitless endeavors to find them, and thoroughly disgusted with hospitals, provost marshals, etc., we took up our quarters in the railroad station near by, and got our meals in the "Rest."

Monday morning, September 8th, I started for the provost marshal's office, to get a pass to Edwards' Ferry and follow on. While waiting my turn in the crowd around the office, I fortunately met a sergeant of our regiment. I was never more glad to see a familiar face in my life.

He told me the regiment was on its way up through Maryland, and had left their knapsacks, with a guard over them, at a place out on Seventh Street, called Meridian Hill.

I immediately went back to the depot and got Jim, and we footed it up to their camp on Meridian Hill. The officer left in charge told us there was no chance to catch up with the regiment now, and he expected they would be back after their knapsacks in two or three days, and it would be better for us to wait for them.

Upon the strength of this information we concluded to stay, looking for them every day, not having the least idea of the important movement of our armies toward Pennsylvania; and that is how we came to miss the battle of Antietam and the march through Maryland, for the particulars of both of which I am obliged to depend upon my comrades for information.

Embarking on the steamer *State of Maine*, the regiment arrived at Washington Saturday, September 6th, and landing, marched through the city, out Seventh Street, to a place called Meridian Hill, and there encamped. While on their way through the city they had the pleasure of meeting and shaking hands with our old colonel, J. I. McCarty, who was located in Washington. On arriving at camp, rations were immediately cooked up and preparations made to continue the march.

Lee's army was at this time in Maryland and threatening Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. Portions of McClellan's forces were upon either side of the river in the vicinity of Washington, and were hurrying forward to meet Lee's forces, and, if possible, prevent him from recrossing the Potomac.

Burnside's corps being well in hand, was ordered forward with all possible speed in the direction of Frederick, Md., which the enemy now occupied in force. In order that the men might be able to move quickly, our regiment was ordered to leave their tents and knapsacks in camp at Meridian Hill under a guard, and with blankets rolled and three days' rations, started out on the Seventh Street road towards Leesboro, with the rest of the Ninth Corps.

On the 9th they arrived at Brookville, and on the 11th at Newmarket. The weather was hot and the marching dusty. No rebels had been encountered up to this time, but began to appear as they neared Frederick City, and on the

12th were struck in force. The skirmish line opened a rapid fire and our regiment went into line of battle on the edge of a field of standing corn. "Forward," was the word, and advancing through the corn, they suddenly found their way obstructed by a high, tight board fence, in front of some hospital buildings. An opening through the fence was soon found and they made their way inside.

In the yard in front of the buildings was found a large number of sick and wounded rebels, and the buildings were also fully occupied by these poor men, left behind by the retreating rebel army, and under the care of rebel surgeons and numerous Sisters of Charity.

A halt was then made, and the regiment bivouacked in the hospital yard for the night. At 9 o'clock the next morning, the line started on again, marching through the city of Frederick, and were received by the inhabitants with every demonstration of joy. Just before reaching Middletown, the rebel rear guard was struck and stoutly resisted our advance, but after a spirited contest, they were forced to retire, and the regiment advancing to the town, encamped for the night.

The next morning, September 14th, they started on again. The whole Army of the Potomac was now well in hand, and deployed in line of battle for assault on the rebel lines, who heavily disputed the passage of the South Mountain Range. The battle was opened early in the morning by Benjamin's battery of the Ninth Corps, supported by Cox's division, on the old Sharpsburg road.

The division of General Wilcox advanced in support of General Cox, and took position on his right.

The battle was now raging the length of the line. The rebel army being speedily reënforced by its outlying detachments, held to its naturally strong line of defenses with the utmost tenacity, but were steadily forced to give way,

step by step, toward the summit of the mountain, followed by our brave boys of the Ninth Corps, until, at just before sunset, the last grand charge was made that sent the enemy flying over the crest and down the other side of the mountain, and the day was ours.

Our regiment was in support of the Sixth Massachusetts Battery nearly all day, and late in the afternoon was called in line to take the place of the Thirty-sixth Massachusetts Regiment which broke to the rear in some disorder. At 8 o'clock the firing had ceased, and the rebel army withdrew that night to a position across Antietam Creek, covering the village of Sharpsburg.

The regiment lay in line of battle all night, and early in the morning received orders to cook coffee and be ready to move in half an hour. Company B was ordered forward a short distance to reconnoiter in our front, but finding nothing but the dead and wounded, who lay thickly scattered among the brush and trees, they returned to the regiment, and shortly after, the whole line advanced down the mountain side.

The dead and wounded lay here and there on each side of the road, torn to pieces and mangled in all shapes, and left by the retreating rebels in their hasty flight. The loss on our side in this fight was 2,325, including General Reno of our corps, who was killed.

Our brigade was now reënforced by the arrival of the Sixteenth Connecticut, fresh from the land of wooden nutmegs, and who had never, as yet, been under fire. They were under command of Colonel Dutton, an officer of the regular army.

On the night of the 16th, General Hooker on the right, crossed the creek in his front, to pounce upon the enemy's left flank, and was supported by Sumner and Mansfield; next in line lay Porter and Sykes, holding the centre;

Burnside occupied the left, along the line of Antietam Creek, McClellan's plan of attack being to close in on both flanks of the enemy, doubling him up, force his communications with the Potomac on his right, and prevent his escape.

The distribution of the Ninth Corps was as follows: "On the crest of the hill immediately in front of the bridge spanning Antietam Creek, was Benjamin's battery of six twenty-pounders, the remaining batteries in rear of the crest under partial cover. In the rear of Benjamin's battery, on the extreme right, joining on to General Sykes' division, was General Cook's brigade, with General Sturgis' division in his rear. On the left, and in rear of Benjamin's battery, was General Rodman's division, with Colonel Scammon's brigade in support. General Wilcox's division was held in reserve; General Burnside having at his disposal 13,819 men."*

General Fairchild's brigade occupied the extreme left of our division, as also the left of the whole line. Harland's brigade came next on the right, consisting of the Eighth, Eleventh, and Sixteenth Connecticut, and Fourth Rhode Island regiments, in order from right to left.

For an authentic record of the part taken by our regiment in this great battle, the work it accomplished, and the losses it sustained, I herewith present a copy of Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis' report to the governor of Rhode Island:

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH REGIMENT, RHODE ISLAND VOLUNTEERS, }
MOUTH ANTIETAM CREEK, September 22d, 1862. }

*To His Excellency, William Sprague,
Governor of the State of Rhode Island.*

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the part taken by this regiment in the battle of Sharpsburg on the 17th inst:

On the afternoon of the 16th, Harland's brigade, consisting of the Eighth, Eleventh, Sixteenth Connecticut, and Fourth Rhode Island, left the

* From Woodbury's *Burnside and the Ninth Army Corps*.

bivouac it had occupied on the left of the Sharpsburg road, and proceeded in a southwesterly direction, following the general course of Antietam Creek for three or four miles, and took up a position behind a range of hills, covering a stone bridge that crossed the creek. The regiment lay upon its arms all night, having its front covered by its own pickets.

The Fourth had the left of the brigade line, and upon its left lay Fairchild's brigade of Rodman's division. About an hour after light, on the morning of the 17th, the enemy's pickets commenced firing upon those of the regiments on our left, and shortly after they began shelling the whole division line, their range being very accurate.

As soon as the firing commenced the ranks were dressed and the men directed to lie down in their places; the three left companies being in a more exposed position, were brought in rear of the rest of the battalion.

Orders were received from Colonel Harland to follow the other brigade to the left, but before that brigade could move the enemy opened another battery on our right, enfilading our position with a fire of round shot, and completely commanding a little rise of ground on our left, which we should have been obliged to cross to reach the ground occupied by the other brigade.

This fact was reported to Colonel Harland by an officer, who returned with orders to move to the left and rear through the same woods, in a direction to be indicated by Lieutenant Ives, of General Rodman's staff, who came back with him. The order was duly executed, the regiment moving by the left flank to the rear through a wooded gully, but partially concealed from the enemy, who continued their heavy fire of shell and solid shot. The regiment was then drawn up in a farm lane, well protected by a hill.

As the brigade filed through the wooded gully, a battery placed in rear of our original position commenced replying to the enemy, too late, however, to cover our retrograde movement, which was almost completed. Our loss, in this affair, was two killed and eight wounded, among the latter our color bearer and two color corporals.

After about an hour, the brigade advanced in line of battle to the top of the hill in front, making a right half wheel, and after crossing several fields finally took a position on top of the hill, at the foot of which ran the Antietam Creek, and on the opposite of which was the enemy. The action on our right was now very sharp, both the artillery and infantry being engaged. Our division constituted the extreme left of the line.

After a halt of some duration, the division moved by the left flank to the creek and crossed at a ford under the fire of the enemy's skirmishers, who were sheltered behind a stone wall. The Fourth, after crossing the ford, filed to the left, (the other brigade going to the right, and the rest of Harland's brigade not having crossed), and after throwing out Company H as skirmishers to cover the front, and Company K to the left, advancing in line towards the stone wall, the enemy retiring, but shortly after opening

a fire of musketry on our left, which was soon silenced by the fire of our battery covering the ford.

The enemy then commenced a fire of grape and shell upon us, and the Sixteenth Connecticut, which had just crossed the ford and was taking a position to support our left, retired, passing along our rear. After it had passed, this regiment, by Colonel Harland's orders, took a more sheltered position at right angles with our original one. From here, we moved to the right, in the direction taken by Colonel Fairchild's brigade, through a wooded ravine, through which ran the creek.

The steepness of the hillside, the thickness of the wood, and the accurate range of the enemy's batteries, made the passage through this defile a matter of considerable difficulty. Upon clearing the woods, we lay waiting for orders for a short time under a hillside which the enemy was shelling, the rest of the brigade having passed on while we were in the woods.

From here the regiment was ordered by Colonel Harland's aide to cross the hill behind which it was lying (a ploughed field), and to form in line in a corn field, and to move to the support of the Sixteenth Connecticut Regiment, which lay in a deep valley between two hills planted with corn. The regiment moved forward by the right flank in fine order, although subjected to the fire of rebel batteries, of which it was in full view.

Descending into the valley to its support, it found the Sixteenth Connecticut giving way, and crowding upon its right, compelling it to move to the left. It was now subjected to a sharp musket fire from the front, but as the enemy showed the National flag (the corn concealing their uniform), and as our troops had been seen in advance on our right, the order was given to cease firing, and a volunteer officer to go forward to ascertain who was in our front was called for.

Lieuts. Geo. W. Curtis and Geo. H. Watts immediately stepped forward, and placing themselves one on each side of the color-bearer, Corporal Tanner, of Company G, carried the flag up the hill within twenty feet of the rebels, when the enemy fired, killing the corporal. Lieutenant Curtis seized the colors and returned, followed by Lieutenant Watts. The order to commence firing was then given, and Colonel Steere sent me to the Sixteenth Connecticut to see if they would support us in a charge up the hill.

I returned to tell the colonel that we must depend upon ourselves. He then sent to the rear for support. Before they could arrive the enemy out-flanked us with a brigade of infantry, which descended the hill in three lines on our left, each one firing over the other in front, and thus enfilading us.

The regiment on our right now broke, a portion of them crowding on our line. Colonel Steere ordered the regiment to move out of the gully by the right flank, and I left him, to carry the order to the left wing, of

which I had charge, the colonel taking the right (the major being sick and no adjutant, there being only two field officers to handle the regiment).

The regiment commenced the movement in an orderly manner, but under the difficulty of keeping closed up in a corn field, the misconception of the order on the left, and the tremendous fire of musketry, shell, and grape, the regiment broke. . . . All the food the men had during the day was what very small quantities of salt pork and hard bread they were able to find in an abandoned camp during the short rest after the shelling out in the morning.

The entire loss during the day was twenty-one enlisted men killed, five officers and seventy-two enlisted men wounded, and two missing. Colonel Steere commends in the highest terms the conduct of the regiment on that day. He himself was severely wounded in the left thigh after I left him to repeat on the left the order to leave the corn field.

The men fought well, as is proven by the fact that they were engaged constantly with the enemy for nine or ten hours. . . . That they finally broke, under such a severe fire and the pressure of a broken regiment, is not surprising, although much to be regretted. . . . Of the present state of the regiment I have only the most favorable report to give.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed),

JOSEPH B. CURTIS,

Lieut.-Col. Com'g 4th R. I. Vols.

After the repulse in the corn field and the break of the regiment, Company B and others of the other companies rallied in rear of the Fifth United States Battery, which now opened on the advancing rebel lines, and ploughed them with grape and canister, effectually staying their advance.

Here they formed line of battle with the Fifty-first New York. Captain Buffum, of our company, was ordered by Captain Gardner, of the staff, to forward a portion of the Sixteenth Connecticut with our company into the field, but the Sixteenth had seen enough for one day, and would not budge an inch. Captain Buffum then jumped the fence in front, and advanced with our company and the Fifty-first New York. Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis taking the rifle and

equipments of a dead soldier, also advanced with them and fought in the ranks the remainder of the day.

The company remained here until 9 o'clock in the evening, and then fell back across the bridge and found the rest of the regiment had bivouacked for the night.

In his report as we have copied it, we think our lieutenant-colonel has not done exact justice to our experience and portion of this day's work. It is the opinion of the rank and file, that under the orders of Colonel Harland, this regiment was moved around from one place to another without knowing sometimes, where its position in line was to be, or its relative position to the rest of the brigade.

On our advance into that bloody corn field no one seemed to know the position of the rebel forces, whether in our front, flank, or rear. The Sixteenth Connecticut, as we were advancing to support them, broke, and came crowding in a confused mob upon our right, and confusion reigned preëminent for awhile. The enemy now poured in a steady fire of musketry, and breasting this storm of lead as best we could, we returned their fire, when suddenly the order was given, "Cease firing, you are firing upon your own men."

We looked, and there above us on the hill were the Stars and Stripes, the top of which we could just see over the corn. The firing upon our part ceased, and, as stated, it was but a ruse of the enemy to draw us into a trap, and immediately upon the return of our colors, minus the color-bearer, fire was again opened.

Standing in this corn field alone and unsupported, and striving their best to keep pegging away at the rebel force in our front, yet not knowing how many or in what position they were, it was thought best by Colonel Steere to charge the regiment up the hill, that we might see, if possible, where we stood. While waiting for the Sixteenth Connecticut to advance and support us in this charge, the rebels, seeing our predicament, determined to wipe us out.

Massing a heavy brigade upon our left, they came down the hill on our flank, pouring in a sweeping fire as they advanced, and our men fell like sheep at the slaughter. To stand before this murderous fire was impossible, and we were ordered to move by the right flank.

The regiment on the right of us now broke and came crowding us as the Sixteenth had done before them. With this "confusion worse confounded" of a retreating regiment entangling our own on the right,—with a ceaseless storm of shot, shell, grape, and minie-balls mowing our ranks from front and flank,—amidst a confused babel of orders, is it a wonder that the regiment, like the two preceding it, also broke?

Neither, in the face of past experience, is it a wonder that, though disorganized for the time being, they rallied, and fought the day out in the ranks of the Fifty-first New York and other regiments.

Of the part of this struggle borne by the writer's company, B, the number of killed and wounded tells its own story. Of the twenty-one men killed in this regiment, *eight* belonged to Company B,—more than one-third of the whole number killed. Seven of the company were wounded, two of whom died of their wounds shortly after.

Darkness soon covered the field; the firing from right to left gradually died away, and the tired armies lay down to rest upon the ground each had occupied at the close of this battle.

In the morning the line was formed again and started for the bridge, supposing the engagement was to be renewed, but the rebel army had withdrawn, and nothing was left to do but care for the wounded and bury the dead. Our regiment returned to the corn field of the previous day, and there beheld the bodies of their dead comrades stripped of clothing, shoes, etc., by the rebel line, and, with sad hearts, buried them as they lay.

And thus the battles of South Mountain and Antietam, and our connection therewith, passed into history. We missed many cheerful faces from around the camp-fire, and our hearts were sore and sad for many a day after. Among those killed in our company was the writer's friend, school-mate, messmate, and comrade, Harry Roberts. Brought up from boys of eight or nine years of age in each other's society, we had gone through many scenes of life together, and were firm and fast friends to the last.

Poor Harry! The night before the battle he felt a presentiment of his coming fate, and asked his captain if there were not some duty he could perform other than in the battle line next day. Finding none, he went bravely into the fight, scorning to shirk his duty, and fell, slightly wounded. As he tried to get to the rear another shot struck him, and his spirit took its flight from earth.

He was buried with the rest of our comrades on the field, and there left to sleep until the Resurrection morn, and we trust that his noble and heroic sacrifice in giving his young life to his country has gained for him a crown of glory in that better land beyond the skies.

That day our regiment mustered together once more, and went into camp near the mouth of Antietam Creek. We stayed there four days and then changed camp, and two days after established permanently at a place called Pleasant Valley, Md., but a few miles from the scene of our late battle.

October, 1862.

CHAPTER X.

PLEASANT VALLEY TO FREDERICKSBURG.

THE warm October days now found us enjoying a much needed rest in camp at Pleasant Valley, Md. Much time was required to bring up the needed supplies, and therefore the days passed by till nearly the middle of October before there were any signs of another move. The whole army was taking a rest, while Lee's army across the river was also recruiting its strength for the race towards Richmond that was soon to take place.

We were furnished with a new kind of tent, described as follows: a piece of light but stout canvas, about five by six feet square, provided on three sides with buttons and button-holes, was called a "shelter tent." Each man was allowed one such piece. By buttoning three pieces together a good tent was made, though not affording much more room when pitched on the ground than a good sized dog-house.

The introduction of these tents for the future use of the army, though causing much inconvenience and a great deal of fault-finding, relieved the army teams of their usual heavy load of tents belonging to each regiment, for now we were required to carry our own tent rolled up with our blanket and strapped to our knapsack. We soon found them very handy, as they could be pitched in a short time anywhere in the woods or fields we happened to stop.

The Seventh Regiment from Rhode Island now arrived to take its place in our corps, and camped near by us. Being fresh from our native state, we spent many pleasant hours with them, learning the news from home and talking over old times.

About the middle of the month we received orders to cook up and keep on hand two days' rations, and be prepared to move at any time. Troops were changing position around us, and this great army that had been lying still for the past month now began to stir itself, in preparation for another mighty struggle.

On the morning of the 26th the orders of "Pack up," "Strike tents," and "Fall in here, lively," resounded through the camps, and we were soon ready in line, and an hour's time found us on the road to the Potomac River.

After a march of several miles we halted at a place called Berlin, on the banks of the Potomac. A pontoon bridge spanned the river at this place, and we soon crossed upon it, and encamped for the night in a piece of woods just north of the village of Lovettsville.

McClellan's plan of advance seemed to be to move down on the east side of the Blue Ridge Mountains, taking possession of each gap, as he advanced, and making Warrenton the point of general direction, with the idea of splitting Lee's army in the centre, and of destroying each wing in detail.

We remained in camp near Lovettsville until October 30th, when the whole army being safely on Virginia soil once more, and well in hand, the grand march was commenced.

At this time the Ninth Corps held the right of the whole line in advance. The corps was composed of three divisions, commanded as follows: First, Gen. W. W. Burns; Second, Gen. S. D. Sturgis; Third, Gen. Geo. W. Getty. The Third Division was composed of two brigades com-

manded as follows : First Brigade, consisting of the Ninth, Eighty-ninth, and One Hundred and Third New York Volunteers, the Tenth and Thirteenth New Hampshire, and Twenty-fifth New Jersey, was commanded by Col. Rush C. Hawkins, of the Ninth New York. The Second Brigade consisting of the Fourth Rhode Island, Twenty-first, Eighth, Eleventh, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Connecticut regiments, was commanded by Col. Edward Harland.

The advance encountered the rebel pickets and drove them from our front, and we moved along slowly until night, when a halt was ordered and we pitched our little shelters for the night. We stopped here two days and on November 2d struck the road again and stretching out in earnest, tallied seventeen miles, and went into camp near a place called Union, but rather a misnomer, as all its people were rebels of the worst kind.

The next morning we again started on, passing through Union, and in the afternoon struck the rebel flank again, and halted, as it was not intended to bring on a battle just at this time. A spirited artillery duel followed, when a body of our cavalry charged down upon them, putting them to flight. We marched on a mile or two further, and halted for the night.

The next day found us again on the road, and the long lines of men, batteries, and teams, wended their way over fields and hills, plodding along slowly under the fierce rays of the sun, until the long, weary day had passed, and evening found us at a halt near Rectortown, on the Manassas Gap Railroad.

Dawn of another day roused us from sleep, and snatching a hasty breakfast, we buckled on our traps, and again marched out into the road. Late in the afternoon we reached and passed through the village of Orleans, and encamped just the other side, our feet tired and sore, our

shoulders and back aching with the weary tramp of twenty miles that day.

We were again close upon the enemy's heels, and the black clouds of smoke rising just ahead of us, told us where he had set fire to the bridges in his retreat.

Reveille at break of day next morning; and an hour after the long line of camps was broken up, and we took our place in line ready to move on again. A heavy snow-storm now broke upon us, and to render our situation more uncomfortable, we were obliged to wait in line until noon, when the headquarter bugle sounded the forward, and as its notes floated down the line, it seemed to say,

" I know you are tired, but still you must go,
Way down to Fredericks', to see the big show."

So we started along, and with many a hitch of our knapsacks and waist belts to ease the sore places, we traveled about six miles, and went into camp at a place called " Carter's Run," a tributary of the Rappahannock River, in the township of Waterloo.

We lay at this camp three days, waiting for rations. Our supply train had been detained, and therefore left us in a great strait for food. Hard-tack was scarce and commanded a high price. The country round about was bare of forage, and we were put to our wits' end for subsistence.

Those who have never suffered day after day the pangs of hunger know little of the value that is set upon food of any kind and in any condition. We were obliged to steal corn from the mules' feed-box and parch and eat it, to quell the cries of our hungry stomachs. By the time the train arrived, we were in nearly a starving condition, and we hailed with shouts of joy its advent with the much needed and long wished for supplies of beef, pork, and hard-tack, and with an appetite sharpened by our three days' abstinence, feasted thereon to our hearts' content.

This camp was appropriately named "Camp Starvation, near Waterloo."

The following order was now received and read to us :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, }
WARRENTOWN, VA., Nov. 9th, 1862. }

General Orders, No. 1.

In accordance with General Orders No. 182, issued by the President of the United States, I hereby assume command of the Army of the Potomac.

Patriotism and the exercise of my every energy in the direction of this army, aided by the full and hearty co-operation of its officers and men, will, I hope, under the blessing of God, ensure its success.

Having been a sharer of the privations and a witness of the bravery of the old Army of the Potomac in the Maryland campaign, and fully identified in their feelings of respect and esteem for General McClellan, entertained through a long and most friendly association with him, I feel that it is not as a stranger that I assume this command.

To the Ninth Corps, so long and intimately associated with me, I need say nothing. Our histories are identical.

With diffidence for myself, but with a proud confidence in the unswerving loyalty and determination of the gallant army now entrusted to my care, I accept its control with the steadfast assurance that the just cause must prevail.

A. E. BURNSIDE,
Major-General Commanding.

For this promotion of our noble General Burnside we much rejoiced, and cheers from the Ninth Corps lifted in great volumes to the clouds and made those old woods ring. But this rejoicing was shared by the Ninth Corps alone.

The rest of this great army having been, as it were, nurtured and brought up under the fatherly care of General McClellan, loved their leader as only men can who had stood bravely by him in all the various trials and reverses he had met with, and they heard with regret that their beloved commander was removed.

The Ninth Corps was now placed under the command of Gen. Orlando B. Wilcox.

The army of Northern Virginia, under General Lee, was now keeping pace with us, down the Shenandoah Valley. But General Burnside's plan was to get ahead of him on this side of the mountains, and force him to fight in the open field intending to strike him at, or near, Spottsylvania Court House.

November 15th we were again on the road, heading down the Rappahannock River in the direction of Fredericksburg.

Pontoons were ordered and promised from Washington to meet us at Falmouth, opposite Fredericksburg, that we might, without delay, cross the river that lay directly in our path.

The march was rapid, and at the end of the first five miles we again struck the enemy's pickets. The line was halted, a section or two of artillery flew past us, and went "in battery," throwing a few shrapnel over into the woods on our left, which sent the rebel pickets flying, and night coming on, we pitched our camp near by.

November 16th the whole line was again put in motion, and fourteen miles of road was passed, when, towards evening, we struck the Orange and Alexandria Railroad at Rappahannock Station, and passing down the road-bed about two miles, filed into the woods on either hand and halted for the night. The bright camp-fires were soon blazing, the boys hovering around with cups of coffee and roasted hard-tack, eating their supper with a relish enjoyed by none so keenly as those who have borne the heat and burden of the day in traveling those long, weary miles.

The music from the brigade band floated sweetly out upon the still night air. We laid ourselves down under the shelter of the tall trees, and with the musical echoes floating through our brain, gently fell into a sweet and quiet slumber, with naught to disturb our repose till the morn-

ing's light, and the drums and bugles called us from the land of dreams to begin the duties of another day.

Tired, stiff, and sore from our late march, we slowly obeyed the sergeant's call to "fall in for roll-call," and then ate breakfast, packed up, slung our knapsacks over our tired and bruised shoulders, picked up our rifles, got into line, and off we went out into the road, to peg along a few miles further towards our destination. Traveling at a good speed, our stiffened limbs got limbered up, we kept chatting and joking one or another, and in conversation or some sort of an argument we forgot how tired we were, and by night went into camp twenty miles from our last stopping place.

Another day's march passed away and brought us within eight miles of Fredericksburg. On the next day, November 19th, we started out early, and arrived on the plains below Falmouth about noon. My company being on "rear guard" that day, did not reach camp until after dark.

But little time was spent, after our arrival that night, in fixing up our quarters. Uncertainty in regard to our stay, and great weariness of body, prompted us to get supper as quickly as possible, take a smoke, and lie down for the night, and after "tattoo" the camps were soon silent, with the exception of the rumbling of the supply trains as they arrived.

November 20th opened with a dull, lowering sky, betokening a stormy day, and we congratulated ourselves on our arrival at the end of our long march from Pleasant Valley, Md. As the pontoon train had not arrived as expected, it was plain we should have to remain here a few days at the least. But while we were busy fixing up our quarters to meet the coming rainstorm, suddenly an orderly from bri-

gade headquarters appeared, with orders for this regiment to escort a body of cavalry down the river.

Immediately we got ready to start. This was rather hard, after our long and weary march, and more especially so in the face of the coming storm. Many were the exclamations of disgust and dissatisfaction, and we were inclined to think that the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment was picked out to do the dirty work of the whole brigade. As all the other regiments in the brigade were Connecticut regiments and the commander of the brigade himself was colonel of one of them, what else could be expected?

However, a soldier's duty is to obey orders, and leaving our tents standing under guard, in an hour's time we were on our way to the river. The clouds that had hovered darkly over us all the morning, now poured down their accumulation of waters in torrents, and in a few moments the road was one thick sea of mud, in some places almost knee deep.

Virginia mud has this peculiarity: that when wet it assumes a paste-like consistency, and sticks to the feet like glue; hence, when one set his foot down into it, it would cling tenaciously to his shoes, so that at times while lifting the foot to take another step the shoe would be left behind, firmly imbedded in the mud, thus making travel extremely difficult, and sometimes quite impossible. Being also as slippery as grease, many a fall was occasioned, the victims presenting a most ludicrous sight, covered with yellow red mud from head to foot.

Reaching the banks of the Rappahannock where our pickets were stationed, we halted for awhile, and had a good view of the city of Fredericksburg opposite, now occupied by the rebel troops. The pickets on both sides were friendly, and indulged in chaffing one another, or in trading rations for tobacco, etc.

It was Burnside's intention on arriving here to occupy the city, then containing but a small force of rebels, as a base of operations against the enemy. But the pontoons, without which we could not cross the river in force, had by some mismanagement of the Washington authorities, failed to arrive, and this great army was forced to lie idle on or near the banks of the river until they were forthcoming. This delay was the principal cause of the subsequent disastrous defeat of our army. Notwithstanding the magnanimity of Burnside in taking all the blame of the defeat upon his own shoulders, the impartial historian can but place it where it belonged — upon the head of the War Department at Washington.

But to return to our march. We fell in line once more, and preceded by a large cavalry force, plodded along through the mud and rain up the river some six miles, when a halt was called. At the end of an hour we “about face” and tramped back to camp.

What under the sun we were ordered on that march for was beyond our comprehension. It could not have been to find a ford to cross the river, for the river was swollen by the storm into a rushing torrent. The cavalry might just as well have gone alone and accomplished just as much. The river being an insurmountable barrier between them and the enemy, they stood in no danger of an attack. We are puzzled to this day to know why we were ordered on this move in the face of such a storm.

We arrived back in camp just before dark, tired, foot-sore, hungry, drenched to the skin, and covered with mud, and instead of finding dry tents, hot coffee, and fires to dry ourselves and warm our chilled bodies, which should have been provided by our cooks and others left behind in camp, our eyes were greeted with this cheering spectacle :

There laid our camp, two-thirds of the tents levelled to the ground by the storm, our knapsacks soaked and imbedded in the mud, not a fire in sight, no coffee,—nothing but the pitiless storm of wind and rain sweeping over us. We righted our tents as best we could, and crawled in. Little sleep was had through the long hours of that dreadful night, and as we lay and listened to the beating of the storm our thoughts turned back to the nice, warm beds at home, and again to the privations and hardships under which we continually labored while in active operations against the enemies of our country.

But just before morning the storm cleared away and the sun arose clear. We arose from our bed of mud and water, and set about to dry ourselves. Having no fire-wood on hand, we took our blankets and wet goods and went down into the woods near by, and built large fires, by the genial warmth of which we dried our clothes and cooked our breakfast. The sun's rays having dried the earth, we pitched camp again, and were soon ready to go forward in our duties.

The condition of our army after the long march from Berlin, was very bad, especially in regard to clothing. Our regiment suffered considerably in this respect, as a great number of the men were without shoes or stockings. Five of Company B had not a shoe to their feet. Our rations were none of the best, and not too plentiful. Of tobacco we had but little or none, and for some time most of us had been obliged to smoke such stuff as squaw weed, chestnut bark, coffee, or anything that approached the taste or smell of tobacco. Sutlers were charging from one to three dollars a pound for it; but we had no money, not having been paid off in several months, and therefore had to be content without.

The rebel army was now fast concentrating at Fredericksburg, opposite us, and was busily engaged fortifying the heights back of the city, preparatory for our reception when we should advance that way. Mounting guns of long range, they could easily toss their shells over into our camp, and we were obliged to move a short distance to the rear.

On the 26th of November our corps was reviewed in due form and ceremony by General Sumner. The next day being Thanksgiving Day in New England, our thoughts often went back to our homes away in the North, and to the happy party assembled and seated around the table so bountifully spread with all the good things pertaining to our annual feast, and we wished—oh, so much—that we could be with them as in days past, before the strife of this cruel war called us away. But the stern realities of our soldier life stared us in the face, and we were obliged to be content with a Thanksgiving dinner of salt-junk and hard-tack, and count ourselves lucky in getting that.

This place being made a base of supplies, the engineer corps was now busy at work rebuilding the railroad to Belle Plain and Acquia Creek, which was partially destroyed on our evacuation of Falmouth five months before. In a few days trains were in operation, bringing us the much needed supplies, and we were soon provided with everything but money and tobacco.

And now we experienced a very severe cold spell of weather. For several nights it was hard to tell whether we should wake up in this world or the next. The Twenty-first Connecticut was encamped near us, and lost several men by freezing to death. But fortunately for us, it did not last but a few days.

Saturday, December 6th, we awoke in the morning to

find about four inches of snow on the ground, an unusual thing for these parts, and now we realized the uncomfortable shelter from the weather these little McClellan tents afforded us.

One could not sit up straight in these tents, but had to lie down if he went inside of them; consequently, to keep out of bad weather, we were obliged to go to bed.

Tuesday, December 9th, we passed through an inspection of arms, equipments, and quarters, by Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis, now commanding the regiment. Wednesday we were provided with new clothes, of which we stood in need, and were again inspected.

Up to this date, our life in camp here had been very quiet. The regular camp duties were performed, and time passed on until one day the long pontoon train arrived, when preparations for action were begun, and everything was put in good order to go across the river. We received orders to be ready to move at a moment's notice, and felt that it would be a much harder struggle now than it would have been had those pontoons appeared three weeks ago.

December, 1862.

CHAPTER XI.

FREDERICKSBURG.

ON the night of Dec. 10, 1862, 179 pieces of artillery were posted in battery on the edge of the bluffs opposite the doomed city of Fredericksburg in our front, and at daybreak on the morning of the 11th the troops of both armies were startled from their slumber by the crash of these guns, as they sent their messengers of destruction screeching and roaring over into the rebel city; and as their continual thunder heralded the light of day, so was it but the beginning of another terrible battle that should lay thousands of our brave comrades low in the dust.

A thick fog had settled down over the city, nothing revealing its locality, save here and there a church spire or tall chimney. Soon after sunrise tall columns of thick smoke were seen lifting above the fog from the fires caused by the bursting shell.

All was now activity around us. The engineers were hard at work, trying to lay the pontoon bridges under a fierce fire of Mississippi sharpshooters. At 8 o'clock we were ordered in line in our camp, and stacked arms, being ordered to remain within call. Just before dark "fall in" was heard, and we broke stacks, and in light marching

order proceeded a short distance from camp, when we halted, and soon after returned. All day long our battery men worked at their guns, and their thunder shook the earth and rolled away in the distance. The city was on fire in many places, and the heavens were darkened with the slowly drifting clouds of smoke.

The sun reached the western horizon and sank in its sea of gold, but still the guns flashed, and still the shot and shell crashed down among the buildings of the city. The firing ceased after sunset, with the exception that now and then another shell or shot would roar on its way across the river, the fires in the town making excellent marks for our gunners.

In rear of the city lay an open plain from five hundred to a thousand yards wide, and ending in a succession of low hills or terraces, rising one above another for some distance back. These terraces were known as Marye's Heights. With the opportunity furnished him by our long and fatal stay at this place, General Lee had built a strong line of earth-works on these heights that completely commanded the plain below, giving a clean sweep of every inch of that plain clear to the outskirts of the city. The rebel line curved in towards the river,—was some three miles in length, his left resting on the river above Falmouth, his centre upon Marye's Heights back of the city, and his right extending to Massaponax Creek, where it was refused, General Longstreet's corps upon the left, occupying the works on the "Marye estate," the stone wall along the telegraph road, and the heights beyond. "General Jackson's corps occupied the right, and General Hood's the centre," all well supported by the remainder of the rebel army.

General Burnside's plan of battle was, in a few words, as follows :

General Franklin's grand division, consisting of about forty-seven thousand men and 116 pieces of artillery, was to cross the Rappahannock on the left flank of our army near the Captain Hamilton estate, pierce the enemy's line at this place, seize the road in the rear, and thus, by turning Lee's right flank, compel him to leave the strong works on Marye's Heights, and give battle on the plains beyond. Then the right and centre in support of Franklin's attack were to assault and pursue along the telegraph or plank road, according to the direction of the enemy's retreat. It will thus be seen that the success of the whole plan rested entirely upon General Franklin.

He was furnished with troops enough to force the enemy's line by sheer weight of numbers. All it needed was a vigorous assault, quickly and strongly supported, a foothold gained within the enemy's line, and held there, turning the works against them, which would, without doubt, cause such a weakening of the centre, that the assault following there would be but a "walk over" for our men.

I have been upon and over the whole ground within the past three years. I have talked with old rebel General Sibley in Fredericksburg, gaining from him much information in regard to the battle, and also much from other rebel officers and men who were there, and they each and all agree in this particular: that when General Meade's columns (the advance of General Franklin's division) had so quickly and successfully gained a hold inside the rebel line by their impetuous assault on the morning of the 13th, the *rebel army was whipped*. If this assault had been promptly supported by General Franklin, the whole movement would have been a grand success. The great mistake of General Burnside lay, not in assaulting the heights in face of such a strong position, but in placing General Franklin in command of the main and most important movement. This is

the opinion of nearly all who were opposed to us in that battle that I met on my southern trip in 1884.

Friday, December 12th, at 10 o'clock in the morning, our regiment left camp, and marching down toward the river, halted in rear of our batteries. Soon after, word was passed along the line that a large quantity of tobacco had been found by our men at work on the bridge, sunk in the river. Parties from each company were sent down to bring up all they could get. They soon returned loaded with boxes and cakes of good tobacco, and each man forthwith supplied himself with as much as he could carry about him. Having been a stranger to its soothing influence for so long, we sat down on the hillside and smoked and chewed to our hearts' content. While thus engaged, a rebel long-ranger got a sight at us and sent one or two shot over into our midst. A change of base speedily brought us in rear of a hill near by, out of their range, and here we waited the rest of the day for orders.

At about 5 o'clock that afternoon we received them, and started down the road toward the pontoon bridges, crossed the river, and up into one of the main streets of the city, where we halted and stacked arms. Just before dark we broke stacks and moved on again, out to the front, halting just in the outskirts of the town, in rear of our picket line.

The picket line was established about a hundred yards in front of us, and we were here to relieve the pickets at 10 o'clock. Having nothing to do until then, we broke ranks, and the night being cold we hovered around what few little fires our men had built in rear of some brick-kilns near by.

At 10 o'clock orders came to "fall in quietly as possible," and moving forward, we crossed a ravine inclosing the railroad, and advanced to the picket line, relieving the One Hundred and Third New York Regiment (Germans), which immediately went to the rear.

We lay on the open ground in regular skirmish order, with the rebel line but seventy-five to a hundred yards away; in fact, so near that we could plainly hear them talk. The night was clear and still, but severely cold. Being in such close proximity to the rebels, we were obliged to lie close to the ground, either on our backs or faces, and therefore were unable to warm ourselves by exercise, and only by kicking the ground with our toes.

Oh, how we suffered from the bitter cold during our four long hours of watching that night! Not a loud word to break the stillness. Not a move could be made without drawing the fire of the rebel line, and we lay there watching, almost freezing, on that cold, hard field, wishing for daylight,—a relief,—an advance,—anything that would serve to quicken our congealing blood and overcome the drowsiness that was fast creeping upon us,—the natural effect of the cold.

My right-hand partner, Corporal Larkham, crawled up to me and whispered, "George, there is no need for both of us to keep awake; you let me lie down side of you and sleep about fifteen minutes, and then wake me up and you take your turn."

"All right, Charley, lie down," I replied, and in an instant he was sound asleep. Some facetious rebel across the way suddenly cried out: "Hurray for the Star Spangled *Hanger!*" and immediately a dozen of our rifles spit fire and lead in his direction, and the noise brought Charley to his senses.

As the line stilled down again, I, in my turn, curled up on the ground to sleep, while Charley kept watch; but had hardly closed my eyes when several more shots were fired, bringing me awake in an instant. One of our men, unable to bear the cold any longer, had got up to go to the rear, and the rebels seeing him, opened fire, not hitting him, how-

ever. This disturbance was soon quieted, and we lay low, not daring to close our eyes for an instant now.

Our officers occasionally crept along behind us on their hands and knees, trying to keep our spirits up by words of encouragement, and telling us we would be relieved in about fifteen minutes. This was an extraordinary fifteen minutes. It was nearly two hours long. At last we heard troops moving in rear of us. It was the Ninth New York Regiment. They crept up behind us quietly, and we gave them our orders and crawled away to the rear. It was now 2 o'clock, and we had been out there four hours.

When I was relieved I attempted to crawl back to the rear on my hands and knees, but found them so stiff and numb from the cold that I had to pull myself along as best I could over the intervening space between our picket-line and the ravine at the railroad, reaching which, I rolled down to the track like a log.

This feat of gymnastics served to warm me up a little, and I proceeded to where a large crowd of men were hovering around a very small fire. Staying here a short time, I went up the opposite bank and found quite a good fire in rear of the brick-kilns, at which I managed to get thawed out.

With returning warmth came the desire to find a place where I could get a little sleep before morning. Situated a short distance in rear of the brick works was an old barn, partly filled with hay, and of course it was crowded to overflowing with tired men, who lay thickly strewn over the hay, trying to get a little sleep.

But those outside kept crowding in, regardless of the rules of the house, tramping, in the pitch darkness, over the faces and bodies of the sleepers, who made the old barn resound with cries of "What the h—l are ye doing?" "Get off my stomach," "Oh, my head," "Put 'em in the guard house,"

etc. By dint of much hard struggling, I managed to get an armful of hay, and running the gauntlet of oaths and curses, got safely out into the barnyard. Finding a warm corner under the lee of a fence, I made my bed there, and lying down, pulled my blanket over me, and was soon asleep.

The morning of the 13th broke gray and dismal. A thick fog hung over the field and obscured the view of the rebel line. Having aroused myself, I went into a house near by, and by the aid of a good fire, cooked my coffee and ate breakfast. I then went out to the brick works and found the regiment getting in line to move with the rest of the brigade. The fog was slowly lifting from the field, and disclosed the enemy to our pickets. Thereupon a picket fire commenced, which soon increased to such an extent that reënforcements were sent to the picket lines.

We were now ordered to change position, and marched down through the city to the banks of the river, near the centre.

The pickets were now hard at work the whole length of the line. Batteries of artillery were flying into position. Brigade after brigade marched out to the field to take the positions assigned them, and the increasing roar of the guns and musketry gave evidence that the day's work had fairly commenced.

The fire of the skirmish line and artillery was kept up until about noon, while Couch's division on the right centre, was massing for the charge, when the word "Forward" was given, and steadily that line of brave men advanced on the run, across the plain towards the enemy's lines.

And now the heavens shook with the terrible roar of battle, as the enemy's guns rained death into the devoted ranks below, while a continual roar of musketry, the bursting of shell in their midst, and the sweeping storm of grape and canister mowed down our men like grass before the scythe.

The line halted, vainly endeavored to breast the storm, lay down to escape its fire, and again tried to advance through the fiery sleet to reach the enemy's works. Seven times was that fearful charge repeated, until the field was covered, and in some places piled, with our dead and wounded.

And thus the fight went on. The wild and heroic lines waving back and forth before the fierce and incessant storm of death that swept them through and through. And now where was Franklin? He should have turned their right long before this, but from the sound of his guns we judged he was no further advanced than in the early morning, and no hope of weakening their forces here could be expected from him.

As the sun drew near the horizon, and indicated the closing of the day, the fire from both sides, which had slackened somewhat, was renewed, and raged with the densest fury. Heaven and earth seemed quaking in the last throes of dissolution. From fifteen or twenty different forts in our front the rebels poured forth their charges of grape, shell, and shot upon the plain below, now covered with the decimated ranks of the living, striving to hold their own over the bodies of their dead comrades.

It seemed to be an easy conflict for this portion of the rebel army. In line behind a stone wall at the foot of the first terrace, that bounded a sunken road, they were protected from everything but our bursting shell, their heads being on a level with the plain. Their batteries were protected by earth-works, and could keep up a constant fire over their heads, consequently, all the rebel line had to do was to load and fire.

At 5 o'clock, while the battle was raging the fiercest, we were ordered to change position to the left. This move brought us through the main streets of the city, now crowded with troops hurrying to and fro, batteries of ar-

tillery flying at full speed from point to point, scores of wounded men lying here and there, their shrieks and groans mingling with the hoarse cries of officers, men, and battery drivers as they lashed their horses on the run, falling bricks and timbers from the buildings, the bursting of shell and rattle of shot and grape, and the never ceasing roar of artillery and musketry, formed a scene which can never be effaced from our memory, and to which my pen fails to do justice.

We halt in the street to allow Battery D, of Rhode Island, to pass us, going from left to right. One of its officers observing the letters — “4 R. I.” — on our caps, pulled up his horse in front of us, and with hat in hand cried out, “Boys, remember that old Rhode Island is looking at you to-day.” Our next comrade, Ned Cary, answered, “By jabers, we’d rather be looking at Rhode Island about these times.”

“Forward, Fourth Rhode Island,” sounds down the line, and away we go, struggling through back yards, lanes, over fences, any way to get through, and soon reach the battle-field again. The right and left wings of the regiment have become separated in passing through to the front, but now come together again by right and left flank. Colonel Curtis is shouting his orders, when a rebel shell bursts over us. A piece of it strikes the colonel in the head, and he falls to the ground — dead.

More by intuition than by orders we drop in line in rear of, and in support of, a battery that is suffering terribly from the fire of the enemy, its men nearly all shot away. Its commanding officer comes back to us with,

“What regiment is this?”

“Fourth Rhode Island.”

“Where is your colonel?”

“Dead.”

“ Who is next in command? ”

“ Major Buffum. ”

“ Where is he? ”

“ Back in the city. ”

“ Who is next in command? ”

“ Captain Bucklin. ”

“ Where is he? ” But before we can answer he goes down to the Ninth New York, on our left, and gets his detail to man his guns. Captain Bucklin is now here, and takes command. The battery we are supporting, unable to hold its position against the rebel fire, speedily limbers up and away to the rear. The enemy's fire now slackens in our front, and we lay in line, waiting for the next move.

As the sun sank in the west, and night drew her dark mantle around us, the firing gradually slackened, and at 9 o'clock had ceased, with the exception of a few picket shots now and then, and a rebel long range gun that occasionally sent its fiery messenger over our heads towards some point across the river. Tearing down the fences near by, we took the boards to keep us from the cold ground, and eating our frugal supper, lay down in line of battle and soon fell asleep undisturbed on that bloody field, until the dawn of another day aroused us to prepare for action again.

Soon after sunrise, Sunday morning, we marched back into the city and stacked arms in one of the main streets. The battle was over. Twenty thousand men lay bleeding out on that plain, the result of this fatal assault, and not one foot of the enemy's works gained, not one object accomplished, and still the enemy filled his works,— his loss being less than two thousand,— ready to use up the remainder of this army, should we again advance.

But no advance was made. The troops were all drawn in, leaving only a strong line of pickets; and the streets of the city were filled with men marching to and fro, broken

and disorganized regiments trying to muster together once more, and numberless stretchers with their loads of mangled men seeking the nearest hospital.

During the morning Meagher's Irish Brigade passed us, going towards the left, and presented a sad spectacle. Regiments that twenty-four hours previous were full in ranks of stout, able-bodied men, now numbering but forty or fifty, or perhaps a hundred, all told; companies commanded by sergeants or corporals, all their commissioned officers having been shot away; and battle flags shattered and torn into every conceivable shape.

But at their head rode their noble general, Thomas F. Meagher, decked in his usual bright uniform and gorgeous array of badges, erect in his saddle, doubly proud of his position as leader of that noble fragment of his once powerful brigade.

General Burnside met them just in front of our regiment. He grasped the hand of General Meagher for an instant, and great tears of sorrow rolled down his cheeks as he beheld in this little body of men the evidence of their heroic bravery, and the disastrous effects of their fearless assault upon the enemy's works.

Less than three years ago, I met in Richmond a veteran of the Twenty-fourth North Carolina Regiment, I believe it was. He told me that during the battle of Fredericksburg his regiment was posted behind the stone wall at the sunken road, in front of which so many of our men were slaughtered. He said that was the "easiest" battle he ever was in. "Why," said he, "we uns had our ammunition all laid out, handy for use, and all we had to do was to load and fire, load and fire. We stood in no danger from anything but bursting shell. All your fire went over our heads. There was absolutely no sight whatever for your men to reach us. They came pretty nigh it once, and one

of you uns fell just six and a half feet from the wall. He was the nearest one I saw."

I asked him why they did not open upon us Sunday and shell us out of the city. "We expected to do that," he replied. "We stayed in that road all day Sunday. Early Sunday morning we had orders to be ready to advance across and drive you uns out; but the day passed by and no orders came for us to start over. Bob Lee had a big heart, and I reckon he thought enough men had been slaughtered for one day."

During the afternoon of Sunday I started out to stroll over the city and note a few scenes and incidents for future reference in these pages.

The field was covered with the dead, and on the slope in front of the "stone wall" they lay in winnows and heaps. Parties were busy digging pits for their burial. The wounded were being cared for and brought in on stretchers to the hospitals. These occupied many of the larger dwellings in the place, and could easily be discerned by the piles of amputated limbs that were heaped up in the yards in the rear; legs, arms, hands, and feet, as fast as they were cut off, were thrown into a pile to be buried. I was curious enough to examine some of these limbs, and found a leg cut off below the knee with only one bullet hole, and that through the calf of the leg; no artery or bone seemed to be touched, and it was plain that this leg might have been dressed and healed, and thus saved to its owner. Other limbs, especially one or two hands, gave evidence that they had been amputated for the sake of *surgical practice* only.

I once saw a man laid upon the operating table with a bullet hole in his leg. Four or five young surgeons were getting ready to amputate it, and had just put the man under the influence of chloroform, and were getting out their knives and saws to go to work upon him, when the surgeon

in charge rode up. Dismounting from his horse, he asked: "What are you going to do with that man?" "Take off his leg above the knee," they replied. The surgeon examined the wound, followed the course of the ball over the knee-cap and under the bend of the knee, found it, made a slight incision, and slipped the ball out in his hand. "There, that man is all right; there are no bones injured. Dress his wound and send him back to the ward," he said, and mounting his horse, rode away. Thus, if it had not been for the fortunate arrival of the surgeon just in time, the man would have been a cripple all his life, if, perchance, he had survived the shock of amputation. Many a one-legged or one-armed soldier to-day would have been saved the use of his limbs, had it not been for the *grand opportunities for surgical practice* that were rendered our young army medical students just after a severe battle.

As I was passing along the street, I met a man hobbling along with a rammer for a cane. A rifled shot had carried away a large portion of the fleshy part of his thigh. Mortification had evidently set in. His wound was such that medical service was of no avail, and he had hobbled from hospital to hospital, trying to get some treatment or relief. The surgeons, with their hands full of those whose lives *might* be saved, would not spend their time on one whose case was hopeless, and the poor fellow piteously appealed to each one he met to help him find a doctor. We pitied him, but could do nothing to help him. Weak from loss of blood, he laid himself down in the corner of a yard near by, and awhile after, on going up to look at him, we found him dead.

As we went down through the city the effects of our bombardment could be seen on every hand. Here and there were once splendid mansions pierced through with our

shot and shell, torn to pieces, or large portions blown out into the streets. Whole squares, formerly the pride of the city, with fine stores, manufactories, and private residences, were now but a heap of smouldering ruins, the fragments of their shattered walls looming up in their midst as if for a perpetual warning to those whose treachery to their country was the cause of all this ruin and bloodshed.

Stores of all kinds yet remaining intact were broken open by our men, and their contents, in the shape of groceries, furniture, dry goods, tobacco, cotton, flour, etc., etc., were scattered in the streets and trampled under the feet of men, horses, and teams, that were continually passing over them.

Here in the eastern part of the town we observed a row of noble old elm trees standing in front of a once beautiful mansion, where for generations they had spread their leafy branches in peace, and afforded shade and shelter for thousands. Now they were pierced, torn, twisted, or split asunder by our fire, and the mansion that reposed in their shadow, and within whose walls youth, beauty, and wealth were wont to hold their joyous revelry, now stood but a shattered, blackened wreck. The gay voices were gone. The music of peace and love was still. The wine of hospitality had ceased flowing.

War, that relentless spirit of evil, had set his heavy foot upon it and crushed it to the earth.

Let us enter one of these deserted homes, not so badly shattered as the rest. We find it furnished with everything the heart could wish or cultivated taste suggest for comfort or pleasure. The parlors are splendidly carpeted. A rich piano stands in one corner. The library is full of books. Beautiful chandeliers hang pendant from the ceiling. Everything remains as when on that dreadful morning, two days ago, our guns began their work, and tossed

their shot and shell over into the midst of the sleeping population.

Aroused by the awful tempest to a sense of their danger, the inhabitants had fled, almost in their night clothes, to a point of safety beyond the rebel lines, leaving everything in their houses nearly as it stood the night before when they peacefully retired. And in this condition did our men find these houses, and at once entered and took possession.

Here we find a group of six or seven rough soldiers occupying this beautiful home. One sits down to the piano to play, and he has not forgotten his musical studies since he left home. It is an enjoyment to him that he has not known for a long time. His comrades lie at ease around on the sofas and easy chairs, listening to the really fine music. As he ceases playing, another says, "Did you ever see me play?" and seizing his rifle, he brings it down full force upon the key-board, smashing it into splinters. Others cut out the strings for future use in banjos, violins, etc., in prospective, and the beautiful instrument is totally ruined. Before this party leaves other furniture shares a like fate.

But in the midst of all this unnecessary destruction of property, there was one object that had a wonderful escape. Down near the banks of the river a fine statue of George Washington was inclosed in a sort of shed. Though this was many times directly between two fires, and as liable to injury during the bombardment as any other building, yet it remained unscathed during the whole battle.

As the evening approached, we passed up the street to where our regiment was located. The wounded had nearly all been brought in and cared for. It was evident that we could not stay here a great while without a move in some direction, but we had no orders as yet, and prepared for a night's rest.

Building a small fire in the road, I put on my coffee to boil, and stepping one side to get something from my haversack, I heard the report of a rebel gun, the whizzing of a solid shot through the air, and away went my fire, coffee-pot and all, flying in every direction. The rebel artilleryman had seen my little fire, and taking it for a mark, had shown us a specimen of his skill in gunnery by planting a shot directly into it, spoiling my supper for the time being.

A little more cautious this time, I went into a house near by, and cooked and ate my supper in peace. After a good smoke and discussion of our situation, we stretched ourselves in rear of our gun-stacks and slept undisturbed till morning.

Monday, December 15th, dawned upon us, and early in the morning we received orders to busy ourselves in collecting and depositing in certain places all the stones, pieces of iron, or other metal that an enemy could use against us. Teams gathered these piles up and dumped them in the river. This order looked to us like a preparation for retreat, and we worked pretty lively most of the day at it.

The two armies still held their relative positions,—ours being too badly crippled to make a successful attack in the day time, and the rebel army did not see fit to open upon the town. It was fortunate for us that this was the case, for if they *had* opened upon the city, crowded, as it was, with troops, wagons, and artillery, what with the flying bricks, falling buildings, and storm of shot and shell, we should either have been forced to charge their works again, or make a fearful rush for the river, followed by the whole rebel army. In either case the effect would have been most disastrous to our troops, probably involving the loss of two-thirds of our whole force, and destroying, for the time being, this glorious old Army of the Potomac.

Towards evening evidences of a move were seen in all directions. Batteries were under way to take position; the wounded were being carried back across the river; regiments changing from one place to another; new supplies of ammunition given out, and the men cautioned to remain near their respective colors.

At 9 o'clock that night orders were received. Every cup or anything that could make a noise was placed inside our haversacks. No order was given in a loud voice, and silence was enjoined upon us. Soon after nine we broke stacks, faced to the left, and marched quickly and quietly as possible to a point somewhat to the left of our former position in the field, when the whole line halted, faced to the front, and stacked arms.

A detail of men for the skirmish line was called, and the line was established a short distance to the front. The writer, with several others of our company, was part of this detail. We crawled out to the front and formed the line, connecting with others on our right and left, and lying close to the ground, awaited events.

What did all this mean? The army in two lines of battle now stretched out in front of the rebel works, ready to advance in a night attack on the heights beyond. The regular pickets in front of us were at work as usual, but the sound of their rifles gave us no indication of any advance movement on their part. The night was still and cold. In front, the enemy's camp-fires were burning brightly, while the sound of picks and shovels and axes,—the shouts of the mule drivers, or the bark of some rebel dog, could be plainly heard, as they worked away repairing damages, or getting things ready to receive our night attack.

Looking back to the rear, we saw our two dark lines of battle extending far to the right and left, ready at a moment's

warning to leap into life, and advance, like the incoming wave of the sea, upon those bloody heights again.

For about an hour we lay there still, expecting to receive the word forward, and those frowning heights transformed into volcanoes in an instant, for well we knew that thousands of watchful rebel eyes were peering through the pitch darkness to catch the first glimpse of our advance, and rifle and cannon were ready to give us a warm reception.

But at last there is a movement in our line of battle. Are they getting in readiness to make the assault? An officer comes out to us on the skirmish line and orders us to report to our regiment. In a few minutes we are with them. The line moves by the right flank, file right, *back into the city*, down to the river, and across the pontoon bridge. We keep on quietly towards camp, but get on the wrong road, and do not arrive there until 3 o'clock the next morning. We are glad to get safely out of *that* mess.

It was a great strategic movement,—the evacuation of Fredericksburg,—a masterly retreat, a representation of generalship which had not its equal during the whole war. To remove an army of 100,000 men, with all their necessary teams, sick and wounded, batteries of artillery, etc., from the direct front of a watchful and victorious enemy without any noise, or betraying the movement in any manner, and to pass them all over a pontoon bridge in the rear, without the loss of a man, team, or gun, was an act that was unprecedented, and gave *sufficient proof* of the *ability* of General Burnside to handle this army, and we thought that if his orders had been obeyed as implicitly in the advance movement as they had in the retreat, as great a success would have rewarded us.

Had the least intimation of our retreat been given to the enemy by noise or suspicious move, the whole rebel line

would have been opened upon us and the fearful loss of life in the panic that would doubtless have followed, in the rush for those two weak pontoon bridges, would have resulted in tremendous disaster, many times worse than we had experienced in the battle.

But all were got over quietly and safely. The men on the picket line were not informed of the movement until it was well-nigh accomplished. They were ordered to gradually cease firing about midnight, and shortly after to crawl back quietly to the city, which they did without creating suspicion of their movements, reaching which they made quick time to the river, where pontoon boats were in waiting for them, were rowed across, the bridges in the meanwhile having been taken up, and the battle of Fredericksburg was fully ended.

The first streaks of daylight revealed to the enemy's pickets a field and city deserted by all save the bodies of the dead.

Surprised and astounded by this discovery, they sprang up, and cautiously advanced toward the city. But no "bluebellies" were in sight, except here and there a "skulker," and now a word in regard to them.

These men had managed to leave their regiments the night before the battle. They secreted themselves in the rooms and cellars of houses, and being able to procure plenty of food and good beds, had performed their part of this movement by living well and keeping out of danger. Quite a number of them had gone to bed the night before, after watching us move in line of battle out to the front, and no doubt congratulated themselves that they were smart enough to evade the coming battle as nicely as they had that of Saturday.

While they were sleeping in their secure and no doubt

very comfortable hiding-places, the army evacuated so quietly as not to wake them. Imagine their surprise when on awaking the next morning they do not hear the usual noise and bustle in the street outside. They crawl out to investigate, but no troops are there. The city is still. Everybody but their cowardly selves have changed base. They have got left, and it is quite a cold morning, while their comrades who have clung to their place in line and have done their duty, are now safe in camp across the river.

As a last resort they rush to the river, and yell to our pickets on this side to send them a boat, but round yonder corner appears a squad of rebels. They turn to flee, but are met by another squad, and thus yield themselves prisoners, and meet the reward of their shirking duty by being marched off directly in sight of their comrades across the river, to some vile hole of a rebel prison. Served them right.

The rebels were astounded at this bold and successful retreat of Burnside, and called it a "right smart Yankee trick." They speedily occupied the town again, and threw up lines of breast-works in the streets to oppose any further movement to occupy the city. The inhabitants came back from the shelter of the rebel works, and fortunate were those who found even a roof to shelter their families.

And now our weary and bleeding army was suffered to rest in camp for a few days. Shortly after the fight I was detailed for picket duty on the banks of the river, and had a good view of the city. The streets seemed as full of citizens as ever. Many ladies were passing to and fro, and everything appeared about the same as before the battle, except the ruins of the burned buildings.

Major Buffum now took command of our regiment. Lieutenant-Colonel Curtis' body was sent home, where it

received all the honors of burial that could be bestowed upon it, and was deposited in the North Burial Ground at Providence, R. I., where a monument of free-stone marks his last resting-place.

Standing on Marye's Heights one day in September, 1884, and taking in at a glance the positions of both armies on that dreadful Saturday of the battle, it was a source of wonder to me, that of the number of our men who crossed that field to the assault so many got safely back. These heights commanded such a clean sweep of that plain that even a cat crossing it would be a fair mark to the rebel rifles. That there was absolutely no chance to carry these heights by direct assault in the face of the rebel force that then occupied them, that our men made the attempt with most desperate heroism, and failed, we have sad evidence all around us. Here on the very spot we strove so hard to win is located a beautiful National Cemetery. In this "city of the dead" lies all that is left of those brave boys who gave all they *could* give, their life-blood, a sacrifice to the defense of their country's flag. Fifteen thousand two hundred and seventeen of our comrades here sleep their last long rest. Of this vast number but 2,487 are known. Twelve thousand seven hundred and seventy graves are marked with a small marble stone, on top of which is cut a number indicating that nothing could be found on the dead soldier's remains to identify him, and he is numbered among the vast army of "unknown" dead.

Where anything at all was found it is noticed on the little headstones. Here you will find one stone that reads "Co. H"—that is all. It was probably upon some of his equipments or other things. Another one reads "John." Another, "89th N. Y." Another, "Thompson, Indiana," while some are more complete. Only one full-sized head-

stone could be found, and that contained a full inscription, and was planted there by his surviving friends or relatives.

At the junction of the different paths that wind around the cemetery, and under the flag that perpetually waves above them,— the flag that these men died to save,— may be found bronze metal plates, upon each of which is inscribed a verse of Everett's beautiful poem ; and our hearts fill with sorrow and our eyes with tears, as we read these inspired words, and as the memory of that dreadful day comes back to us with renewed force in the presence of these poor wasting bodies of our dead. May their rest be sweet, and their reward eternal peace.

Unknown ! Unknown to all save God and the angels of heaven ; and we turn away and leave them to sleep where

“ On Fame's eternal camping-ground,
Their silent tents are spread ;
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead.”

January, 1863.

CHAPTER XII.

FREDERICKSBURG TO SUFFOLK.

THE year 1863 dawned upon us in camp, engaged in the regular routine of camp duties, but not a week of this new year had passed before a change occurred in our brigade, to our great satisfaction. We were removed from Harland's Connecticut Brigade and assigned to the Third Brigade, Third Division, Ninth Corps, which was composed of the Thirteenth New Hampshire, Twenty-fifth New Jersey, Twenty-first Connecticut, and our own Fourth Rhode Island.

Of course this new assignment necessitated a change of camp; and soon after a general review of the Ninth Corps by General Burnside, occurring on the 6th of January, we broke camp and crossing the main road, marched about a mile nearer the railroad and pitched camp on the side of a steep hill. I visited this camp in 1884. No traces of it remain, except the stumps of the trees, general lay out of the land, and the spring where we used to get such good water. The hills are all covered with a twenty-year old forest, and vines and underbrush cover the ground; but still one can readily recognize the place.

It was a dreadful place for a camp; but by building our tents up on logs we managed to live quite comfortably here.

This way of building afforded room for a fireplace and mud chimney. Each tent was adorned with one of those graceful (?) towers of sticks and mud; but bad as they looked on the outside, they afforded us a comfortable little fireplace on the inside, where we could keep a nice fire burning all night during the severe cold weather.

But to keep wood enough on hand for our fire was a hard job. With axes and ropes we each day went over to a piece of woods about a mile distant, and after a couple hours of hacking and chopping came back to camp with a good sized bundle of wood. As all the rest of the army were occupied in the "short wood" line, it soon became a scarce article, but we found enough to last us during our stay here.

Near by the camp was situated Prof. James Allen's balloon, kept here for the purpose of observing the enemy's movements. It was supplied with gas manufactured on the spot, and made several ascensions, by the aid of windlass and rope, to the height of a thousand feet every day. From this height the whole line of the enemy's works, camps, and movements could be easily discerned. During the battle previously he made one or two ascensions, but the rebels got the range of him, and sent one or two shot in such close proximity that he gave up the attempt and came down.

The monotony of camp life was at length relieved by the appearance, on January 15th, of our paymaster with his treasure chest, and visions of bright new greenbacks and the consequent supplies of sutler's stores, etc., cheered us greatly. The happy, smiling faces that gathered around the sergeant's tent for the signing of the "pay rolls" became suddenly clouded when it was announced that although six months' pay was due us, we were to receive but four.

This we felt to be a great injustice to us, fighting and suffering all kinds of hardships for a nation amply able to keep square with us in financial matters. With our families at home in great need of money, and in many cases suffering by being deprived of it so long, it did not seem just that it should be withheld from us.

But our indignation was aroused to the highest pitch when we learned that out of our small earnings a further sum of \$36.50 was to be deducted in payment of our first suit of army blue.

Now when we enlisted in Rhode Island for our country's salvation it was clearly understood, and so announced in big letters upon the recruiting placards posted in the offices, that, together with \$13.00 a month and found, good medical attendance, etc., we were to be furnished with a full suit of army clothing and equipments free of charge. It was not expected that in offering our services as volunteers we should *buy our own uniforms*, neither was such a thing demanded, and of all the Rhode Island troops that went to the field, not one, with the exception of our regiment, was ever required to pay for their first suit.

Much excitement was created in camp. The men refused to sign the pay rolls unless that objectionable and fraudulent demand was erased from them. We threatened to stack arms at the dress parade that night and refuse further duty until our right and honestly earned wages were paid to us. Cheers were given for Jeff. Davis, and a mutiny seemed imminent.

The paymaster, Major Ehretts, unexpectedly meeting such opposition, knew not what to do, but after conferring with our officers decided to stay in camp and let the men sleep one night upon it, and the next day he gave out warning that unless they signed and took what they could get now, it would probably be from four to six months

before he would be able to come again to us, and then we should be no better off. "Of two evils, choose the least," is an old maxim, and acting upon it, the boys, very generally the next day signed the rolls, and took their meagre allowance.

Some of us had a large clothing balance due us, and therefore got nearly what would amount to four months' pay, while others, from having been obliged to over-draw in clothing, on account of losing knapsacks and clothing at Washington, and the wear and tear of this last campaign, added to the deduction of \$36.50 for the first suit, received a very small pittance for their hard labor of the past six months.

One poor soldier received a little over three dollars as his share. Another was paid eighty-five cents, while still another had periled his life for the magnificent sum of *two three-cent postage stamps*. Compare this with the wages these men might have been receiving had they stayed at home and provided for their families, and the injustice done us is very apparent.

I will state here, that after twenty-four years have passed since the above transpired, the State of Rhode Island seems willing to allow our claim, and return us the sum deducted.

After pay-day the camp settled down to its usual routine of duty, but was soon stirred up again by the reception of marching orders. The men were required to be ready to move at a moment's warning. Five days' rations were ordered to be cooked up and kept on hand, and various were the surmises as to our destination.

At length on Tuesday, January 20th, at dress-parade, an order from General Burnside was read to us to the effect that we were about to move again on the enemy on the other side of the river.

The next morning at 3 o'clock we were waked up, and

found all the troops astir, and getting ready to move on the enemy by daylight. The storm that had been slowly gathering in the eastern heavens the day before, now burst upon us in all its fury. The rain poured in torrents, and driven by the fierce wind in blinding sheets through the camps and across the plains, soon converted the solid clay into a batch of sticky mud.

Most of the men in obedience to orders had struck their tents and were sitting on their knapsacks in the deluging rain, waiting for the brigade to move, and, of course, were soon wet to the skin. Fires were out of the question in such a storm, and they were therefore forced to remain cold, wet, and miserable until daylight. The writer, knowing from experience that no move could be made in such a storm as this, made excuse that his *tentmate was sick*, and kept our tent standing, as did several others, ready to strike should the line move, and meanwhile kept myself and messmate dry. This proved subsequently to be the wisest plan, if not strictly honest, as at daybreak the orders were countermanded.

But those troops who *had* started out on the road found themselves unable, by reason of the mud, to proceed more than a mile or two from camp. Men plodded along slowly in the thick darkness and storm, through mud and water, until they could go no further. Horses and mules struggled and floundered about, drivers shouted and cursed, the artillery sank to the hubs,—and to cap all, the movement was discovered by the enemy, who were at once on the alert to prevent the contemplated surprise, and were soon ready to receive those who, having survived the dangers of the road, should attempt to cross the river in their front.

An advance was impossible, and General Burnside's contemplated attack upon a vulnerable point of the enemy's lines, and which doubtless would have been a success but

for the fierce battle of the elements and the adhesive nature of Virginia mud, was defeated at every point, and he was forced to order the troops back to their camp and give it up. But owing to the awful condition of the roads, it was late the next day before they all reached camp, and many teamsters, unable to extricate their teams from the mud, were forced to leave them.

Thus ended this unlucky attempt, and its unfortunate failure was duly celebrated by the festive Johnnies across the river, who hung out a large canvas sign in front of the houses near the river bank, upon which was painted in enormous letters

“BURNSIDE STUCK IN THE MUD.”

The feeling in the regiment in regard to their late pay was in no wise allayed but in some degree intensified by this last move. Although we were not obliged to leave camp, yet most of the men stood out in the cold driving storm, when by a little forethought, all might have been allowed to keep their tents standing as a shelter until we were *obliged* to move.

We received a number of recruits at this time, among whom were several bounty jumpers, mostly French Canadians. These men enlisting for the purpose of desertion at the first opportunity, sowed the seeds of discord upon well tilled ground, as it were, and infected many of the discontented with their plans of desertion.

Not a day passed but one or more took French leave of us. One of Company B, a Canadian recruit by the name of James Jeffers, one day received a box from home in Nova Scotia, containing a full suit of citizen's clothes.

This affair was well known to every one in the company. I went in myself and examined his suit, and the orderly sergeant of the company was as well informed of his in-

tentions as any one, yet such was the state of feeling in the regiment at that time that no blame was attached to any one who was smart enough to get away, and he was allowed to escape without any report being given to our officers of his intention.

Putting on this citizen's suit underneath his blue uniform, he took an axe and went out after roll-call the next morning to get some fire wood, and for all we know is chopping away yet, as we never saw or heard anything more of him.

January 26th, the following general orders were read to us :

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, }
January 26, 1863. }

By direction of the President of the United States, the Commanding General this day transfers the command of this army to Maj.-Gen. Joseph Hooker.

The short time that he has directed your movements has not been fruitful of victory or any considerable advancement of our lines, but it has again demonstrated an amount of courage, patience, and endurance, that under more favorable circumstances would have accomplished great results. Continue to exercise these virtues. Be true in your devotion to your country and the principles you have sworn to maintain. Give to the brave and skillful general who has so long been identified with your organization, and who is now to command you, your full and cordial support and coöperation, and you will deserve success.

In taking an affectionate leave of the entire army from which he separates with so much regret, he may be pardoned if he bids an especial farewell to his long-tried associates of the Ninth Corps.

His prayers are that God may be with you, and grant you continual success until the rebellion is crushed.

By command of

MAJ.-GEN. A. E. BURNSIDE.

LEWIS RICHMOND, A. A. G.

Never for a minute did we expect that General Burnside would be laid upon the shelf by the War Department. Men of strong, earnest, and honest patriotism, capable of handling armies, were too scarce an article in those troublous times,

and we were not surprised when a few weeks later he was appointed to the command of the Department of the Ohio.

Nor did we expect that he would long remain in *any* department without the presence of his faithful old Ninth Corps, and we were prepared to receive marching orders, which came to us Friday, February 6th.

The next morning we packed up, struck tents, and marched down to the railroad. At sunset we got aboard the cars and left the scene of our many troubles and trials without the least regret. At half past ten that night we arrived at Acquia Creek, and at three the next morning the regiment embarked,—the right wing aboard steamer *Colonel Ruckner*, and the left wing aboard the steamer *Josephine*.

An hour later we left the wharf, and swinging out into the stream, came to anchor while the rest of the Ninth Corps embarked on the various transports in waiting. At 1 o'clock in the afternoon we weighed anchor and sailed away down the Chesapeake. Monday morning we arrived off Fortress Monroe and anchored. At noon we started again, heading up the James River, and landed at Newport News, from which we had started with such full ranks only a few months before.

We were now but a shadow of our number at that time, having, since we left here, lost three commanders, Rodman, Steere, and Curtis, and about one hundred and seventy-five men. But our shattered regiment still held its own, and marched as proudly up the old familiar roads as when we had left them.

We were now quartered in barracks some distance to the right of our old camp, large enough to hold two or three of our companies, and therefore we were a little more comfortably situated during the cold weather than we were in our little canvas dog-houses on the banks of the Rappahannock.

We were put in good trim, kept our shoes blacked nicely, and equipments and guns in first-class condition all the time. We also enjoyed a good supply of fresh, warm, soft bread every day, which in consideration of the hard-tack that had been our staff of life since we left here, made us feel that the change we had experienced had been the better for us.

Soon after our arrival here, I was again placed on detached service in the bakery, to follow my vocation of "dough puncher" for the benefit of this corps. There were two gangs of men, eight in each gang, under the charge of the foreman, Geo. W. Young, of the Seventh Rhode Island Volunteers, and we turned out from twelve to sixteen barrels of flour in bread every twelve hours, working very hard to do so, and receiving only the customary extra rations and forty cents per day extra pay.

Sunday, February 22d, the regiment was formed in a hollow square on the parade, and a new stand of National Colors was presented to us from the ladies of Rhode Island. A letter from the donors was read to us, alluding to our patriotic defense of the old colors with which we left the state, and charging us to follow this new one as faithfully. The colors and letter were received with many cheers, the color-guard took charge of their new ensign, and the parade was dismissed.

This new flag was a beautiful silk emblem of our national existence, of regulation size, and neatly inscribed with the words, "Roanoke Island, Newbern, Fort Macon, South Mountain, and Antietam," in letters of gold.

The old colors, shattered and torn with the storms of battle, and stained by the blood of its bearers, was carefully packed away and sent home to Rhode Island, to tell its silent story of our endeavors to uphold the honor of the state and the life of the Nation entrusted to us on our departure for the seat of war.

After about a month's experience in camp-life at this place, and its usual routine of guard and picket duty, things began to look like another move. The first and second divisions of our corps parted company from us, and left for the far West to operate under Burnside in connection with Grant's and Sherman's armies.

Thursday night, March 12th, our division, the third, received marching orders, and packing up, next day our regiment embarked on the steamer *Kitty Hudson*, which landed them at Norfolk, on their way to reënforce General Peck, at Suffolk, Va.

As when the regiment departed from this place before, so at this time, we were left at the bakery on detached service to follow up our regiment at the dictation of the post commander.

We had not long to wait, however, for on the 18th we received our extra pay, and were ordered to report to our respective commands at Suffolk. On the 20th, our little party of bakers took transportation for Suffolk, and arrived there (by easy stages) on the evening of the 22d.

Suffolk is a small village prettily situated on the banks of the Nansemond River, about twenty miles from Norfolk, at the junction of the Norfolk and Petersburg, and Seaboard and Roanoke Railroads. These roads run nearly parallel with each other from their terminus at Norfolk and Portsmouth to this place, and separated by about two miles of intervening swamp and woodland nearly the entire distance. Over these two roads our army received their supplies.

The town was of no special military importance except as a post of observation and protection to the two ports of Norfolk and Portsmouth. General Peck had been sent to command here during the September previous, with a force of about thirteen thousand men, and had labored unwearyingly to put it in a state of defense.

About the middle of March, Longstreet was found to be advancing against the place. Hence the orders for reënforcement; and our Third Division, Ninth Corps, Gen. George W. Getty commanding, was ordered from Newport News to his relief. New troops were also arriving daily from Washington and other points, and work was rapidly pushed forward on the fortifications surrounding the town.

Our regiment's camp was situated about a mile from the railroad station, and occupied a level piece of bare, clayey soil, which at every rainstorm became a thick, sticky mass of yellow mud. During our stay at this camp we passed through the usual reviews and inspections, and our hearts were gladdened by the appearance of the always welcome paymaster, and there being no deduction this time, he left us well filled purses. Sutlers received their usual patronage, cards were brought out again, and the state commissioner was on hand to take a part of our well-earned wages home to the wives and families.

April 10th orders came for us to move. We packed up, and leaving our tents standing, started down the river road about 8 o'clock in the evening. After marching along in the darkness for about six or eight miles, we left the road, turned in towards the river, and halted at a place on its banks opposite Hill's Point, where the left of the rebel army investing this place was supposed to lay.

It was now about half-past two in the morning. We stretched ourselves on the ground, got a couple of hours' sleep, and were aroused at daylight to get ready to throw up an earth-work at this place. The land here rose in steep bluffs from the river to the height of about thirty feet, and its bank being covered with a heavy growth of timber and brush, afforded an excellent spot for a masked battery, commanding the river and rebel line beyond.

After a hasty breakfast, we set at work with axes, picks,

and shovels, and by noon our fort began to show quite good proportions. The Thirteenth New Hampshire Regiment now came in to relieve us.

During the afternoon we rested as much as possible while they were at work, and as night closed down, made preparations to sleep, but were ordered in line again, and started back to camp, arriving there at half-past two next morning, and found the whole army under marching orders.

“The rebel Général Longstreet had now crossed the Black Water, the next stream north of the Nansemond, and was advancing on Suffolk with 40,000 men, with the intention of crossing and of cutting the railroad at or near Hill’s Point, where we had just erected the battery or fort above mentioned, thereby getting in rear of us, capturing or scattering our whole force, and then advancing on Norfolk and Portsmouth, which would fall an easy prey to his armies.

“General Peck deeming our half finished works an insecure barrier to the designs of Longstreet, sent to Admiral Lee at Hampton Roads for gun-boats, and they arrived just in time to prevent the enemy (who were now in overwhelming force on the other side of the river) from crossing.

“These formidable batteries moving up and down the river, kept up an incessant firing night and day, thus precluding any possible effort of the enemy to cross.”

Longstreet finding Peck prepared at every point to receive him, abandoned the attempt to take the place by surprise, and sat down before it in regular siege. “Planting batteries along the stream, he first endeavored to drive the gun-boats away or sink them. A fierce artillery fight followed, in which the gun-boats were riddled with shot, but Lieutenants Cushing and Lamson, who commanded the fleet, clung to the enemy’s batteries with a tenacity that nothing could shake loose.

“ General Getty, commanding the Third Division, Ninth Corps, held the line of the Nansemond, nine miles in length, and by his sleepless vigilance and skill kept Longstreet’s army from effecting a crossing. But on the 18th, the enemy succeeded in establishing a battery (opposite ours) at Hill’s Point, which threatened to drive the gun-boats off. But this strong earth-work was surprised and captured by a brilliant night attack made by 280 men of the Eighty-ninth New York and the Eighth Connecticut regiments. The garrison of 137 men, and five guns, were captured in this gallant assault. Longstreet now began to strengthen his defenses.”*

Owing to the close operations of the enemy, we were kept on the alert night and day for anything that might transpire, and supplied with two days’ rations and eighty rounds of ammunition constantly.

Sunday, April 12th, our beloved old colonel, W. H. P. Steere, arrived once more among us, having been away on sick leave since he received his wound at Antietam. How different his reception now from what it was that first day at Newport News! He was greeted with cheer upon cheer by the whole regiment, which, with smiles of joy upon their faces, hailed his advent among us with outstretched hands of welcome. He was yet very lame from the effects of his wound, and walked slowly by the aid of a cane.

Monday, 13th, we were routed out at four in the morning, and ordered away. At six we marched over to support a battery on the south side of the intrenched line, about a mile from camp, as the enemy was reported to be massing a strong force in front of that point. The day passed, however, with nothing unusual occurring.

At half-past two the next morning, Company B was turned out and set at work digging a magazine in the fort. We

* From Headley’s “ *The Great Rebellion.*”

worked till daylight, and were relieved by Company E. Thus, by strengthening the works, and lying in bivouac in rear of the breast-works during the intervals of our labor, we passed the time until April 20th.

At noon we received marching orders, and leaving the fort in charge of other troops, we marched down the river road to the fort opposite Hill's Point. After about an hour's rest we came back to camp. This was one of those military moves that seemed to accomplish nothing, and that none of us could account for, but probably there was a special reason for it somewhere.

The next day, at noon, we were ordered in line again, and started off in the same direction as yesterday, but striking the railroad, followed it down to the edge of the Great Dismal Swamp, about three miles from camp. A canal of dark red water ran along the edge of the swamp, finding its head in some lake or bayou in the midst of this wilderness, and its outlet in the Nansemond River.

It was believed to be passable by boats for several miles into the interior, and was probably used as a highway to some secret lurking place by runaway slaves in days gone by. Along its edge the bogs had formed at the foot of the trees, and by the unrestrained growth of years, had interlaced with the mould and roots in such a manner as to make quite a respectable footpath for some distance into the swamp.

We followed this path slowly, and in single file, for three or four miles, and at last reached the utmost limit of pedestrianism, and halted here till nearly evening, when we retraced our steps. It was thought there might be a road somewhere in the — to us — unknown recesses of the swamp whereby an enemy might get in the rear of us, and this move was made to investigate, and as a precautionary measure only.

On our return to solid footing once more, we proceeded

towards camp as far as Fort Halleck, a large earth-work commanding the railroad, and there halted. At about midnight we came back to camp.

By these various moves, which were participated in by other regiments, in various directions, it will be seen how constantly on the alert for a flank movement of the enemy we were kept during the progress of the siege.

When we lay down at night, we were liable to be turned out of our beds and started off on a "scout" in some direction, or to strengthen some weak point in the line, or to throw up an earth-work in some exposed position. No time was allotted to drill, or the usual camp exercises. With a vigilant and active enemy surrounding us on three sides, separated from us only by a small, narrow stream, outnumbering us two to one, and ready at any failure or lack of vigilance on our part to pounce his armed legions upon us, it was absolutely necessary that we kept ever ready to move from point to point, with the greatest celerity, either night or day, until this siege was raised.

We had now two days' rest in camp, which was much needed by all of us, and duly improved. Friday morning, our pickets on the south side of the line reported the enemy moving, and it was decided to reconnoiter in force in that direction to see what he was about.

At noon, two of our brigades with two batteries of artillery advanced toward the front, feeling our way cautiously along through the woods and open spaces. At a distance of two and a half miles from our works, our skirmishers struck a strong rebel picket line posted behind breast-works, extending as far as we could see down into the swamp on our left.

They stoutly resisted our advance, but our skirmish line being reënforced, and aided by a few rounds of shot and shell from our batteries, charged down upon them and drove them from their cover. The main line of battle halted

here and lay down, while the skirmishers scoured the woods and fields in front of us, but finding nothing further in the shape of an enemy, save the still retreating rebel pickets, they returned, and we were ordered back to camp.

A week passed with nothing unusual to mar the regular course of duties, and things were getting to be somewhat monotonous, relieved only by the arrival at Suffolk of the Eleventh Regiment Rhode Island Volunteers, nine month's men.

Of course we at once visited their camp, some two miles away, on the banks of the Nansemond River, and were glad to find among them many old-time friends and school-mates, and spent happy hours refreshing our memory of home life and talking over the good old times before the war. I found no less than twenty of my old friends and school-mates in this regiment. As a regiment, they were a fine looking body of men, but from the size of their knapsacks and the anxious look they occasionally cast over the river at the enemy's works, it was evident they needed a taste of gunpowder and the privations and hardships of a life in active service at the front, to transform them into *soldiers*.

Friday, May 1st, we broke camp, and marching about five miles down the road, went into bivouac for the night. The next day the teams brought down our tents, etc., and we made preparations for a permanent camp, being within supporting distance of our fort on the river bank, which was now finished and supplied.

It was now evident that Longstreet was about to raise the siege and was withdrawing his troops from this vicinity. A reconnoissance in force was therefore ordered, and on the evening of May 2d, the whole force occupying that portion of the line nearest the river was ordered to be in readiness to cross at a moment's notice.

Our regiment and the Twenty-first Connecticut holding the extreme right of our line, crossed to Hill's Point that

night in boats, and landed a boat howitzer. About the same time a foothold was gained by our forces further up the river. The next morning, May 3d, a general advance was ordered, and soon the line of the enemy opened its fire and the "ball" began.

The Twenty-first Connecticut, supported by our regiment, advanced against a piece of woods filled with the enemy, about half a mile from the river. A terrible fire met them, when the Twenty-first dropped their colors and retired. The old Fourth had been there before, and clearing themselves of the rush of the Twenty-first, bravely faced the storm. It was one regiment against twenty. We could not advance against such odds, being unsupported. Comrade Seagraves, of Company H, went forward and picked up the colors of the Twenty-first, and under orders, the regiment fell slowly back to the river where they halted, holding their position until dark, losing one killed and four wounded.

Without the protection of the gun-boats it is probable they would have been driven into the river, as the rebel force was found to exceed ours greatly, and would have tried to make another Ball's Bluff affair of it if they had not been stopped by the huge shell from the fleet. Soon after dark the recrossing of the troops commenced, and about midnight the regiment reached camp with a loss of six wounded in this battle or skirmish, two of whom died soon after. The writer being on guard duty at camp, did not participate in this fight, but has given as good an account of it as he has been able to obtain. If there *are* any mistakes, comrades, pass them over.

The result of this movement was the formal retreat that night of nearly the whole rebel force, thus effectually raising the siege of Suffolk.

Longstreet and his rebel horde now left this vicinity for Fredericksburg, to coöperate with Lee in his second invasion of Maryland.

May, 1863

CHAPTER XIII.

TO PORTSMOUTH, AND UP THE PENINSULA.

THE weather was now extremely hot. Thursday, May 14th, orders came to pack up, and at ten that morning we marched out, bag and baggage, on the Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad, and down the track towards Portsmouth. The sun poured its piercing rays down upon us, the dust rose in clouds around us, and the march soon became awful.

Halting at times, we sought the shade of the woods near by, and wondered why it was we should travel in the heat of the day, when we could accomplish twice the distance in the cool hours of the night in much the same time and with ten times as much comfort.

We had accomplished about five miles of our journey, when we were overtaken by a heavy thunder shower, which drenched us to the skin, but cooled the air, laid the dust, and made the march much more agreeable. When about ten miles had been tallied, we turned in to the right of the railroad, and about a mile farther on encamped.

Hastily stripping our weary shoulders of their heavy load of knapsack, haversack, canteen, gun, and equipments, we put about to build a fire and cook our scanty supper, and after gathering a few armfuls of pine boughs for a bed, we turned in for the night.

As the cheerful music of the reveille sounded through the groves and fields next morning, we reluctantly turned out to roll-call, and were then ordered to lay out our camp for permanent occupation. After breakfast we set at work, and with axes cut down poles, crotches, etc., suitable to raise our tents three feet from the ground, and to provide them with bunks to sleep in.

We labored hard all that hot day, and by night had the prettiest camp we had seen in a long time. Now we could rest from our weary campaign of the last two months, and feeling that we stood a pretty fair sight of enjoying camp-life for some time, we went to sleep that night happy and contented, in our new quarters, so nice and cool.

The next morning we busied ourselves in putting the finishing touches on our new quarters, when suddenly "Pack up, pack up," was heard, "Strike tents, and get into line here." Alas! our beautiful camp. All our labor and pains-taking had been in vain. Down came our arbors and tents, etc., in a hurry, and with a vengeance, and we shouldered our baggage and started on again about noon, the hottest part of the day, of course. Striking the railroad, we headed towards Portsmouth again, and marching along at route-step through the heat and dust of that sultry afternoon, sunset found us at a point four miles distant from Portsmouth, when we turned in to the left of the railroad and encamped.

Here we were informed we should at last find rest for the soles of our feet. A new line of fortifications were to be constructed for the defense of Norfolk and Portsmouth at this place, extending from the Nansemond River to a point beyond the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad. On the strength of this information, we began to prepare our quarters for a permanent residence. We built up our tents three feet high, having an arbor in front, supplied with rude seats and a table, and soon were taking as much comfort as was permitted a soldier to take in this hot country.

Soon after our quarters were completed we began work, throwing up a large fort on the south side of the railroad and near our camp. On account of the excessive heat, (the thermometer dancing around between eighty and 120 degrees most of the time,) we could labor but four hours per day, from five in the morning until nine.

The rest of the day was spent lying under the shade of our brush arbors, or strolling about among the neighboring farms, picking up what we could to replenish our larder.

Blackberries were very plenty and large. Night expeditions were organized for raids upon the neighboring potato fields, which would go out after roll-call, at 9 o'clock and return about midnight, loaded down with sweet potatoes and other vegetables; and though the old farmers would watch their fields all night with dog and gun, yet the boys generally outwitted the old men and got what they went after without being discovered.

Every comrade who was there will call to mind these happy days of our soldier life, and the many comical scrapes we got into while we lay here in camp, but by which we were enabled to live on the fat of the land at the expense of these old "bushwhackers," who would gladly have blown us out of existence if they could, for the equal benefit of their crops and their beloved Confederacy.

June 4th we began to build a line of stockade, extending from the fort towards the river, and just in rear of our camp. Piles were cut in the woods near by, sharpened at one end, hauled in, and planted in the ground so that the top reached a height of eight feet from the ground. They were set snug and close together, and crevices or loop-holes were made between them, about three feet apart, and at the height of four feet, for the use of the infantry, to fire through.

This we thought at the time to be an insurmountable bar-

rier to an enemy, presenting, as it did, to its defenders the advantage of being almost impervious to bullets, while we could maintain a constant fire upon the enemy through the loop-holes. But in our after experience, we learned how weak and futile they would have proved had we been attacked by the enemy in force. Though we had seen many long months of hard service in front of the enemy, we had much of the science of war yet to learn.

Wednesday, June 17th, we celebrated the battle of Bunker Hill by a flag raising in camp. A high flag-staff had been erected on the parade in front of Colonel Steere's headquarters, a large and beautiful flag provided, the services of the Thirteenth New Hampshire Band brought into requisition, and amid much cheering, music, and enthusiasm, the old Stars and Stripes floated out above us. After the exercises were over, at the invitation of Colonel Steere, we marched up to his quarters, and received a treat of lemonade, very nice, but without the "stick." It was no less acceptable, however, and giving old Father Steere three rousing cheers, we went back to our quarters to take up the usual duties of the day,

Preparations now began for another move. The work on the fortifications was pushed forward with the greatest celerity, and extra forces of troops and contrabands were put to work along the line to hurry up matters.

On the 19th, the first gun, a heavy thirty-two pound siege gun, was mounted on the fort, and others soon occupied their respective places.

On the 21st we received marching orders. At midnight the long roll was beat, and arousing from our slumbers, in response to its alarm, we packed our knapsacks, filled our haversacks with three days' rations, and leaving our tents standing until we came back under care of the convalescents and the usual force of non-combatants,—who some-

how or other, always avoid a move of this kind,—we started down the railroad towards Portsmouth.

We were well provided with shelter tents and everything for a raid in some direction. General Lee had begun his annual excursion into Maryland and Pennsylvania, and was now on his way up the Shenandoah Valley, followed by the Army of the Potomac on his right flank. For this grand invasion, he had gathered all his available troops this side of South Carolina, determined to pursue his march even to and possibly over the walls of Washington, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, leaving but a small force to garrison the rebel capital, and a long line of communications in the rear reaching from Harper's Ferry to Richmond. It was decided to move our little army up the peninsula, to cut his communications, threaten Richmond, and, if possible, oblige him to weaken his forces or stay his movements, thus giving the Army of the Potomac time and advantage.

We arrived in Portsmouth at half-past three the next morning, and together with the Thirteenth New Hampshire Regiment, went aboard the steamer *Maple Leaf*. After we were all aboard, the lines were cast off and we steamed away, crossing Hampton Roads, out past Fort Monroe, and up the Chesapeake to York River, and landed at Yorktown about ten in the morning.

As this was a place of some importance during the Revolutionary War, as well as the present great Rebellion, it deserves more than a passing notice. Situated upon a high bluff that rises abruptly from the river,—commanding a wide view of the river and bay beyond, and being easy of access to our troops inland, a better place for a base of our operations could not well be found.

Here it was that Cornwallis surrendered to General Washington. The house which the former used as his headquarters was still standing, and also the tree under

which it was said he delivered up his sword. (How is it that a big surrender is always made under a tree?) These were objects of great interest to our troops, who looked upon them with reverent awe. The old line of works thrown up by our forefathers of that memorable campaign that decided the fate of our young Republic, was still visible in places, though almost worn level by the ravages of time.

The spring where our patriot fathers quenched their thirst still ran as clearly and fell as cheerfully to supply *our* army with its never failing treasure of pure, sweet water. What patriotic sentiments animated our hearts as we gazed upon these time-worn relics of our country's struggle for liberty and independence. Here had our forefathers, "though few in number, but of dauntless courage and unwavering constancy to their cause and to each other," toiled and fought day and night upon this very ground, to complete that beautiful structure of universal liberty which we, their sons, in their footsteps and over their decaying ashes, were now striving to perpetuate.

But our enemies of to-day were heavier in numbers and better versed in the science of war, and had built for the defense of this place, a long and intricate line of intrenchments extending entirely across the peninsula from the York to the James rivers, and at each end had heaped up batteries and forts of immense strength.

"Special attention had been given them by the rebels from the outset of the war. They knew it was the most direct route to Richmond and hence had made them, as they supposed, impregnable. Mounted with heavy guns, fronted with rifle-pits, and easy of access to the whole rebel force in Virginia, they presented a most formidable appearance."

Here were also the works that McClellan had built to facilitate his contemplated assault, a move which the evacuation of the place by the rebels fortunately made unnec-

cessary. Across the river lay the town of Gloucester, also strongly fortified by the rebels.

Troops were arriving from Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Fort Monroe every day, and going into camp around us. The Eleventh Rhode Island Regiment arrived a couple of days later, and encamped near by. Their nine months' service was about ended, and they were anxious to return home before this general move up the peninsula should begin. It would not do, however, to let them go before giving them a taste of "peninsular dust," and the next morning they were routed out earlier than usual, packed up, and started on the road towards Williamsburg. It was an awful hot day, and about 10 o'clock in the morning we saw them come straggling back to camp in squads of two to six, covered with dust, sweating, puffing, and blowing, bewailing their hard fate, and determined not to march another step for Uncle Sam or any other man, unless it was toward home. Towards night the remainder of the regiment arrived back in camp, and a few days after embarked for home.

Thursday, June 25th, we again received marching orders. At three the next morning reveille was sounded, we broke camp, and marching down to the landing, embarked on board the steamer *Peconic*. At seven we left the wharf and sailed up the York River, in company with the rest of the troops, and landed at the White House, on the Pamunkey River, at about 5 o'clock that afternoon. Marching up about half a mile from the river, we encamped near the Richmond and York River Railroad.

This place was made famous as a base of supplies for McClellan's army during the disastrous Peninsular Campaign. Government buildings had been erected and large amounts of forage, subsistence, and ammunition were stored here, until the retreat necessitated their destruction.

During the general destruction of stores at that time, the long and high trestle bridge that crossed the river near by was fired by our troops, and a railroad train loaded with supplies was started and sent along at full speed towards the burning bridge, reaching which, the whole train plunged through to the river below. The bridge had been repaired since by the rebels, but the wreck of the locomotive and train still lay below it in the stream. The railroad track had been torn up, but was speedily restored to its former uses.

Having received orders to get ready to move again, on Wednesday, July 1st, at six in the morning we started, crossed the railroad bridge, and struck off on the turnpike road. There were in this command about ten or twelve thousand troops, including cavalry, artillery, and infantry, under command of Maj.-Gen. John A. Dix, Gen. Geo. W. Getty second in command of the expedition.

The day was extremely hot, and the boys, unable to bear any extra load on their shoulders through the hot sand and dust, began at each successive halt to relieve their knapsacks of all superfluous matter. First, overcoats or blankets were cast away; then followed clothing of various kinds, and for miles the road was strewn with these articles, which proved a god-send to the colored people, poor whites, or "bushwackers," residing along the line of march, who gathered them up after we had passed by.

At evening we reached a place called King William's Court House, and passing on about a mile the other side, halted, and encamped for the night. There was a large field close by, filled with stacks of straw, and the men of the whole command at once made a raid on it, each one carrying a bundle to his quarters, for a bed to lie on.

The owner of the straw entered a complaint against us to the general. That officer sent orders to each regiment

to return the straw to the place where they found it, which was done, and piled up in one vast heap, in the middle of the field. But before morning some of our comrades, in revenge for the loss of their bed, set the pile on fire, and it was all burnt up, much to the satisfaction of the whole force, and the great chagrin of the owner. Pigs, sheep, and poultry were in abundance here, and many a camp kettle that night contained a savory mess of provisions.

At three the next morning we were routed out, and had scarcely time to cook our coffee when "Fall in" was heard, and again we took the dusty road. The blood-red sun, as it rose in the heavens, shed its fiercest rays upon us. Man and beast suffered alike, but still the long line stretched on through heat and dust, scarcely halting five minutes at a time for rest, till in many cases, the men gave way under the excessive heat and fatigue, and began to fall out of the line, hide in the woods from the searching eyes of the rear guard, and follow up in the cool of the day as they were best able.

Several houses were plundered and set on fire by parties of stragglers, whose only excuse for loitering behind was mischief. That night we halted within three miles of Newcastle, and only fifteen from Richmond, in a direct line.

Scarcely had we got asleep, after our weary day's journey, when at half past two in the morning, we were again turned out to resume our march. The line was formed without giving us any chance to make coffee, and there we stood in line for three hours with all our traps buckled on, waiting the order to "Forward."

At 6 o'clock it was given, and we stretched out on the road again.

The suffering of the day before was now renewed and intensified. The heat was more severe, not a breath of air

was stirring, the dust kicked up by our feet hung in stifling clouds around us, and the line moved quicker than yesterday. Before noon it was evident that whoever led the line knew not, or cared not, for the condition of his troops following. Scores upon scores fell out, unable to proceed a step further without rest. Some of the poor fellows traveled as long as they could endure the heat, and then dropped dead in their tracks. Six of the Tenth New Hampshire were reported to have died that day from sunstroke. I myself counted over fifty cases of sunstroke in the space of a few miles, but whether they proved fatal or not, I never knew.

Between two and three thousand men were straggling along the road, unable to keep pace with the line, and in some cases whole companies left the line and filed into the adjacent woods to rest, and wait for the cool hours of evening to resume their terrible march. The line at last halted on the road, within eight miles of Richmond.

We now expected to move directly on the rebel capital. What was to hinder us? Nothing but a small force of provost guards, 1,500 in number, over whose works we could easily and gladly advance.

Everything was reported to be in a state of alarm and confusion in the city, owing to its defenseless condition and the near presence of our army. Thousands of poor prisoners at Libby, Castle Thunder, and Belle Isle were waiting and hoping for our appearance on the morrow. To liberate them, and escort them back down the peninsula would be well worthy our attempt, and we talked the matter over around our camp-fires that night, forgetting our tired limbs and blistered feet in our eagerness to get within the walls of that rebel city, if for only an hour.

The band of our brigade, inspired by the hopes of the coming day, cheered us with its sweet music, and we fell asleep to dream out our plans for the capture of Richmond.

The next morning we cheerfully arose, ate our frugal breakfast, and started with a light step out on the road towards the rebel city. A guide-board was passed which read "*Seven miles to Richmond,*" and our spirits rose accordingly. About a mile farther, and we observed the head of the line leading off at right angles with the road, in a northerly direction. What did that mean? Perhaps we were going into line of battle, and advance the rest of the way in that manner, by brigade or regimental front.

But no, the line kept on, still going northward; on, on, still *away* from the rebel stronghold, still away from our thousands of prisoners, until we were obliged to believe that this war had not lasted *long* enough to suit some people. Not enough money had been made out of it. Not enough military reputation had been acquired by some shoulder-strapped authority. Not enough blood had been spilt to satisfy some one, and therefore, even if our leader was ready enough to make the attempt, he had no orders to enter Richmond, *only to threaten it*. This was the case several times during the war.

The severity of heat and travel were again experienced as on the two former days, but night found us at Pamunkey River bridge, and there we halted. A battery of artillery and a force of infantry and cavalry was now sent ahead to Hanover Junction, a short distance away, at the intersection of the Virginia Central, and Richmond and Fredericksburg railroads to destroy the track, etc.

Having accomplished their object with but little resistance, they returned before morning, and after burning the bridge over the river, we started on the back track, halting at a distance of five miles.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon we fell in line again and resumed our retreat. It was decided, for the benefit of the troops and to conceal our movements from the enemy

(who could easily discern them by the clouds of dust accompanying us), to march during the cool hours of the night. This was a wise plan, and if it had been observed during our advance would have saved valuable lives and much suffering and sickness.

At five we started, and marched mile upon mile without a halt. Horses dropped dead now from excessive fatigue, but still the men kept on, their hats in their hands, the night air keeping their heads cool, until about twelve miles had been passed, when the bugles sounded the "halt and rest."

And now another source of suffering presented itself. No water was to be found. Instead of sitting down and resting their aching limbs during the halt, most of the men were chasing over the hills and fields in search of water to quench their burning thirst, engendered by the dust of the road.

Every canteen was dry. All the brooks were dry. No large stream or pond could be found. At last an old well was discovered, and was speedily surrounded by a crowd of men, struggling, fighting, climbing over one another's backs, for a chance to get a drink.

Meanwhile the line started on again, and marching about six miles farther went into bivouac.

A short rest, and the next morning saw us again on the road. But this day's march was easier, and at night we reached King William's Court House. As we crossed the hills that day we could plainly observe a huge cloud of dust rising along the roads behind us, about ten miles away, marking the course of a large body of rebel cavalry who were following us; but our retreat had been too rapid for them and our rear guard suffered no attack.

As it had been raining all the afternoon, we were forced to lie on the wet ground that night. The next morning at sunrise, we again started for the White House, and arrived there about noon and encamped. But our rest here was of

short duration and the very next day we again took the road to Yorktown. This road, part of the way, was a corduroy, built by McClellan's forces during the Peninsular Campaign, and was not in the best condition for traveling.

Soon after we started, a heavy shower of rain fell, and in fifteen minutes had converted our road into a series of pond holes, broken logs, and mud, through which we floundered and stuck, and swore, and struggled on for about ten miles, when we halted and encamped. The artillery sank to the hubs. Wagons got set fast in these holes, and some were obliged to be left and set on fire. By night most of the teams had got through the slough, and we were ready to start on again.

The next day, Thursday, the sun rose bright and warm, the mud speedily dried up, and we paced along the road till twenty miles had been passed, and again halted for the night. Tired and footsore, it was with great reluctance, and stiffened limbs, that we again took the road on the following morning. We soon reached and passed through Williamsburg.

“This town is twelve miles west of Yorktown and fifty-eight from Richmond, and is situated in the midst of a plain, nearly midway in the peninsula. Two roads lead to it from Yorktown, one near the York and the other near the James River, these rivers being about ten miles apart at this place.” It was the scene of a heavy battle soon after the evacuation of Yorktown.

Passing through the place and across the battle-field, we kept on our weary way until evening, arriving at Yorktown at 6 o'clock, and camped in the same place we occupied before leaving here.

Transportation was now provided for all those who, by reason of sore feet or sickness, were unable to march any farther. Quite a number from each regiment but ours

was permitted to avail themselves of this opportunity, but for some reason *our* sick and lame were obliged to foot it the remainder of the march. A few of them, notwithstanding orders to the contrary, fell out soon after we started, and reporting to the officer on duty at the boat, were promptly furnished with transportation and food to Portsmouth, arriving at our old camp at the same time as the regiment.

The rest of the line plodded along the road again, heading for Fortress Monroe. Arriving there, they took steamer for Portsmouth and arrived in camp Monday evening, July 13th. We had been gone from camp twenty-two days, had marched from the White House to Hanover Junction, and back to Fortress Monroe, a distance of 156 miles, in ten days, on the road, under the piercing rays of a boiling hot sun, through clouds of dust, with scarcely a good square meal at any time, and with but little rest or refreshment.

We were pretty well tired out, and the next day were allowed "off duty" and to lie still in camp and rest, which privilege was duly improved by all of us.

We had come back with a great deal lighter burden than when we started, not having any clothes but those we had on, and no blanket or overcoat, having been forced to cast them away in order to relieve our shoulders of every ounce of extra weight possible. But fortunately for us, we found means to procure others in their place without expense a day or two after our arrival back in camp, a full account of which will be found in the next chapter.

July, 1863.

CHAPTER XIV.

BOWERS' HILL.

AFTER a few days' rest, we received orders to move camp inside the line of stockade. A regiment of New York troops, lately arrived out, having held this line while we were upon our late raid, now received orders to march.

They were well provided with all the comforts they could stow away in their knapsacks, and consequently the latter were of prodigious size. As during our late exhaustive march on the peninsula we had been forced to part with most of our worldly goods, and were in great need of blankets, overcoats, and clothing, we thought it advisable to follow up these huge knapsacks a mile or two, confident the bearers thereof would soon have to lighten them owing to the extreme heat of the day.

Before they left the camp we passed around among them, begging all the extra blankets, etc., that they could not carry, but they being somewhat fresh in the service and its requirements, supposed they were not to go far, and were not very willing to give away their traps.

It was amusing to witness the heavy loads they provided for themselves. The following is a summary of one man's load: In and upon his knapsack were closely packed one

overcoat, two woolen blankets, one rubber blanket, one shelter tent, one dress coat, one pair of pants, undershirt and drawers, fatigue cap, and two pairs of socks. His haversack contained three days' rations of meat and hard-tack, vinegar, box of sugar and coffee, box of salt and pepper, can of condensed milk, butter, cheese, and cookies, tin plate, cup, etc. Attached to his knapsack was a large frying-pan.

This man was the cobbler of his company, and an extra haversack contained leather, shoe hammer, and kit of tools. We watched him get ready to start. He had packed everything snugly away but his lapstone. This indispensable article was a good-sized pavement of perhaps five or six pounds. As rocks was a scarce article in this part of the country, it would not do to leave that. After seeking in vain for a place to stow it away, he appealed to several of his comrades to carry it for him "just the length of a moile, divil a bit more," promising to tap their shoes free of charge forever after.

But all his persuasions were in vain, and at length came the order "Fall in, men."

As a last resort, he accosted the captain's colored servant with a smiling "Wad ye plaze, now," but that individual replied only by an indignant roll of his eyes, and walked away.

"To the divil wid yez all, thin," Pat exclaimed, "I'll carry it meself," and emptying his haversack of a third of his rations of hard-tack, he thrust in the heavy stone, and shouldering his huge knapsack by the aid of a comrade, he grasped his rifle, and took his place in line.

Extraordinary as this may seem, it is no exaggeration, and with the exception of his lapstone and kit of tools, he carried no more than most of the comrades of his regiment.

They at length moved off the field and down the road

leading to Portsmouth. Quite a number of our boys followed them, and not in vain, for at their first halt, some two miles from camp, many of them lightened their heavy loads, and willingly gave away blankets, etc., with which our boys soon returned to camp. We were thus supplied with the much needed "dry goods," and could furnish our quarters with good beds and covering.

Wednesday, July 15th, was occupied in moving our camp inside of the line of stockade and fixing up our quarters permanently, as it was understood we should finish and garrison this line of works. This work occupied several days, at the end of which we again took our shovels and picks for labor on the fortifications. During our late raid a large force of contrabands had been at work on the fort near the railroad, and had nearly finished it.

Our brigade was therefore detailed to fell the woods for a space of three or four hundred yards in front of the line, and to build a line of breast-works running from the aforesaid fort southeasterly some two miles, and connecting with Fort Reno on our left.

Shouldering our axes each morning, we marched out to the edge of the woods, and soon the cheerful click of the axeblades, and the swaying and crashing fall of the tall pine trees, attested the result of our labors. These great trees were allowed to remain as they fell, in order to impede the advance of an enemy, and lay him open to a scathing fire from our works.

Wednesday, July 29th, the fort was completed, the flag hoisted thereon, and the heavy guns of its armament woke the echoes in the old Dismal Swamp and surrounding country as they saluted the name of Fort Rodman, in honor of our late colonel and general.

The fort mounted eleven guns of large calibre, and was garrisoned by a regiment of heavy artillery.

The hot season was now upon us, but with the advantage of our cool, shady arbors over and in front of our tents, we managed to live quite comfortably. What, with the usual routine of inspections, guard duty, chopping, and building breast-works, the time passed quickly on, and brought us to September 6th, the beginning of my third year in the armies of the United States.

Upon this day we were mustered for general inspection and review, after which we were assigned our position in line of battle at the breast-works, and received orders bearing upon the same, of which the following is a synopsis :

“In case of an attack a signal gun will be fired from either fort. The troops commanding the line will immediately muster at their respective stations in line of battle at the works, without any delay or waiting for the usual company formation in camp, there to receive further orders.”

Thus, if in the dead of the night, or at any time, the signal should be fired, every man would at once repair to his position by the shortest route and in the quickest time possible.

Our regiment was first assigned to the defense of Fort Rodman; but after its occupation by the heavy artillery, we were posted along the line of breast-works to the left of the fort.

The line of works, now nearly completed, presented an effectual barrier to an advancing enemy, but yet was devoid of many obstructions in its front that subsequent experience in fortifying deemed necessary.

Forts of large size, and mounting guns of huge calibre, were stationed every mile or so, with numerous redans, or “baby forts,” interspersed between, for the accommodation of field artillery; and the breast-works connecting these were solidly made, and protected in front by a line of abatis, in which an enemy would get seriously entangled

in an attempt to advance against us, while constantly receiving a galling fire from our works.

We now expected an opportunity of testing our works in earnest, as we received a report of the advance of a large rebel force near Suffolk, in our front. Work was pushed forward, strengthening the lines, night and day, and getting everything ready to give them a warm reception should they conclude to pay us a visit; but they moved off in another direction, thus saving us a little ammunition, and themselves the opportunity of getting hurt somewhat.

And now an enemy of a different stamp made its appearance in our midst. Diphtheria prevailed. Many were afflicted with sore throats, and several died of this fell disease.

Wednesday, August 26th, Companies I and D were detailed to garrison the first two redans at the right of Fort Rodman.

Thursday, August 27th, our first detail of eighty men and officers, went out to a place called Bowers' Hill on picket duty. As this is one of the conspicuous places in our soldier life, perhaps it will be well to give a short description of it.

Bowers' Hill, a barely perceptible rise of ground, was situated on the line of the Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad, about three and a half miles in front of our camp, and about seven miles from Portsmouth, the terminus of the road. The village was composed of a few straggling farm-houses, at the junction of a road, or cart path, running at right angles with the railroad, and extending from the river Nansemond to the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad. On this cross-road our picket lines were established.

At the extreme right of the line, some one and a half miles from the railroad, stood an old mill on the banks of a stream, now nearly dry. Just beyond were located a few

houses, mostly of the better class of farmers. This place was called Wright's Mills. It was pleasantly situated, but all of the neighbors were of a thorough rebel stripe, devoted to agriculture through the day, and *Confederaculture* during the night, or in other words, "bushwhackers." At the old mill were stationed a lieutenant, sergeant, two corporals, and fourteen men, with orders to guard all approaches to the mill bridge, and allow no one to go out beyond the post in the day time without a proper pass, and in no case at night.

There was but one post between this and the railroad. On the railroad, occupying log huts for barracks, was stationed the reserve picket, composed of the officer of the day, officer of the guard, lieutenant, sergeant, two corporals, and about thirty men. To the left of the railroad, still following the cart path, the pickets were stationed about every eighth of a mile, from three to five men on each post, extending nearly to the Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad, two miles away.

In front of the reserve, about a mile out on the railroad, was stationed the outpost, consisting of lieutenant, sergeant, two corporals, and sixteen men. These held possession of a small piece of open land, just at the edge of the great swamp, and took up their quarters in a couple of log shanties, formerly occupied by some poor white or colored "pusson."

Still further in front, some three or four miles, a line of cavalry outposts was stationed, to warn us in case of an advance or movement in our front. And now that our picket line is established, we will go back to camp and follow up events in their proper order.

Monday, September 28th, it was decided to move camp once more, that we might be nearer our place in line of battle at the works. A place was selected across the rail-

road, nearly opposite our present camp, and but for its proximity to a neighboring mud-hole, might have been a very good place to locate. The ground being duly staked out and cleared of brush, etc.; Wednesday, October 7th, we moved across, and then began another week's work of sawing, hammering, and digging, to put it in proper shape. As the season was now well advanced and the rays of the sun somewhat less piercing, the necessity of brush arbors, etc., had passed, and winter quarters were made by boarding up a foundation for our tents four feet high, and providing them with fire-places and chimneys made of sticks and mud, and topped off with an old barrel. Bunks were fitted up inside the tent, and very comfortable quarters were thus provided against the cold blasts of the coming winter.

Target practice by the garrison at the different forts was indulged in daily, and at such times we were required to muster at the works and practice with blank cartridge, blazing away as if our lives depended upon it, at the invisible enemy in our front. This, while it accustomed us to our expected work in case of an attack, also furnished us with the agreeable (?) task of washing our rifles every day, and was appreciated accordingly.

Details of pickets were regularly sent up to Bowers' Hill. The writer's experience in this duty may be summed up by relating an incident or two that occurred during our turn of picket at this place. Arrived at our reserve post one fine morning, after our three-mile tramp from headquarters, it was my fortune to be among those selected to relieve the post on the extreme right, at Wright's Mills. Shouldering our rifles, we again moved on for another mile and a half to our post, and relieved the old guard waiting to receive us, after which we began preparations to spend the next three days on duty here as

comfortably as possible. One man was posted on the bridge and another at the forks of the road just beyond. At this post, No. 2, was a junction of two roads, one taking a course nearly due west and the other southwest, both leading off into the country beyond.

Our first day passed off quietly. We were kept quite busy examining passes for all who were obliged to pass our lines, and the contents of their various vehicles. This class of people were mostly old farmers residing in the vicinity, and who would go into the markets of Portsmouth and Norfolk to dispose of their farm truck.

It was necessary for them to obtain permission of the officer in charge of the reserve post to pass through the lines. That officer, after searching their teams for mail-matter or anything "contraband of war," and, if things looked suspicious, their clothes also,—for these people would not scruple to convey letters or dispatches through the lines if they found a way to do it,—would grant them a written pass. At our outpost they would again be subjected to a thorough search, and if all right, could go on to their homes. After sunset no one was allowed to pass outside the lines. Understanding this, they would all be over by the middle of the afternoon.

During the night an additional post was stationed in our rear a short distance, at a little cart path leading off into the forest. Besides serving as a protection against a flank attack, it gave us a chance to turn out to receive the grand rounds, they being obliged to pass that sentry before reaching us. The first night of my picket duty here I met with an adventure which brought me in an unpleasant contact with the grand rounds. During the visit of the officer of the day that morning, (a major, I believe, of some Massachusetts regiment lately arrived from a long encampment in North Carolina,) we observed that he was about "three

sheets in the wind," and that by the time of his coming at midnight on the grand rounds, would doubtless be full (or fool) enough to attempt some kind of "monkey work" with the pickets.

It was my fortune to be corporal of the relief at the hour he made his appearance, shortly before midnight. He was accompanied by a sergeant only, and doubtless had shared his "commissary" with him, as both were making considerable noise coming down the road. Reaching our sentry in the rear he was challenged as usual, and passed without any trouble, and on they came at a sharp canter towards us. As corporal of the relief, it was my duty to challenge all comers at night, and stepping to the middle of the road. I sang out, "Halt! Who goes there?" "Grand rounds." came the reply. "Halt, grand rounds! advance, sergeant, and give the countersign." And now through the gloom I descried suspicious movements on the part of both horsemen, and plainly heard the officer say in a low tone to the sergeant, "Run him down, sergeant; run the d—n fool down." But I was ready for him. Down came the sergeant, spurring his horse to a dead run. "Halt!" I cried. "Halt, or I'll fire!" but before I could bring my rifle to an aim, he was close upon me. Coming to a "charge bayonet," I gave a quick thrust at him across the horse's neck. The horse reared and sprang to one side, and his rider fell to the ground. In an instant I was upon him; and demanded his surrender. More frightened than hurt, he arose from the ground and gave me the countersign. "What in the d—l were you trying to do, sergeant?" I asked. "I was ordered to run over you," he replied. "Think yourself lucky you got off so easy," I remarked, "and don't try that on any one again." I then ordered "Advance, rounds," and took my place in line with the rest of the guard, who had watched the whole proceeding.

The officer came forward to the post, reeling in his saddle, and overflowing with rage at being baffled in his little game, and, of course, had much fault to find with every body. He was taken to task by our lieutenant, and could not deny that his orders to the sergeant to run the post were illegal, and would not have been given in a sober state of mind, and after a great deal of swearing and blustering, he rode off. The next morning a messenger from the reserve post told us that he tried the same thing on the left of our lines and was fired at twice, but with good luck had escaped getting hurt. But he found that the Fourth Rhode Island was too old in the service to be trifled with, and it is safe to say that he never cared to trouble our pickets again. The rest of the night passed off without further adventure, and also the next day.

The next night about 11 o'clock, two of our cavalry pickets came in from the front on a dead run, and reaching our post they reported that a large body of rebel cavalry was advancing in this direction, about five miles away. The rest of our cavalry pickets were slowly falling back towards us, observing the enemy's movements.

Our lieutenant immediately dispatched one of the cavalrymen to the reserve post for orders and reënforcements, and we advanced and formed a skirmish line just beyond our Post No. 2, crossing the road on which the rebels were advancing.

All prepared for the emergency, we lay behind a fence peering out through the darkness to catch the first glimpse of our retreating cavalry pickets and their rebel followers. For an hour we lay here. The night was chilly. The stars looked down in silent majesty from on high, and save the low murmuring of the stream in rear of us at the bridge, no sound was heard to break the stillness of the midnight hour.

At length we heard the tramp of men and horses in our rear, denoting the arrival of our reënforcements, and our two cavalry-men silently advanced out on the road to the front, and were soon out of sight. We at length descried a party of horsemen approaching, who, after answering the challenge of our sentry, proved to be a party of our cavalry pickets. They reported the enemy's cavalry as having turned off in another direction, and we should probably hear no more from them; and with this information the necessity for our line of battle ceased, the troops from the reserve retired to their post, the cavalry left us for the front again, and our pickets resumed their former station and watch. Not a shot had been fired, and the enemy, probably upon a scout or foraging expedition, had not dreamed how near they had come to our lines, or how many Yankee eyes had been watching all their movements. Nothing further occurred during our stay here worth recording, and at the end of our three days' campaign we were duly relieved and marched back to camp.

During a subsequent tour of picket duty on this line, another incident occurred to show, in this case, how easy a body of men may be deceived in the night while watching closely for an enemy.

This time I was one of a party consisting of lieutenant, sergeant, two corporals, and sixteen men, and was sent out to relieve the out-post on the railroad. Here the track crossed an arm of the great Dismal Swamp. On one side of the road-bed stood two log huts, the former homes of some poor white or colored people. These huts were used by us for quarters. Near to the track stood a small shed. In front, upon the track, Post No. 1 was located. About a hundred yards in the rear of Post No. 1 there was a bridge supporting the track over a small stream. At this place Post No. 2 was stationed. On the other side of the track,

opposite the log huts, a strip of thick woodland extended into the recesses of the Great Swamp. For the first hundred yards or so in this direction the ground was solid and dry. Here we came to a cart path running parallel with the railroad, and crossing it beyond the bridge. Beyond the cart path was a wilderness of water, trees of giant growth, interlaced with vines and rank vegetation, extending back for miles,

“Thro’ tangled juniper, beds of weeds,
Thro’ moss and fern, where the serpent feeds,
And man’s foot ne’er trod before.”

Wild beasts, panthers, bears, serpents of all kinds and some of enormous size, wild birds, and every creeping thing that finds a home in this climate, here obtained their livelihood, untroubled by their common enemy—man. In the still hours of our night watch, on the edge of this dark wilderness, we could plainly hear the howls and screeches of these wild denizens of the forest, holding their nightly revels far away in the deep recesses of the swamp. We could sometimes see snakes twining among the branches of the trees near the outskirts of the swamp, and black snakes from ten to fifteen feet long are often met with in the low marshes near the border. These are comparatively harmless, gliding noiselessly away at the approach of a footstep. The fatal hoop-snake is an inhabitant of this region, together with its *confrere*, the copper-head, one of which we encountered in our camp and killed.

Scorpion lizards are very plentiful, and these little fellows were often found under the blankets of the men, where they would crawl during the night for a warm and comfortable repose.

The hoot of the owl, the whirr of the night-hawk, the moan of the wild bear, accompanied by the howls and

screeches of various other wild animals in this "Great American Menagerie," formed the music by which the midnight sentry paced his lonely beat. And now having given an idea of our surroundings, I will return to the incident before mentioned.

The first day of our three days' tour of picket duty at this place, we spent the time mostly in viewing our situation and surroundings, and trading with the neighboring farmers. During the afternoon an "officer of the day," with whom none of us were acquainted, and who was evidently as much a stranger to this section of the country, visited us. His inquiries about the place, the situation, number, and orders of the post, were very definite. Ordinarily we should not have paid much attention to this fact, but he acted in such a strange manner that our suspicions were aroused that he was not what he seemed. He shortly left us, however, and nothing further occurring to strengthen our doubts and fears that day, we thought no more of it.

After supper and the usual accompaniment of pipe smoking and story telling, the posts were set, the strictest orders given, and we that were off duty for the time being, stretched ourselves on the floor of the log huts, and rolling our blankets around us, were soon oblivious to all our surroundings.

At 10 o'clock I was aroused to relieve the posts on duty, having done which, I returned to the hut and sat down by the fire for a smoke, going out occasionally to see that everything was all right and to have a confidential chat with my chum, Archie Williams, who was stationed at Post No. 1.

On one of these occasions, about half past eleven, I had scarcely got back to the quarters when I heard in a low voice, "Corporal of the guard, Post 1." Snatching my rifle I stepped out, but was surprised to see Post 1 taking cover

behind the tool-house by the side of the track. As I approached, he, by signals with his hand, bade me be cautious and keep low. I instantly dropped to the ground and creeping swiftly along, stood up beside him and demanded to know why all this was thus. He bade me listen, and that I did intently.

A quarter moon shed her dim light around us, making the recesses of the swamp seem doubly dark and hideous. After listening for a moment, we heard, to our great surprise, the steady click, click of sabres somewhere in our vicinity. After being satisfied that something wrong was going on around us, I asked Archie what he thought about it.

“You know that strange officer that was around here to-day?” he asked. “Well, that darn cuss was a rebel scout, and he was trying to find a way through here to pass a body of cavalry, and that is what you hear now,—that same cavalry going past us on the cart path, over yonder in the woods.”

It is certain that the noise resembled a body of cavalry moving on our flank, and the accompanying click, click of their sabres, and we listened a moment longer, but the noise had ceased. I concluded to visit Post 2. As I neared him he gave the same cautionary signal, obeying which, I soon reached him, and found him lying flat on the ground on the side of the track with his gun levelled over the rails.

He told me he had heard a movement in the brush on the other side, and thought he saw an object creeping along in the woods. Warning him not to fire should he discover the enemy, but keep out of sight and report quickly to headquarters at Post 1, I returned and aroused the sergeant. He listened a moment, after I made my report to him, and said “Wake up the lieutenant.” That officer got up very reluctantly, and yawning once or twice, asked what was the

matter. I told him in as few words as possible that we believed we were being surrounded by rebel cavalry. He replied sleepily that there was no chance for rebel cavalry to get as far as this without our knowledge. By this time we had reached the railroad where stood the sergeant and Archie.

For a few minutes all was still, and then came that click, click, again, softly, but very distinct.

This waked our lieutenant up pretty quick, and turning to me he said: "Get the men up quick, and still as possible. Post them behind the buildings. Let them keep still and out of sight." I went into the huts where fourteen of them lay in sound slumber, and quietly shaking each one, told him to "Get up; we think we are surrounded." *These were veteran soldiers*, and there was no turning over to take another nap. Every one was up in an instant, and, rifle in hand, ready to act as circumstances might direct.

Returning again to the railroad, the lieutenant ordered Sergeant McCann and myself to skirmish out towards the cart path, and see what was going on. With our rifles at half-cock we entered the dark woods, and advancing from tree to tree, keeping close together, peering forward through the gloom to discover the first traces of an enemy, we at length arrived at the cart path. There was certainly no enemy passing now, and after an examination of the road, upon our hands and knees, we were satisfied that no one had passed that way for a day or two, as we could not find any fresh tracks.

After listening in vain for a few minutes, and neither hearing any noise nor seeing anything suspicious, we returned to the railroad. Reaching the edge of the woods, we were stopped by hearing the same noise again, but now it seemed above our heads, and gazing up awhile, the absurdity of the whole affair burst upon us as we observed

the tops of two tall gum trees near which we were standing, waving gently in the night breeze and their leafless branches hitting against each other, producing a noise exactly resembling the passing of a body of cavalry near by, and taken together with the suspicious actions of the strange officer who visited us the day before, were enough to deceive and alarm us, even to turning out the whole post, prepared for the expected attack. The sentry on Post No. 2 probably saw some wild animal trying to find a way out to the settlements.

We felt rather foolish at being sold so easily, but it was nothing more than what might happen to any out-post, and it proved that we could *not* be caught napping in case of a genuine attack.

The boys turned in again, the guard resumed their watch, and nothing further occurred to disturb us. Upon the third day our relief arrived, and after transferring our orders and warning them to beware of the deceptive influence of those two gum trees, we departed for camp.

The next tour of picket found me detailed for the left of the line. Nothing of note occurred but the burning of the barracks at the reserve post, the light of which we plainly saw. They caught fire the first night of our stay from some body's pipe, and the blaze running quickly over the loose straw on the floor gave the boys sleeping there hardly time to get out, many losing their blankets and equipments.

Although I was detailed for this line of pickets several times subsequently, I met with no more personal adventures worthy of note, and so will bid good-bye to Bowers' Hill for the present, and proceed to relate an incident of a far different character which shall form our next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

MILITARY EXECUTIONS.

IN the city of Norfolk, Va., resided a great many people in full sympathy with the Confederacy, and although now under the protection of the United States forces and enjoying privileges that they had been denied during the thirteen months' previous occupancy by the rebel army, still hated the sight and sound of a government soldier.

Among the better or richer class of rebel non-combatants were a few who would, at every opportunity, make themselves obnoxious to our officers and men in various ways. Occupying splendid residences upon one of the more fashionable streets, they desired to keep these streets clear of our men, who at times performed their daily evolutions of drill in the neighborhood.

One of the most influential of these secessionists was a man named David M. Wright. He had been a citizen of Norfolk since 1840, and had built up a flourishing business as a physician. During the period the town was held by the Confederacy, he had presided at their secret meetings, and was prominently concerned in the plan for the capture of the Gosport Navy Yard, across the bay, and after the raising and equipment of the famed *Merrimac*, he was commissioned naval surgeon on board of her.

At the time of which we are writing, an effort was made by the government to raise a regiment of colored troops in this vicinity. One full company being ready, officers from the regular garrison at Fortress Monroe were placed in charge. Among these was a young man by the name of Theodore F. Sanborn, recently promoted from sergeant to first lieutenant, and placed in command of this colored company. He had been in the habit of drilling his company in front of Dr. Wright's residence. If white troops in blue uniform were obnoxious to this rebel element, how much more so were these colored troops, some of whom they claimed as former slaves!

After trying in various ways to drive this officer and his men to some other locality in vain, they held a council over the matter, and resolved to order him off peremptorily, and if he did not go, to shoot him on the spot. But, as may be supposed, this ordering was a mere farce to the lieutenant, who still continued his daily drills in the neighborhood. While manœuvring his men one morning directly in front of Dr. Wright's residence, the old man came out in a towering passion. "Take away those d—d niggers," said he to the lieutenant, "I will not have them before my house; and you, you paltry Yankee skunk, if you don't leave this neighborhood, I will soon put you beyond the chance of stealing any more niggers."

"The men were about to rush forward to resent the insult offered to their commander, when he ordered a peremptory "attention," for the purpose of suppressing their aroused feelings. The doctor observing that the young lieutenant was too much engaged to notice what he was at, drew a pistol and discharged the contents into the back of the lieutenant, who fell dead in front of his command.

"The report of the pistol had not died away before the murderer was grasped and firmly held by several black but

muscular hands, which, but for the exertions of the other officers of the company, would have torn the rebellious doctor to pieces. He was, however, speedily secured and taken to the guard-house, where he was confined to await the action of a court-martial.

“ The military commission for the trial of criminal offenses committed by civilians assembled in due form at Norfolk, under directions of special orders from the headquarters Department of Virginia. The prisoner was brought before the commission upon the charge of having in cold blood, deliberately murdered an officer of the United States forces while in the discharge of his duty, he, the prisoner, neither being within the enemy’s lines, nor in the recognized service of the foe, but residing within the lines of the United States troops as a resident non-combatant, and not displaying open hostility to the said United States forces to mark him as an enemy.

“ As the prisoner stood before the court he presented the following appearance : In height, rather tall, slightly bent in the shoulders, with a large frame, though somewhat lean : his eyes were dark, with heavy brows, and long iron-gray hair, hanging over the shoulders, moustache and goatee.

“ The charge was a grave one, and being fully established before the court, the prisoner was removed to his cell to await his sentence. The following official document shows the result of the trial :

“ GENERAL ORDERS, No. 17.

“ HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA, }
FORTRESS MONROE, VA., Oct. 10, 1863.

“ The proceeding of the military commission instituted for the trial of Dr. David M. Wright, of Norfolk, Va., by special orders No. 195, 196, 197, of 1863, from the headquarters of the Department of Virginia, having in accordance with Sec. 5, of the act of Congress approved July 17th, 1863, been submitted to the President of the United States, and the sentence having been approved, and the execution thereof ordered by the President

at such time and place as the major-general commanding the department may appoint, it is therefore ordered that the sentence that "the accused, Dr. David M. Wright, of Norfolk, be hanged by the neck until he be dead," be carried into execution on Friday next, the sixteenth day of October, at 10 o'clock in the forenoon, at such place in or near Norfolk as the commander of the United States forces at that place may designate.

"By command of

"MAJOR-GENERAL COMMANDING DEPARTMENT.

"During the interval between the termination of the trial and the rendition of the sentence, every effort was made by the friends of the prisoner to induce President Lincoln either to revoke the sentence of the court or to order a new and civil court trial. The plea of insanity was put in by some of his friends and at one time it was thought the main object—the saving of his life—was effected, and that he was to be sent to a northern lunatic asylum. But the issuance of the above order at last put all doubts to an end.

"Could it be possible? The husband of a high-born Virginian lady and father of one of the first families in Virginia, to be hung up like a slave! Oh, no, it could not be possible. Something must be done to save him from a felon's end.

"All the efforts of the Confederates in Richmond were put to work, and by the aid of their sympathizers in Washington, the President was induced to grant him one week's respite, the execution being put off until Oct. 23, 1863.

"After he was incarcerated, he began to betray many evidences of his most eccentric character. Upon learning of his fate, he ordered a coffin to be made after a plan designed by himself. It was constructed of plain cypress wood, extremely rough in its exterior appearance and of very odd shape. Instead of being like ordinary coffins, widest across the breast, the broadest part was at the head from which it gradually tapered off to the foot, having something the appearance of a great wedge.

“Directly over the head, extending about two feet, there was an abrupt rise above the level of the top of the coffin, about eight or ten inches higher than the lower portion of it. It looked as though a small box had been fastened to the top after it had been finished. The doctor’s idea of having his last home so constructed was that small photographic likenesses of all the members of his family might be placed inside, after the manner in which they are usually hung upon walls. He also desired that these relics might be buried with him. The prisoner expecting to be executed on the following morning, began arranging the pictures of his family along the raised sides of his coffin, and then got in himself. Being perfectly satisfied with it, he then got out, and with a steady, good, bold hand wrote his name in full with a lead pencil upon the lid of his coffin.

“The condemned man was thus engaged when his family came to bid him farewell on the Thursday evening. The parting was very affecting. At this time an incident occurred which greatly tried the officer in charge. When the officer appeared, the doctor’s little son rushed up to him, and clasping him around the knees, uttered in a piteous accent, ‘Oh, can I not die for my father? Save him, and let me die.’

“The lieutenant was greatly moved, but as he had no power to make such a change, and fearing another such an appeal, he quickly left the cell in charge of the jailer, who was more hardened to such scenes. The condemned man had just taken a final farewell of his family, when a messenger arrived from the general with the joyful intelligence that the prisoner was respited for one week.

“On the following Monday morning the wife of the prisoner, having with her as a companion her youngest daughter, left Norfolk to pay a visit to the commander of the department, at Fortress Monroe. The wife begged

hard for the life of her husband, and during the conference the little girl climbed upon the knees of the general. Putting up her sweet, innocent face, she said with an earnest pathos that went to the very soul of the stern man of war: 'Oh, save my father, won't you?' The veteran soldier had met the foreign foe at Cherubusco; he had shed his blood on the field of Molino-del-Rey; he had faced the domestic enemy at Roanoke and Newbern, and never before felt what fear was. But the six simple words of the young girl completely conquered him, and he melted into tears beneath the pathetic entreaty of guileless childhood. Stern duty, the only master of a soldier, compelled him to carry out the orders of a higher power, and the wife and daughter returned to Norfolk unsuccessful.

"Thus the hours steadily progressed without the prospect of a pardon, and the execution was fixed for the following Friday morning. A deep laid plan for his escape was now operated. In the first place, a number of hacks was provided with fast horses and certain instructions, and were to locate at certain points in the city. Should his friends succeed in getting him outside the jail, one hack would speedily convey him to another, and thus changing hacks, and each and all of them driving in different directions simultaneously all over the city, the effect would be to throw his pursuers off the track. The last hack he entered was to drive at a dead run through our picket lines and into the country beyond, where he would be safe. This feature was a good one, and doubtless would have worked well, but the main thing was how to get him out of the jail.

"On Wednesday evening the wife and son, accompanied by the two eldest daughters, paid the father a visit in his cell, all entering the apartment together. The door was closed behind them, the jailor remaining outside. 'Quick,

father,' said the eldest daughter, 'change dresses with me and you will be able to escape while I remain here. They will not harm me, and there are good friends outside to help you directly you are free.'

" 'But,' said the father, hesitatingly, 'should they punish you for aiding in my escape, I could not bear that.' 'Fear not, father,' returned the devoted daughter, 'they will not hang me,—a woman,—and your life will be saved. Hasten, father, or you will be too late.'

"The change in dress was soon effected, and the party left the cell, the daughter remaining behind. Fully equipped in male attire, she threw herself upon the bed and covered herself with the quilt. Her feet encased in her father's boots were allowed to appear just beneath the covering, so as to give to a casual observer the appearance that the prisoner had thrown himself upon the couch in an agony of grief.

"It was necessary in order to gain the street from the cell of the prison for the visitors to pass through a little ante-room, which was generally occupied by the officers of the jail for the transaction of business. As the party was passing through the doorway leading into the room, a slight stumble was made, which drew the attention of the turnkey towards them. After they had cleverly reached the street, that official jumped up and exclaimed, 'By G—d, I believe that was Dr. Wright in disguise.'

"An officer of infantry who was seated in the room at once pursued the party and intercepted them before they passed over many feet of ground, and just about as they were congratulating themselves on their fortunate escape, he walked up to the disguised doctor, and raising the two heavy veils that covered his face, said :

" 'Come, old gentleman, that is played out ; I know you.'

"Although much disappointed at the failure of the scheme,

the prisoner was determined the officer should not see it, and therefore appearing to be neither annoyed or embarrassed at the detection, he returned to the jail, remarking as he did so,

“Desperate means are always pardonable under desperate circumstances.’

“He then walked back into his cell as unconcernedly as if nothing had happened.

“When the jailer and his prisoner entered the prison apartment, they found the daughter lying on the couch in the position before described. She was much chagrined at being found out, and pained to find her schemes for her father’s escape had been frustrated.

“Although guilty of a criminal offense in conniving at the escape of a condemned prisoner, some due consideration was allowed for her close relationship to the unfortunate man, and for the circumstances of the case. She was, therefore, placed under no restraint for the imprudent act, but, instead, was escorted to her home by one of the officers of the prison.”

We will now go back to the regiment awhile. On Wednesday, October 21st, we were ordered to cook up three days’ rations. Thursday at seven in the evening, we left camp in light marching order and arrived at the Fair Grounds in the suburbs of Norfolk about midnight. Here we found three other regiments of infantry and a battery of three pieces of artillery.

Friday, October 23d, we ate breakfast, after which we prepared for the execution. The failure of the plan to escape aroused the indignation, hate, and fury of the whole rebel class of people throughout the city, and they resolved, rich and poor alike, that he should *not* be hung if it took every man’s life to rescue him from the gallows. Consequently, it was necessary to have a large

force of military on the ground, armed and equipped, to fulfil the sentence of the law.

The line was formed three sides of a square, the scaffold near the centre, and the three pieces of artillery in rear of the scaffold, loaded for quick work, at short range. Outside the main line, and completely surrounding the square, a heavy line of guards was posted. All were loaded and capped prepared to see the sentence of the law carried out to its fullest extent, if it caused the destruction of the whole city to accomplish it.

“All hope of pardon for the prisoner was at an end. In vain the relatives and friends of the doomed man besought for him a few hours’ respite. A telegram from the President commanded that the ends of justice should be fully carried out.

“The execution was ordered for 10 o’clock that morning, but long before the hour arrived, an eager crowd of spectators assembled in the street and park in front of the prison to witness the sad and solemn spectacle. Two regiments of infantry were drawn up in line to prevent any attempt at rescue, for rumor had stated that such a plan was to be attempted, even at the scaffold itself, if not sooner.

“At 9 o’clock the condemned appeared at the prison door. The murmuring voices were hushed into death-like stillness as he passed along, supported on either side by his spiritual advisers. He paused a moment on the sidewalk to address a few words to those whose faces he recognized, and, smiling calmly as he looked around upon the sea of faces, the old man steadily entered the carriage assigned to him.

“Closely guarded by the military, the carriage slowly moved along to the solemn music of the ‘Dead March.’ Every precaution had been taken by the mounted patrols to keep the crowd at a respectful distance from the carriage, so that any attempt at rescue would prove an utter failure.”

As he passed into the inclosure of troops the writer ob-

served him cast a glance at the scaffold, and a quick shudder shook his whole frame; but he held out bravely, and mounted the steps with a firm tread.

The officer read the charge, findings of the court, and his sentence. His spiritual attendant offered a prayer. The prisoner and his executioner were then left alone face to face beneath the gallows tree. The doomed man sank upon his knees, and in an audible tone addressed the Divine Being, whose laws he had outraged; after which he arose, and in a firm voice said:

“ ‘I die for the crime of murder, but the deed I committed was without malice. I am sorry for it, but it cannot be recalled, and I know I must suffer. I bid you all farewell.’ ”

His hands were then tied behind his back. He knelt down and uttered a last prayer to God for forgiveness and courage. The noose was placed around his neck, the black cap was drawn over his face, the signal given, the trap fell,—and the soul of David M. Wright stood before its Maker.

A shrill scream rent the air, so agonizing in its tone, as it came from the lips of his beloved daughter, who had witnessed the execution, and stimulated the excited crowd of citizens to attempt a rush upon the line; but the sight of the twelve-pounders and the glittering line of bayonets that confronted them, cooled their ardor, and they slowly dispersed to their homes.

After hanging twenty minutes, the body was pronounced dead, and was cut down, placed in the coffin, and taken away by his friends in funeral procession, to the grave.

The troops were kept here all that day and until the next afternoon, ready to quell any outbreak that might occur. At 3 o'clock Saturday afternoon we started for camp, and arrived there at dark, wet through from the heavy showers of rain that had fallen in torrents all day. This was the

first public execution I had ever witnessed. It was hard to see a man forfeit his life in such a manner, and I never wanted to see another.

For the immediate details of this case,—those that, as a soldier, I had no opportunity to collect,—I have been indebted to a stray paper, called the *War Record*, in which I fortunately found the whole matter, corroborating all that portion of my journal that came under my own observation, and of such a truthful description that I have not hesitated to indorse, and enter it on these pages.

Camp-life and its duties began again, and our work on the fortifications being ended, drill with the company and battalion took the place of axe and shovel. Orders were now received, in view of malaria and fevers that existed and were threatened, that every man be required to take a daily allowance of quinine and whiskey to keep us in good health. But our rations soon became all quinine and no whiskey, and were discontinued, to our great satisfaction.

Monday, November 9th, I, with several others, attended the execution of two men near Fort Reno, on our left, belonging to the Eighth Connecticut Volunteers, who were to be shot for desertion. Arrived on the grounds, we found a large number of soldiers assembled, and the brigade to which the condemned men belonged already taking position in form of hollow square, three sides occupied by the troops and the fourth open for the firing party.

At half past ten the solemn music of the "Dead March" was heard, and soon the procession arrived and marched slowly around the inside of the square in the following order :

Brigade Band.

Ambulance containing two coffins.

Four files of men, arms reversed.

Two prisoners, attended by their spiritual advisers.

Firing party,

Composed of sergeant, corporal, and twelve file of men.

As they passed around the line, every man's breath was hushed, and every heart beat with pity for the poor men who were so soon to part with all that is beautiful in life. One of them was probably twenty-nine or thirty years of age. The other was quite young, not over eighteen, and betrayed the most heart-rending emotion.

At last the funeral *cortege* arrived at the open side of the square. The coffins were taken out and laid side by side on the ground, near the graves, already dug. The prisoners were placed in front of them, facing the centre of the square, and the firing party took position in front about ten paces distant, and facing the doomed men.

The officer then read the proceedings of the court-martial and sentence of death. During this ceremony the youngest of the prisoners completely broke down, and leaning on the shoulder of his spiritual adviser, wept most piteously. The other, though seemingly not so deeply affected, hung his head in painful sorrow.

At the end of the reading of the sentence, the sacrament of the church was administered to them, a prayer in their behalf was offered, their hands were tied in front of their breasts, their eyes were bandaged, and all was ready for the final act of judgment.

In the deep and solemn stillness of those last moments, that seemed hours to them and to us, broken only by the piteous sobs of the young soldier, the officer took out his watch and the word was given in the interval of about ten seconds: "Ready, aim, fire!" A crash of musketry, a groan,—and without a struggle the two men fell forward, shot through the body, — dead.

Their life-blood spurted forth in a crimson tide, and their souls entered that bourne from whence no traveler returns. A space of a few minutes passed, as every eye gazed upon the horrible sight, and then the line formed quietly into columns of companies, and passed in review of the lifeless

forms of their late comrades. When they had gone, we also viewed the remains, and turned back to our camp, sick at heart.

We were always invited to such a scene that the lesson there taught might be impressed upon our minds to the extent of preventing us from desertion. That our men never profited by such examples as the one we have just narrated may be seen from the fact that desertions were never stopped, but increased in proportion to the length of the war.

Many were shot during the war for desertion, bounty-jumping, and the like, who deserved the extreme penalty of the law; but there were also many, who, being called home by the sickness or death of some loved one, and for some reason or other not being allowed the necessary furlough, had taken it upon themselves to go "without leave." Some of these returned to their regiments and reported for duty. They had no idea of defrauding the government of their services. Immediately upon their return they were arrested, tried, and sentenced to be shot for desertion. Having no influential friends to plead their case before the President, they were forced to be led to their graves like dogs, and there be shot in cold blood.

In support of this assertion, I beg leave to quote the following incident, by the author of the *Blue and Gray*:

"A soldier who had proven his loyalty upon the hard-fought battle-fields of three campaigns, and who bore upon his breast the scars of honorable wounds, made application to visit his wife, whom he had not seen for two long years, and who was at that time dying of consumption. A letter from his home had brought the sad tidings that she could not hold out much longer, and that she had expressed a wish to see him once more before she died. Upon this statement he hoped to get a leave of absence, but although his application was indorsed by all his regimental officers, it failed

at headquarters, and he was refused a permit. His loyal soul, although true to his country, was truer still to the woman whom he had sworn to cherish before the altar of heaven, and he, revolting at this disappointment, clandestinely left the camp.

“ In due time, he arrived at his home, just in time to see his wife die, and after burying her, he again started back to the army. In the meantime, he was reported absent without leave and pronounced a deserter.

“ Upon reaching his camp, he was promptly arrested and court-martialed. That tribunal heard the charges against him, and heard the prisoner’s plea of guilty distinctly pronounced by himself, and asked what he had to say in extenuation of the act.

“ ‘ I would say that for three long years I have served my country with a loyal soldier’s devotion, although I never swore to do it. At the altar I pledged my honor to my wife to cherish her until death. When death summoned her, I asked leave to be permitted to see her die, and it was refused me, and in obedience to my oath, I went to her bedside. When all was over, I laid her away, and came immediately back to my post.

“ ‘ My duty to my country is secondary to my duty to my God. Find me guilty and punish me with death.’

“ That court never agreed upon a verdict, and Edmund Scott continued loyal to the cause, and witnessed the downfall of the Confederacy at Appomattox.”

We cite this as one case in which the accused fortunately escaped death ; but there were many, whose cause was as just as his, who were forced to die in obedience to a “ raw head and bloody bones ” sentence.

Such punishment is *murder*, nothing more or less, for as against the laws of God, capital punishment is a crime ; and as such, it should be blotted from the statute books of the civilized world.

CHAPTER XVI.

CAMP INCIDENTS.

IN front of and separated from our camp by a swampy piece of land, was quite a little village of board shanties occupied by contrabands. These people, gathered in from the surrounding country, had been put under the care of our troops, the men working on the fortifications, while the women were employed at washing, or other work adapted to them. There were probably about a hundred of them, — men, women, and children.

One night, not long after the events recorded in the previous chapter, the writer was on guard duty at camp. It was just after 10 o'clock, and I had duly posted my relief, when a party of our men who had been visiting friends in a neighboring regiment, returned in an hilarious condition, but becoming quiet as they reached our camp, gave the countersign, and passing over the guard line, took the direction of the contraband camp above mentioned.

The night was clear and cool. The men in their quarters had ceased their talking and fallen asleep, and nothing broke the silence around, save the call of some sentry pacing his beat in some of the various camps about us.

Suddenly from the contraband quarters came the sound as of pounding, breaking down doors and shanties, soon increased by the shrieks of the colored wenches and the shouts of the men, as they endeavored to defend their

homes from the rude assaults of our gang of drunken comrades, who, it seems, had taken it into their heads to give them a "waking up" and were pulling down their shanties and smashing things generally. All at once a shot was fired, and immediately the camp was alarmed. The colonel flew out of his tent and across the parade in his shirt and drawers, crying at the top of his voice, "Turn out the guard. Fall in the regiment. Turn out, every man."

Instantly the whole camp was a scene of confusion. Waked so suddenly from their slumbers, the boys at once supposed that the whole rebel army was in front of our works, and they tumbled out of their quarters in all shapes and conditions, some without hats or shoes, some in shirt and pants only, and all half dressed, grasped their gun and cartridge box, and rushed across the swamp toward their place in line at the works.

Officers, half dressed, brandished their swords, and shouted their orders. The colonel raved and tore around. The guard off duty hastily formed and made speedy tracks for the scene of action, and a confused noise of shrieking women, crying children, shouting men and officers, barking dogs, and crashing shanties, made night hideous for awhile.

With the alarm of the regiment and the subsequent confusion, the men who had caused all this commotion prudently skedaddled to safer quarters, and in a few minutes the disturbance was suppressed, the excited negroes quieted down, the regiment came back to camp and to bed again, and the guard returned with one prisoner, a large negro who had been caught in the act of striking one of our men with an axe.

This fellow was terribly frightened at being a prisoner under such circumstances, a fact which we at the guard-house on duty, thought best to keep alive; and so for the next two hours we reviewed his case, and impressed him with the assurance that at 8 o'clock the next morning he

would be court-martialed, and at nine brought out in front of Fort Rodman and shot for a murderous assault upon a United States soldier with an axe.

We described very vividly the particulars of his execution, and thus kept the poor fellow praying, singing, and asserting his innocence of any criminal intent, enduring untold agonies of mind, until near morning, when our attention being drawn away for a few moments, he slipped out of the guard-house unobserved, and we never saw his face again.

Thus ended this carousal, and the principals in the affair were sought in vain. But to pay for this, Colonel Buffum the next day increased the camp guard to its full number of fifteen or twenty posts, and our turn for guard duty came every other day. This, with the usual picket and fatigue duty, kept us almost constantly on duty. In this case, as in many others since the world began, the innocent were made to suffer for the guilty.

But with all our extra duty we had one respite, one chance to enjoy ourselves. At different times we were allowed a pass to Norfolk, giving us permission to spend the day enjoying ourselves in the city. These passes were often altered in such a manner as to enable us, when we could get away from camp, to visit Norfolk at any time without applying for a new pass. As an illustration of the way this thing was performed, I give a copy of a pass granted, which reads thus :

HEADQUARTERS FOURTH REGIMENT RHODE ISLAND VOLUNTEERS, }
 CAMP AT GETTY'S STATION, VA., Dec. 6, 1863. }

Guards and patrols will pass the bearer, Geo. H. Allen, of Company B, Fourth Regiment Rhode Island Volunteers, to and from Norfolk, Va., until 8 P. M. this day.

Signed: M. P. BUFFUM, Lt.-Col. Comd'g Reg't.

CHAS. WILSON, 1st Lieut. and Adj't.

Countersigned: G. W. GETTY, Com'd'g Brig.

By erasing the "8 P. M. this day" and substituting the words "further orders," we made a general pass of it, which we could use at any time by being careful to have some one of our comrades to answer "Here" for us at roll-call while we were away.

As the Norfolk Theatre was in full operation, many of us would stay down to the city through the evening to attend. The theatre was over at eleven P. M., after which we would make our way back to camp.

Crossing the ferry to Portsmouth without any trouble, we would travel up the railroad in a crowd composed of members of different regiments, to the number of thirty or forty, all provided with general passes as the above. Well knowing these passes were of no use to us in the night, on reaching a guard post, we usually had among our number one or more who, being on guard detail in their respective camps that night, were in possession of the countersign.

About a mile out of Portsmouth was posted a cavalry picket, extending across the railroad. As we neared this post one night, coming home from the play, we heard the sentry's challenge, "Halt! Who goes there?" One of our number answered, "Friends with the countersign." As a rule, this all-powerful word would pass us all through by the one who held it, but this night the sergeant on duty refused to pass us unless each and every one of us could give the word. The man who held it passed through, and the rest of us gathered in a knot on the railroad and held a council of war.

It would not do to go back to the city or to stay here all night, so we resolved to run the post at all hazards. Quickly agreeing upon a plan, we sent one of our number ahead to hold a confab with the sergeant, and meanwhile the rest of us closed upon the line, and before the sergeant or his men knew what we were up to, with a rush we passed

over the line and scattered for the woods near by. The sergeant cursed and shouted, and ordered his guard "To horse!" in pursuit, but they could not follow us far in these dark woods, and an hour later found us all right in camp.

Another source of amusement was created near our camp. A large building, capable of holding two hundred or more, was erected by the men of our brigade in their spare hours, for the purpose of giving theatrical entertainments, etc. It was built of rough pine slabs and timber hewn out of the forest.

A company of amateur performers was organized, and with a stage, some cheap scenery, an orchestra, and other requisites, several plays were very well enacted. The house was crowded nightly, and many a 50-cent "shin-plaster" found its way into the pockets of the "management," who did their utmost to cater to the amusement of their comrades; and though their resources were limited, yet their performances were generally very satisfactory, judging by the applause of their auditors.

Friday, November 27th, at dress parade, an order was read to us by the adjutant, relating to the trial and sentence of two of our regiment for desertion. One by the name of Leach, of Company H, and the other, Samuel Ames, of Company A. Leach deserted us at Annapolis, Md., on or about Jan. 2, 1862; was caught, brought back to the regiment at Beaufort, N. C., and deserted again at "Camp Starvation," or Waterloo, on our march from Berlin to Fredericksburg. He was tried by court-martial at Norfolk, found guilty, and sentenced to be shot to death, at or near Fort Rodman, on Monday, December 7th, next ensuing.

Samuel Ames, of Company A, was also sentenced to be shot at the same time and place. The firing party was drawn by lot from each company, and all the preparations were made for this sad event, when, the day before their sentence was to be executed, there came a reprieve for both

of them : to Leach, of fourteen days, to await the action of the President ; and to Ames was given a long lease of life, his sentence being commuted to six months of hard labor on the "rip-raps." Within ten days President Lincoln issued an order reprieving all prisoners under sentence of death in this department, and this, of course, included Leach. Whatever became of him subsequently, the writer knows not.

Orders were now received from Washington to provide for the reënlistment of all three-year men for another term of three years, or during the war. As a special inducement, a government bounty of \$402 was offered to us, payable in installments, and a further bounty of \$300 from the State of Rhode Island. Moreover, added to this was a thirty days' furlough, granting us leave to return home and enjoy the society of our friends before setting out on our new term. The three years enlisted for was to begin at muster in or right away. The books were opened in our regiment, and Lieut. Geo. W. Field was appointed recruiting officer.

Of course this created quite a commotion among the men, and was the main subject of conversation for many days. Each man had his opinion, and stoutly maintained it. Some were anxious to get home and see their friends, and at the same time provide well for them with the munificent bounty offered. Others were heartily sick of the service and preferred staying their first three years, and then go home for good. But at last many of the latter changed their minds, for the temptation to see home and wife and little ones was too great for them.

Christmas came in, pleasant but cold, and was enjoyed as a holiday by the regiment, and quite a crowd assembled to witness the various sports of the day, announced to consist of chasing the greased pig, sack race, wheelbarrow race, and an exhibition of the manly art of self-defense by several of our pugilistic comrades. Among our distin-

guished guests on this occasion we note General Getty and staff, Colonel Steere, and several ladies. The games commenced at two P. M. and passed off successfully, with much credit to the participants.

As New Year's drew on apace the excitement in regard to reënlisting increased, and many signed the roll who were at first its most strenuous opposers. The books were closed Tuesday, January 5th, at midnight. About one hundred and fifty men had reënlisted, of whom the writer's company, B, numbered eight, the writer himself being one of that number. We were duly examined by our surgeon, Dr. Dedrick, were discharged from our first three years' service and mustered in for our second term, and now awaited transportation to our homes.

Our camp was now visited by General "Small Pox," who, after a week's stay, left us minus several of our comrades, who died from the effects of his visit, Company B losing one man, Comrade James H. Randall.

Monday, February 28th, the order was received, "Re-enlisted men, fall in for Rhode Island." Cheers of joy from the "vets" resounded through the camp, and we hastily packed our knapsacks, bade good-bye to our comrades left behind, who watched us soberly and somewhat regretfully. Messages were transferred from friend to friend, the parting hand-shake given, cheer after cheer rent the air, and joyfully we left our parade-ground on our homeward journey.

Stepping aboard the cars at the station just below camp, we were soon whirled into Portsmouth. At the wharf lay a transport in waiting for us, on board which we were soon quartered, and leaving the wharf, ran down the harbor as far as Sewell's Point and anchored for the night. Tuesday morning up anchor and sailed back to Portsmouth to get our rations aboard. We then started again, but now a thick fog obscured sun and sea alike, and we were forced to come to anchor once more.

At 5 o'clock Wednesday morning, the weather being clear, we made our final start for home. Passing Fort Monroe and Cape Charles in succession, we put out to sea, heading E. N. E. A brisk wind dead ahead impeded our progress much, and the rough chopping sea, always to be found at this point, pitched our steamer about like a chip in a mill pond. This vessel, like all other government transports, was exceedingly dirty. No place was provided for us to sleep, and we were obliged to bunk on the main deck or first deck below. As the weather promised a rough voyage, most of us chose the latter place, as being better protected from the cold winds and spray.

Several of our number having bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen several dogs of several nationalities, had brought these aboard to take home, and had fastened them on this deck. When we got well out to sea, and the ship began pitching and rolling, our friends of the canine persuasion being thoroughly frightened at the novelty of their situation, began a series of the most doleful howlings and barkings, making night hideous with their noise, disturbing our slumbers, and thereby receiving a cannonade of old shoes, bits of pork, or anything we could lay hands on.

The second day out they were all put into the lower hold, loose. Here, unable to stand on their feet, and tossed about among the coal, etc., with each roll of the ship, they began a series of fights, howlings, and various other noises, such as dogs were never known to make before. Their respective owners were now obliged to descend and make them fast as before. Nevertheless, they kept up their noise until we arrived, and their hearts were gladdened by the end of their perilous journey.

The stench of the bilge-water in the hold, added to the savory mess of fat pork that composed our meat rations, was anything but agreeable, and forced many of us to repair occasionally to the "lee scuppers," there to pay our tribute

to old Father Neptune. But we were on our journey home, and this fact encouraged us to bear and forbear until the shores of Rhode Island loomed up on the horizon, with a promise of better things to come.

Thursday morning we began to look for signs of land ahead, but nothing could be seen beyond the vast waste of waters until just after sunset, when a little twinkling light on our port quarter gave us renewed thoughts of home. As we neared the Long Island coast, one light after another could be seen, at first looking like a little star struggling to rise out of the dark ocean, and at last we made old Montauk Light, and then turned in, assured that a few hours more would find us between the shores of Rhode Island.

Friday morning, we were early on deck and found our ship hove to off Narragansett Pier, waiting for a pilot. At half past six he came aboard and we steamed away up the west passage, and through the bay, feasting our eyes on the old familiar land-marks, and hailing with joy the first glimpse of Providence, as we rounded old Conanicut Point. Everybody was happy.

But in the midst of our joy, we did not forget to cast a thought back into the past, when a little over two years ago we sailed past these same shores with so many of our comrades who would never see their homes on earth again. Though full of confidence and expectation as we were at that time, yet their day of life was over, and we had left them at rest on many a southern battle-field, or near hospitals. Fathers, mothers, wives, or children of these loved and lost would look upon our little band as we passed through the streets of Providence, and would inquire of us the story of their soldier's life, sacrifice, and death, how he died and where he was buried; and the old heart wounds, that nothing but eternity can heal, would bleed afresh as we related the particulars of their soldier-boy's patriotism,

his suffering, and his final parting with this life, so far away from home and loved ones.

While these sad thoughts passed through our minds, our ship swept around Field's Point and came to anchor. A boat, containing Major Bucklin, who was in command of us, was now sent to the city, to find out if any provisions had been made for our reception. They were gone so long and we were so impatient to get ashore, that we began to lay plans to take the ship by force, weigh anchor, and steam away for the city on our own hooks. But just about as this plan was to be put in operation, the major was descried on his way back, and in a half hour, about 1 o'clock at noon, we landed at Fox Point Wharf.

The authorities had not received any notice of our coming, and consequently there was no public reception. But we cared little for that. We were home once more safe and sound; were treading the old familiar pavements; our friends were pressing in on all sides, and as we marched up South Main Street it was hard work for us to free our hands from the hearty grasp of one old friend, to shake hands with the next.

By the time we reached the Great Bridge quite a crowd had collected. The news had flown over the city like a thunder-cloud, that the old Fourth Rhode Island had arrived, and while waiting to be paid off, at the office on Weybosset Street, we were kept continually talking, shaking hands, and accepting the congratulations and welcome of friends, acquaintances, and citizens of all classes.

But the best, the dearest, the most heart-felt welcome awaited us in the sacred seclusion of *home*, and after receiving our pay we separated for the space of thirty days, and were soon at rest among those we loved, enjoying our brief respite from the trials, dangers, and hardships of a soldier's life.

1864.

CHAPTER XVII.

POINT LOOKOUT.

OUR furlough being extended ten days by the gracious permission of Uncle Sam, we pass over the interval of forty days since we landed in Providence, and report ourselves on Monday, April 11th, at the Providence Depot, ready to return to the front.

We have had a glorious good time at home. Have enjoyed ourselves to our full extent among our old time friends and acquaintances, and in the more quiet and heart-felt pleasures of the home circle. And now again to leave all we hold dear, to shake the parting hand, to give the last fond embrace, and receive the last words of those dear ones whom we may never see on earth again, is more trying to our moral courage than anything yet in our experience. Oh, could we only lift the veil of the future and see what destiny has in store for us!

With faltering lip and tearful eye we bid them all a last adieu, and amid the music of bands and the cheers of the multitude, moved slowly out of the depot. Farewell, dear ones! Farewell, home! Farewell, all those familiar scenes of our youth! Many of us are carrying away our bodies to lay them dead on Southern soil in your defense. But wherever we go, or whatever our fate may be, these last sad

scenes of parting will never be effaced from our memory, and through all our trials and suffering we shall thank God that we have a home, that we have friends, that we have a country that is worthy our sacrifice.

Amid these hallowed thoughts and memories, as we rushed along over the iron rail, came the sound of revelry, boisterous songs, howling, and fighting. There was plenty of rum aboard, and judging by the appearance of some of our men, they had been wrestling with this demon ever since they landed in Providence.

At Groton we marched aboard the steamer *Commonwealth*. Scarcely had we reached the deck, when the cry was sounded "man overboard." An excited crowd quickly gathered at the gang-plank, and from the dark abyss between the steamer and the wharf a man's body was fished up. He was taken to the saloon deck unconscious, restoratives were quickly applied, work was briskly kept up for a half hour, but all in vain, and William Tew, of Company A, had given up his life. He had indeed bidden good-bye to home this night, and forever! The hearts that were sad at parting to-day will be sorely stricken to-morrow when the sad news reaches them; and as long as life shall last, they will, together with us, his comrades in arms, sadly regret that he had not died as a soldier dies,—in the path of duty.

As soon as the excitement attendant upon this sad casualty had subsided, I began to look about me for a place to sleep. Finding an empty berth, I disrobed, crawled in, and settled down for a night's good rest, when the curtains were thrown apart, and a large, portly looking man poked his head into the inclosure, and the following dialogue ensued:

"Here, you man, you are occupying my berth. I have the ticket and number."

"All right," I replied, "I suppose I shall have to give it up and find another place," and I jumped out of the berth and began drawing on my pants, the old gent growling all the while at being so bothered; but upon discovering my uniform, he said in an altered tone of voice:

"Oh, you are a soldier, are you? Returning to the front, I suppose. Well, sir, get right back into bed. Here is my number to guard you against any further intrusion."

"But where are you going to sleep?" I inquired.

"I'll sleep on the sofa, table, anywhere," he replied, "before I'll deprive a soldier of all the comfort he can take. Now go to bed and good night, sir," and he was gone.

We were glad to meet with one friendly stranger, for many of the boys were forced to sleep on deck, on account of not having the privilege of berths, those beds belonging, of course, to passengers who had bought and paid for them, and most of whom would not discommode themselves to accommodate a poor soldier, who was going forth to risk his life and limb that they might safely enjoy these comforts.

We awoke next morning sailing up East River, and about 8 o'clock landed and marched up to City Hall Barracks. Here we staid until noon, when after procuring rations, we marched down to the Battery and went aboard the steamer *Commodore*, and soon sailed away down the harbor, towards Amboy. At this place we boarded the cars, and without further incident or accident arrived at Philadelphia about dark.

We took supper at the Soldiers' Refreshment Saloon, and then pursued our journey by rail, arriving at Baltimore the next morning. We then marched over to the rooms of the Union Relief Association, at which place we took dinner. In the afternoon we resumed our course to the river, and embarked on the steamer *Kennebec*. At six P. M. we left the wharf and moved slowly down the bay.

Thursday noon we arrived at Fort Monroe, landed, and soon after went aboard the steamer *Kitty Hudson*. At three P. M. we arrived at Norfolk, and found our regiment encamped just on the outskirts of the city. During our absence they had removed from Getty's Station to this place, and were detailed to perform provost duty in and around the city of Norfolk.

The boys were glad to see us back again, and saluted us with cries of "How are you, vets? How are you, three years more? Why didn't ye lep the bounty?" etc., etc.

Now that we had returned, they were glad that they had not reënlisted, and bantered us a good deal on our long three years in prospective. But the sequel shows that *they* were not wise in refusing to follow our example, as only seven months elapsed between the time of their discharge and the end of the war. *Eight months* after they got home, we arrived home also, with the advantage of a big bounty and of having seen the war *through to the death*. Many of them enlisted again in other regiments after they had been at home a while, when it would have been much more to their advantage to have reënlisted in January and stayed with us.

The very next day after our arrival in camp, we began again our duties as soldiers, by being detailed as provost guard in and about the city. Our duties consisted in preserving order, arresting drunken men, and those without a pass, etc., etc. Having a chance to attend the theatre nearly every evening, the time passed pleasantly until Sunday, April 24th, when we received marching orders.

Our brigade was now split up. The Thirteenth and Tenth New Hampshire regiments and Sixteenth Connecticut left here for Newport News, and we were packed up and ready to go in another direction. Our men on provost duty were relieved by the First Regulars, and the rest of our regiment by the Second Massachusetts.

Marching down to the wharf we embarked on the steamer *George Leary*, and bade good-bye to Norfolk and its surroundings, and when off Fort Monroe "hove to."

At 2 o'clock the next morning we again started, heading up the Chesapeake, and at noon arrived off Point Lookout, Md. After the fog, which lay heavy on the water, had lifted, we hauled up to the wharf and landed. At this place was encamped the Fifth New Hampshire Regiment.

On page 26 of this record the reader will review an incident that took place when this regiment, the Fifth New Hampshire, first arrived at the seat of war in 1861. Disembarking from the cars at Bladensburg, near Washington, in the early evening, and pitching their camp next to ours, we soon found they were without rations, and no way to get any before the next day.

Our regiment immediately turned out of their quarters, camp-fires were renewed, rations of our own brought out, and soon the kettles were steaming merrily. In a short time we had provided every man of that hungry and tired regiment with a good hot supper. They received it with much pleasure and surprise, and vowed to repay it some time in the future. The two regiments were brigaded together for over two months, and at "Camp California" were separated, and had not again met for the space of twenty-seven months.

But now hearing that the Fourth Rhode Island was about to land here, they remembered their promise of long ago, and immediately set to work to make it good. As we landed at the wharf, we were received by a delegation from the Fifth, who escorted us to their camp, but a short distance away. Upon our arrival there we found the Fifth, our old comrades, drawn up in line to receive us, and after a few welcome remarks from their colonel, referring to our kindness of long ago, we were cordially invited to partake

freely of that which they had provided in a hurry for us, with the assurance that had more time or notice of our arrival been given them a more sumptuous repast would have awaited us.

Each company of the Fifth then escorted its letter company of our regiment to their quarters and provided its entertainment, and without further ceremony we were cheered and feasted to our hearts' content with many good things not usually found among a soldier's rations.

With much refreshing of the inner man, with stories of our mutual experiences during our long separation, we passed the time joyously until the day was well nigh spent, when we again formed line, marched over to the west side of the point, and encamped, relieving the Fourth United States Colored troops. The above pleasing episode of our soldier life served to more firmly knit the two regiments in bonds of perpetual friendship, and will ever be remembered with lasting pleasure, while the veterans of the Fifth New Hampshire and Fourth Rhode Island regiments live upon earth.

Point Lookout is the southernmost point of Maryland, and is situated at the mouth of the Potomac River. Here were built two large inclosures, or pens, for the confinement of rebel prisoners, there being about eight thousand here at this time. The larger pen faced the east side of the point, and was surrounded by a high board fence stoutly and securely built. On the outside of this fence, about three feet below the top and ten feet from the ground, was a plank walk extending clear around the pen, and reached by a flight of steps at each corner. On this platform the sentries walked and kept guard over the prisoners inside the pen. The pen was nearly square in form and covered thirty-eight acres of ground.

Inside the fence, upon the north side of the pen, were

barracks erected for facilitating the cooking operations of the camp. In rear of these, tents sufficient to shelter 10,000 men were placed in lines of company formation.

On the side nearest Chesapeake Bay was a large gate. Every morning this gate was opened, and the prisoners were allowed to go out upon the beach, take a bath, or wash their clothes, a privilege they much enjoyed, and which prevented sickness among them to a great extent. They were permitted to stay out all day if they chose, being constantly under guard of the sentries on the fence. At sunset they were all driven into the pen again, and the gates closed for the night.

Around the inside of the pen, and about fifteen feet from the fence, a row of short stakes a few feet apart constituted the "dead line," inside of which it was death for the prisoner to step. In this pen all the rebel non-commissioned officers and privates were confined.

The second pen was much smaller in extent, but laid out about the same, and at a distance of a few feet from the first one. Here were confined in barracks the rebel commissioned officers.

Parties from fifty to one hundred prisoners were allowed to go out each day, under guard, of course, and perform what labor was to be done on or around the wharves, etc., and as a reward were permitted to collect wood for use in their camp.

There were many ingenious spirits among them, who fashioned rings from the buttons on their coats,—some very handsome ones, inlaid with silver in various devices. Others formed toothpicks and other small trinkets from the rough pieces of bone saved from their meat rations. One party manufactured a regular steam engine, with the power of which they turned their rings, etc. The boiler was made from an old camp kettle, and the pulleys and

running gear from old scraps of iron, bones, sardine boxes, and other rubbish picked up here and there, as they were allowed.

When it is understood that they were not allowed to have knives, hammers, saws, or anything of that kind in their possession, it will be seen to what extent their ingenuity drove them to thus manufacture such articles, and I will here state that their workmanship was of the very best,— as good as could be done with all the requisite tools and machinery; and they asked and received a good price for their manufactures, finding a ready sale therefor among our boys, who bought them to send home as souvenirs of the war.

It would seem that with plenty of food, clothing and good quarters, this was a desirable place for them to stay. The mortality from disease was very small. As soon as reported sick they were removed to the large field hospital on the point, and shared equally with our own sick men the benefits and blessings which a humane government afforded, and when they died were buried with a soldier's honors.

The prisoners were, as a general thing, strongly inclined to the worship of God. The "poor whites" of the South, of which class of people the rebel army was mostly composed, were in intelligence and ambition, in literature, in habits and customs, and in speech and language, but one degree removed from the black slave, and therefore it was natural that they should share all the religious enthusiasm of the latter class. Upon every pleasant evening they would gather in crowds at different parts of the pen and hold religious services. We listened at times to their worship, and with our eyes closed could scarcely tell whether the speaker was black or white.

Their rations, in quantity and quality, were about the

same as ours, as shown by the following table, copied from Glazier's work upon the subject :

Rations issued by the United States Government to rebel prisoners of war :

Hard bread,	14 oz. per one ration.
Corn meal,	18 " " " "
Beef,	14 " " " "
Bacon or pork,	10 " " " "
Beans,	6 qts. " 100 men.
Hominy, or rice,	8 lbs. " " "
Sugar,	44 " " " "
Rye coffee,	5 " " " "
Tea,	18 oz. " " "
Soap,	4 lbs. " " "
Adamantine candles,	5 candles " "
Tallow candles,	6 " " "
Salt,	2 qts. per " "
Molasses,	1 " " " "
Potatoes,	30 lbs. " " "
Soft bread,	18 oz. " one ration.

Here follows a statement of clothing issued for a period of eight months in the year :

Average number of prisoners 4,489.

7,175 pairs canton flannel drawers.	3,480 ¹ / ₂ pairs bootees.
6,260 flannel shirts.	1,310 pairs trousers.
8,807 woolen stockings.	4,378 pairs woolen blankets.
1,094 jackets and coats.	2,680 great coats.

Thus it will be seen that while our Union prisoners in the horrible pens of the South were starving and dying by hundreds and thousands from hunger and exposure, the rebel prisoners under our charge were treated with nearly the same amount of food, clothing, and medical care as our own troops in active service.

It is unnecessary in this record to offer any further comparison between the treatment of prisoners on either side. The youngest school child is well acquainted with the his-

tory of our prisoners at Libby, Belle Isle, Millen, Andersonville, and other pestilential dens of the South, and as the hidden facts are brought to light in these later days, the shameful evidence against the rulers of the so-called Confederacy in regard to their brutal and inhuman treatment of our defenseless prisoners, grows more dense, and blackens still deeper that page of our history "that is well calculated to shock even the rude sensibilities of an American savage."

Nearly every day large numbers of "fresh fish," as we called the new arrival of prisoners, were landed here, mostly captured by the Army of the Potomac. These rebels, dressed in rags very generally, were brought here upon our transports, consorted by one or two gun-boats. Details of guards attended their landing, and inspected their clothes and traps, taking away only the following articles: knives, arms, hardware of any sort, and money to a certain amount, all of which was accredited to them on a book kept for the purpose, and returned to them at their discharge or exchange. They were then marched into the pen, served with a good square meal, and assigned to good comfortable quarters.

At night, in addition to the watch of the sentries over the camp, a patrol was sent inside the pen. They were required to walk each a certain part of the camp all night, or until relieved. This patrol was composed of six or eight non-commissioned officers, and were armed to the teeth with a cutlass and brace of revolvers. Their orders were to keep the camp quiet through the night, to stop all talking in the quarters, to allow no one to approach them without giving a certain sign, known only to those in command or on duty as patrol, and to fire at the least sign of insubordination. The most careful and trusty men were appointed,

and their orders were of the strictest character, as their position was one of great danger. Six men, in the darkness of the night, in the midst of 15,000 deadly enemies, stood little chance of getting out of that inclosure alive, and they were not to be trifled with by any means. They generally entered the pen quietly about 9 o'clock at night, and came out at day-break next morning. The writer had the pleasure of serving on this patrol for one night and that was enough for him.

Of course opportunity was afforded those who wished to desert the Confederacy to get outside the pen by the connivance of our officers and men, and after making their desire known to the guard or some officer in a secret manner, would be removed at night from the pen, or detailed to work outside during the day. The oath of allegiance would be administered, they would be clothed in a suit of Uncle Sam's blue, and were either enlisted, sent North, or put to work in the quartermaster's department. While we were at the point many of them availed themselves of this privilege.

And now having given a description of our surroundings, I will take up the thread of our history where it was dropped at pitching camp, and proceed.

April 27th, was our first detail for guard duty on the pen. There were forty-four posts along the line of guard, besides patrol and supernumeraries. Consequently, it required nearly the whole regiment to form three reliefs. We held our position all day and night without anything unusual transpiring, and were relieved next morning by the Fifth New Hampshire, who had been stationed here some little time.

April 30th, Lieutenant-Colonel Buffum, who had been away for some time, returned, and took command of the regiment.

Orders were now received relative to a transfer into the navy. Several of our regiment embraced the opportunity offered and laid down the rifle and equipments, to serve the remainder of their time on the decks of our gun-boats. About every second or third day came our turn of guard duty on the pen and left us but little time for drill.

May 7th, just before guard-mount, a sad accident occurred in the guard room. Patrick Gallagher, of Company A, and Charles Melarkey, of Company F, were engaged in fooling, when the rifle in the hands of the latter accidentally discharged, the ball crashing through the head of Gallagher, causing almost instant death. This sad affair cast a gloom over us for awhile, and stopped further fooling with loaded rifles.

May 8th, we attended the execution of a young soldier named Henry E. Burnham, of Company E, Fifth New Hampshire. It was in all respects similar to those recorded on a previous page of this book, and for the same crime, desertion, and we will not attempt a further description of this sad affair, other than to say that no means were left untried to gain for him a reprieve, or commutation of sentence, but in vain. Before he was shot he made a few impressive remarks coupled with good advice to his comrades, and shook hands with each one of the firing party. Two volleys were fired before resulting fatally. After the execution, we returned to camp and took up our line of duties once more.

Having a beautiful sandy beach for bathing, the evenings were improved by a good wash after the heat and dust of the day. Large numbers of prisoners were daily arriving from the front and at last we were forced to turn over for their use our large Sibley tents, (Oh, the magnanimity of Uncle Samuel!) and to content ourselves with little shel-

ter tents in future. After a day's work resetting our foundation, we made out to fix our quarters in good shape, considering the size of our covering.

In consideration of the large number of prisoners under our care, (now some fifteen thousand, and increasing day by day,) it was deemed advisable to have the force at this place fully prepared for any emergency. There were only four small regiments, or about twenty-five hundred men here, to guard this large body of prisoners. United and organized in one grand effort, these rebels might possibly break through the fence that surrounded them, and by sheer force of numbers overpower us and gain control of the point. Their escape thereby would, of course, be assured. A rumor was rife among us that such an idea was under consideration by them, and in consequence, gun-boats were sent for and anchored in line of battle on each side of the point, from which position they could sweep with their broadsides, every inch of that flat surface; and our troops were supplied with everything needful in case of a "break."

Lookout Point is in the form of a peninsula, connected with the mainland by a narrow neck, over which runs the road to Baltimore. At this neck was erected a small earthwork, capable of accommodating a battery of field artillery. On the opposite side of the peninsula and directly in rear of our camp was another small strip of land, the interval between these two strips being a salt marsh or swamp, impassable. On this latter neck of land a line of heavy stockade was planted pierced for rifle-men. At these two points the rebels would have to meet us, in case of an attack.

To test the efficiency of our regiment at such times, while we were off duty one hot afternoon, and most of us, in our shirt and drawers, were lying asleep in our tents, suddenly the long roll was beat. Knowing that an out-

break was expected at any time, and fully alive to the importance of the situation, we hurried on our clothes and equipments, scarcely stopping to glance over towards the prison-pen, supposing, of course, there was a "break" somewhere, and snatching our rifles, hastened to our post in line of battle, at the rear of the stockade near our camp. To show the celerity of our movements, and the efficiency of the regiment in time of alarm, I will state it was just *three minutes* by my watch from the time the drum began to beat until the regiment was in line behind the stockade, ready for action. And this, in view of the fact that we were unaware of any such movement to be made, and most of us were half dressed and asleep in our quarters, we call pretty quick time.

May 29th, our old friends, the Fifth New Hampshire, having received marching orders, were relieved by a regiment of "invalids," and left for the front. They had hoped, as their time was nearly out, to be allowed to stay here during the remainder of their service, having done their share of fighting with the Army of the Potomac. But the services of such veterans were too valuable for them to be left long at rest, and they departed from the point with our hearty cheers and best wishes. Subsequently we heard of their encounter with the enemy at the Wilderness and Cold Harbor; and sustaining, as ever, with their bravery the good name they had won, were nearly cut ot pieces; and thus, many who had trusted to see home again without any more fighting, had at last laid their bones to bleach on the bloody field of battle. These were part of the many thousands that General Grant sacrificed from the Rapidan to Petersburg, in a vain attempt to outflank or outfight Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia. But our turn at the front was to come soon.

The regiment of "invalids" that had been stationed here in their place, was some seven or eight hundred strong, and was composed mostly of large, heavy, fat, strong men, most of whom never saw a day's fighting in their life,—men who had played their little game of "disability" so well, as to receive a transfer from their own active regiments into the "Invalid," or, as the boys used to call it, the "Diarrhœa Corps," and were thus permitted to serve out their time guarding hospitals, prison-pens, etc., returning home with all the honors of old veterans.

Great, stout, rugged men they were, generally, loaded with knapsacks as huge in proportions as those we saw at Getty's Station; a crowd of dead-beats they were, whose only affliction was "shell-fever" and a heavy appetite for rations. A few among them bore honorable wounds, or were honestly disabled for active duty at the front; but these were the exception, and greatly in the minority.

The second day after their arrival here they were detailed for guard duty on the pen, and mustered enough out of the seven or eight hundred to form three reliefs. These made out to stay, most of them, till night, but when the second relief was called to fall in at 10 o'clock, scarcely a score of them could be found. It was too tiresome, too much like work, not to say dangerous, for them to stand guard in the presence of so many rebels, especially during the night, and so they had gone back to camp, or were hid away from their officers, and it was found necessary to detail a large force from our regiment to fill out the quota of guards. Thus we were forced to do double duty on account of these "beats."

But to our great relief, the One Hundred and Thirty-ninth Ohio Volunteers (a regiment of one hundred days' men) arrived, and our duties were made somewhat lighter.

Tuesday night, May 31st, an escape of seven of the rebel prisoners was made, and according to the story of one of them, subsequently captured, was effected in the following manner :

During Tuesday, while enjoying their daily privilege on the beach, these seven men managed to bury themselves in the sand. A large crowd of them would gather on the beach and hold a meeting, being addressed by one of their number, and thus diverting the attention of the guard on the fence, while in the centre of the crowd and screened from the sentries' gaze, one of them dug a hole in the soft sand and buried himself, being carefully covered by the rest, and leaving only an aperture to breathe through. This was done at a point which the tide would cover after dark. After all was secure, the crowd would disperse and leave him to work out his plan as best he could.

When it came evening they were all driven into the pen, leaving, of course, the seven buried ones to wait for darkness and the rise of the tide. As they felt the water creeping upon them it was an easy matter to wiggle themselves out of the sand and noiselessly crawl out to deeper water, when they boldly struck out, and were soon swimming away to a spot above the battery, where they landed and made tracks for Baltimore.

But a party of colored troops, out foraging on the Baltimore road, discovered two of them and effected their capture. They were brought back to the point, and placed in the guard-house under ball and chain.

June 11th, the colored regiment left here for a raid into Virginia, and on the 17th sent back as a part of their capture a large lot of horses and cattle, returning themselves on the 20th. With this exception, the time passed off, occupied only by the usual guard and camp duties,

and devising means to keep cool this terribly hot weather, until Sunday, June 26th, when we received orders to prepare for another campaign at the front.

We were relieved by the Tenth Regiment, Veteran Reserve Corps, and at seven P. M., Friday, July 1st, we struck tents, and bidding good-bye to old Point Lookout, with its prison-pens, sand-flies, and dead-beats, we embarked on board the steamer *Eastern State*, and were soon floating away down the Chesapeake.

Our few months' respite from the battle-line was ended, and henceforth until the end of the war we must bear the heat and burden of an active campaign. At daybreak next morning we found ourselves nearing Fort Monroe, and passing old Newport News, sailed slowly up the James River, bound to once more unite ourselves with our old Ninth Corps and the Army of the Potomac.

July, 1864.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN FRONT OF PETERSBURG.

THE Army of the Potomac had at this time swung around on the south and east side of Petersburg and Richmond, and under the leadership of Gen. U. S. Grant had sat down before these places in regular siege, in which we, as a regiment, were destined to bear an eventful and important part.

About 3 o'clock on the afternoon of July 2d we reached Bermuda Hundred, and sent ashore for orders, after which we dropped down the stream to City Point, and anchored. The next morning we landed at City Point, and immediately set out for the headquarters of the Ninth Corps. After marching about ten miles through the heat and dust, we halted near Burnside's headquarters for the time being. The Ninth Corps held that part of the line extending from near the Appomattox River to the Jerusalem Plank Road.

We were situated now about a mile in the rear of the main line of works, and could see a portion of the rebel line, and hear the incessant fire of the pickets. Our regiment now numbered about three hundred and fifty, all told.

On the next day, the 4th of July, a detail from the regiment was sent over to the immediate rear of our main

line, to clear up a place for our camp. The site chosen was located in a piece of woods at the foot of a succession of hills, rising one above the other to the edge of the city of Petersburg.

On the top of this first hill our main line was located. Still farther on were stationed our picket lines and rifle-pits, the intervening ground being cut up by a net-work of traverses, rifle-pits, flankers, and covered ways extending in every direction, the better to protect our troops in their movements back and forth from the rear to the front line, and to facilitate their ingress or egress, in case of an attack. These passages, or covered ways, were five or six feet deep and four feet wide, and being constantly under fire night and day were, of necessity, provided with every means for the protection of our troops from the enemy's bullets.

The picket line consisted of a trench about six feet wide and deep enough for a man to walk almost upright, and running irregularly from left to right. Having been dug directly through the battle-field of the 17th of June, previous, many remains of dead bodies were often seen, and in some places, near where a lot of men were buried, the sides of the pits were full of maggots, and a sickening stench filled the atmosphere. On top of the rifle-pits loopholes were made for the pickets to fire through.

The rebel rifle-pits, or picket line, occupied a position somewhat higher than ours, and from one to three hundred yards distant. Their main line was located along the brow of the hill, and from a quarter to a half mile away, being about one and a half miles in front of the city. The dangerous proximity of the opposing lines of pickets, (being in some places within easy speaking distance,) and they having the advantage of us by occupying higher ground, enabling them to deliver their fire almost directly into our lines, those of us on duty in the rifle-pits who were

careless enough to stand up straight, at once became the target of a hundred rebel rifles. Consequently, many of our men were killed from this cause alone, and it was a common spectacle to see some one carried to the rear almost every hour, dead or badly wounded, as the fire was incessant day and night.

Many forts were erected along the line on both sides, holding batteries of from three to eight or ten guns each, and of calibres varying from the light twelve-pounder to the large sixty-four seige guns. A battery of seven of these seige guns was located a short distance on our left. They were called by the boys "the seven sisters." One of them threw a thirty-two pound rifled shot over into the city of Petersburg once in every fifteen minutes, and from the noise made by the shot hurtling through the air resembling the puffing of a locomotive, was called the "Petersburg Express."

From the elevation of the rebel picket line, their bullets fell thick and fast into and around our camp, sometimes striking the ground, piercing our tents, or whizzing away through the air above us with a noise resembling the wail of a cat in distress. Of course we soon became used to minie-balls, shot, and mortar shell, and the sight of dead or wounded men in our midst.

Tuesday, July 5th, we marched down into the woods, and into our new camp. It seemed like going into battle as we neared the place, and while we halted in front of our new home, two of our number were struck down by rebel balls, but fortunately were not badly wounded. As our comrade, Ned Carey, remarked, "A man was as well entitled to get killed here, as in the middle of a battle-field," and no one was safe, even for an instant. Here we found the Seventh Rhode Island Volunteers, and were camped beside them.

The nature of the place demanded a name of some sort, and it was accordingly called the "Nine Holes," from the fact that, as in the game of whist, where this expression is used, it was a hard place to get out of, and honors were of no account.

July 7th, two more of our men were wounded in camp. The next day, about five in the afternoon, the enemy made a sortie to carry a portion of our lines, and quite a heavy fire resulted. At this time I was sitting out behind a tree, enjoying my supper of coffee and hard-tack. The usual picket-fire could be heard, but nothing alarming, when suddenly, down on the right, the Johnnies leaped out of their pits in force and charged our lines. The pickets immediately opened a heavy fire upon them which they could not withstand, and sent them back to their lines again, badly repulsed.

At this moment the battery just above us on the hill opened fire upon them, when instantly the whole rebel line in our immediate front became a sheet of flame and smoke, and a shower of rebel bullets, thick as hail, flew down into and around our camp.

I concluded it was best to change base, and snatching up my cup of coffee with one hand and haversack with the other, I started for the shelter of my tent, just in time to face the whole storm of leaden hail. Seeing it strike all around me and in the dust at my feet, I made one desperate plunge for my quarters, where my comrades, Fiske, Williams, and Chace, were closely hugging the little breast-work that formed the back of our tent, and landed like an avalanche in their midst. My coffee struck Williams in the face, my haversack danced around Fiske's head, while I landed square on the belly of Shoemaker Chace, nearly knocking the breath out of him, who yelled he'd be blankety-blank blanked if he ever saw such a thundering fool

in all his life. But the firing soon lulled down,—much quicker than the revengeful feelings of my comrades,—and I finished my supper minus coffee.

On the 11th, another of our men was wounded in camp. On the 12th, I was one of a party detailed to carry abatis through the traverse out to the picket-line in the night. Such work could not be done in the day-time. When it became pitch dark, a party of us started forward, dragging quite a large and heavy tree-top, already cut and sharpened, to place in front of our picket-line, and while going through a low and dangerous part of the traverse, we started on a run with it, and turning a corner suddenly, the unwieldy thing whirled over in such a manner as to catch me near the waist, and lifted me off my feet, head and shoulders above the works. The balls whizzed fiercely past my face. The tree, impelled by the force of a dozen men, whirled me around, tearing my clothes and bruising me badly. I cried to the men, "For God's sake, stop; you are crushing me to death."

But they rushed on with a sense of their own danger, unheeding, until a lucky turn of the old tree released me, and I made my way back to camp, bruised and sore, but thankful it was no worse.

On the 14th, our whole regiment was detailed for duty in the rifle-pits. Our position was a little to the right of a point opposite our camp. The time of relieving pickets was in the evening, that the darkness might shield us somewhat from the watchful eyes of the rebels, and we should thereby escape considerable fire. On our way into the pit we were obliged to move over the hazardous places on a run, stooping low, and following on as best we could. At last we entered the covered way, which after sundry turnings and twistings, brought us to the front line of rifle-pits.

The regiment that we relieved immediately moved back

to the rear in the same manner, and they having gone, we began to look about us. We were cautioned to keep down out of sight, and in passing from one place to another were obliged to bend very low for safety from the rebel sharp-shooters.

The next day opened hot and dry, and we suffered much from the foul air of the pit. As we lay here that afternoon an artillery duel between the two lines commenced, and the falling mortar shells sometimes came too close to be comfortable.

Christopher Plunkett, of my company, (B), was hit by a piece of shell in the leg, breaking it in two places, and severing the arteries. As I observed the blood gushing forth like water from a pump, I jumped for him, and with the help of Comrade James Kenney, tied his leg above the wound with my handkerchief, and stopped the flow of blood, which would soon have ended his career. He was taken to the hospital on a stretcher, and his leg was amputated, after which he recovered and went back to Rhode Island.

Several comrades were passed through the pit from other companies or regiments, also badly wounded. Reliefs were kept firing night and day, and so close was the fire, and so true the aim, that it was almost impossible for us to fire through the loop-holes without crouching down, and lifting the rifles over our heads. A hat placed on the end of a rammer and held just above the top of the works, would instantly be pierced with bullets, the rebels thinking it contained a Yankee head trying to look over.

We were on duty here three days and nights, when early on the fourth night we were relieved by the Fifty-eighth Massachusetts, and made the best of our way back to camp. We had just lain down for a night's rest when about 10 o'clock we were silently routed out, and formed line in rear of Fort Morton, near our camp, and lay in

support of this battery all night, as an attack was expected. But no alarm occurring, we managed to sleep until morning.

On the morning of July 18th, a number of us was sitting here,—not having yet any orders to return to camp,—and holding some conversation, when a ball passed through our midst, and with a *thug* struck Sergt. Cromwell P. Myrick in the head, passing entirely through and striking in a pile of haversacks beyond. He was taken to the hospital and lay unconscious for over forty-eight hours, when he died. Poor “Crom”! He was a genial comrade and a good soldier, and we missed him greatly.

At ten that morning we received orders and returned to camp, to find three more of our men badly wounded; one of them, a drummer boy, being hit in three different places, did not long survive his wounds.

On the 19th the regiment again went out to the former place on picket. The second day out, Sergt. Arthur McCann, of my company, (B,) was struck in the leg by a piece of shell which cut a solid piece of flesh from his leg about two inches square. He was carried to the hospital, and was never able to return to duty again.

Thus, nearly every time we left camp for picket duty in or around this place, we came back minus a number of men killed or wounded, the average number of men as reported at Ninth Corps headquarters, being about ninety daily, either killed or wounded, out of the whole corps, so continuous, close, and fatal was the storm of rebel bullets, shot, and shell. And yet we lived in this place and stood this kind of work night and day *for a period of six weeks!*

On the 21st we were again relieved of picket, but had no sooner got into camp than we were ordered, as before, to lay out on the main line all night. On the 23d, two

days later, we went into the pits on picket again. The mortar shells from the enemy's batteries dropped around us pretty lively, but we lost none of our own company at this time, although there were many narrow escapes. One large eight-inch mortar shell dropped down plump into the midst of a group of our men lying down in the bottom of the pit; they whirled quickly over on their faces; the shell burst, its pieces flying upward in an oblique direction, scattering the dirt over them, but doing them no harm.

One evening in camp four of our men were engaged in playing poker. The money was already placed in the "pot" and each was examining his "hand," when a rebel bullet struck the pole of their tent, glanced downward, and swept the money from the board, passing out between them without further injury. They did not care to play any more that night.

By these minor details are shown the beauties of siege life, and it will be seen to what severe and dangerous duties we were at all times subject. We had lost, up to this time, twenty-five men killed or wounded in twenty days; and all around us other regiments were suffering in like manner. By being accustomed to sights which would make other men's hearts sick to behold, our men soon became heart-hardened, and sometimes scarcely gave a pitying thought to those who were unfortunate enough to get hit. Men can get accustomed to everything; and the daily sight of blood and mangled bodies so blunted their finer sensibilities as almost to blot out all love, all sympathy from the heart, and to bring more into prominence the baser qualities of man, selfishness, greed, and revenge.

As an illustration of this condition I cite one case that came within my own observation.

One afternoon, two of the stretcher bearers brought out of

the covered ways a man who had been fatally wounded, and setting down their stretcher near a small group of mounds, just above our camp on the hill, they began to dig his grave. From their actions I perceived the man was not yet dead, and went up to watch them. After digging a hole about a foot deep, they lit their pipes and sat down to smoke and talk over matters, and wait for him to die.

They betrayed not the least sense of emotion or feeling for the poor wretch who lay there before them, gasping in the agonies of death, and when he had breathed his last, roughly tipped him over into the hole, and covering him with a few shovelsful of earth, picked up their stretcher and went back into the pits for the next one.

Such scenes were common, and few there were that were killed here that got more than a blanket for a coffin, or as much as a prayer over their burial. And yet all this lack of sympathy was without malice, and but the result of living night and day within the "valley of the shadow of death."

July, 1864.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MINE.

N EARLY opposite our part of the line, and occupying a rise of ground about one hundred and fifty yards in our front, stood a rebel earth-work mounting six large siege guns. From its elevated position, it commanded within the range of its guns a great part of our line. In rear, and a little to the right of this fort, was another eminence, on the crest of which was located a church and cemetery. This latter position was considered the key to the whole rebel line. To gain possession of this point would insure the perhaps permanent defeat of the rebel army and the downfall of Petersburg.

But the way to this Cemetery Hill, as it was called, lay directly through the above fort, and the latter being impregnable to a direct assault, plans were agitated to remove it. At last Lieutenant-Colonel Pleasants, of the Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, hit upon a plan by which he proposed to undermine the fort by digging a trench directly through the hill, reaching to the centre of the fort, and by the use of several tons of powder, blow it out of existence. Troops being ready, could in the confusion that would naturally ensue, charge through the breach without much opposition, and occupy the crest of Cemetery Hill beyond, thus dividing and outflanking the whole rebel position.

Our old General Burnside heartily indorsed this idea, but the other generals, his superiors in rank (but in nothing else), Grant and Meade, snubbed the idea and the men that originated it. But Colonel Pleasants was so confident of the result that General Grant acquiesced, and gave permission for the work to go ahead, as Grant himself says, "as a means of keeping the men occupied." It would have been better for General Grant to have visited the front line occasionally and stayed a day with us, under fire, if he carried the idea that his men were not sufficiently "occupied."

The Forty-eighth Pennsylvania Regiment being mostly composed of coal miners in their native state, was detailed for the work. The mine was commenced on the 25th of June in the ravine in rear of our rifle-pits, and about five hundred feet from the rebel fort, and dug almost on a level for a distance of 200 feet, and then on a rising grade of thirteen and one half-feet to the 100, being nearly square, or about four feet wide by four and a half high.

The earth was brought out in cracker boxes and dumped in the ravine near by. For a month the miners labored day and night. At length on the 25th of July, the end of the excavation, or gallery, lay directly under the centre of the fort, and about twenty feet below it. Two wings were now excavated to the right and left, thus forming with the gallery, the shape of a letter T. In these were placed four wooden tanks capable of holding a ton of powder each.

On the 27th I was one of a party detailed to carry the powder into the mine. It was large, coarse blasting powder, and was placed in kegs of twenty-five pounds each. These kegs were then placed in bags and slung over our shoulders. We moved quickly over the space between the teams and traverse to avoid getting a bullet in one of these kegs of powder, as they were continually flying all around us, and left the kegs at the mouth of the gallery.

Here they were taken by the miners and carried into the magazine underneath the fort. In this manner four tons of powder were deposited in the large wooden tanks.

A wooden trough was then laid to communicate with the outside. This was half filled with loose powder and fuses laid through the centre of it. The space between the trough and the sides of the gallery was then filled with bags of earth well tamped in and extending ten or twelve feet from the magazine outward, presenting a solid wall, and thus determining the force of the explosion upward. The mine now being completed, the 30th of July was fixed upon as the day the great breach should be made.

General Burnside's plan of attack was, in a few words, as follows: "To form two columns, and to charge with them through the breach caused by the explosion of the mine, then to sweep along the enemy's line, right and left, clearing away the artillery and infantry by attacking in flank and rear, — *other* columns to make for the 'crest', and the rest of the army to coöperate."

General Ferrero's division of colored troops was selected to lead the assault, for the reason that all the white troops in the Ninth Corps had been constantly at work in the rifle-pits for a long time, and besides being worn out with hard service, "had acquired the habit of sheltering themselves from the enemy's missiles.

"The colored troops, on the contrary, were fresh and strong, their ranks full, their *morale* unexceptionable, and their spirits elated by the thought of the approaching conflict. They had been drilled with especial reference to this movement, and their officers were conversant with all its details, the ground to be traversed, and the work to be done."*

If this plan, so feasible and plain that the most ignorant

soldier in the ranks could readily understand its import, had been seconded and approved by General Meade and supported by General Grant we should not have to record an inglorious and disastrous defeat. But from the first, both of these officers had shown an obstinacy to all of Burnside's plans, seemingly determined to doubt the success of any movement that did not originate with themselves.

Whether this arose from a feeling of jealousy on the part of Meade, or apathy and arrogance on the part of Grant, let the world decide. One thing is certain, General Grant has placed himself in a bad light in regard to this matter, for while in his *Personal Memoirs* he states that the failure was "all due to the inefficiency on the part of the corps commander," (General Burnside), he testifies in his examination before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, that "General Burnside wanted to put his colored division in front, and *I believe if he had done so, it would have been a success.*" The failure then, according,—not only to General Grant's testimony, but to the freely expressed opinion of *every* intelligent soldier in that corps, was *not* due to the "inefficiency of General Burnside," but because he was not allowed to carry out his original plan of battle and "put his colored division in front."

As a means of drawing away a portion of the rebel army from Petersburg, and of weakening the lines to be assaulted in our front, two divisions of the Second Corps were sent up to Deep Bottom, on the extreme right, and on the 28th made a demonstration in force at that point. After attaining their object, they withdrew quietly, and returned to this place, taking position near our camp, as the rear line of support.

Being detailed for our usual picket duty on the 27th, our regiment occupied their accustomed place in the "pits." As yet, among the men, nothing definite was known of the

exact time fixed for the explosion. At length, at midnight of the 29th, Colonel Buffum informed us that the mine was to be sprung at half-past three the next morning, and that General Ledlie's division of our corps was to lead the assault, with our division (Potter's) on the right, and General Wilcox's division on the left. A detail was immediately made to remain on "firing duty," occupying the place of the regiment, and the remainder of us prepared for action.

The night was still and calm, broken only by the crack of the rifles and whiz of the minie-balls over us, denoting the ever-watchful eyes of our enemies across the way. We that were ready for the part assigned us, sat there in the rifle-pit, thinking of home and all that was dear to us, and of the bloody work that we must soon undertake, wondering how many of us would, ere the setting of the next day's sun, have passed away in the roar and smoke of battle and bidden farewell to earth; and we looked upon each other's faces and whispered messages to be left with those who were likely to be kept out of the fight, as if indeed we were about to part with them for the last time. And well were those looks cast, and well those messages given for many of our comrades who returned not again.

One, two, three o'clock arrived. All was activity in our rear lines, but no movement on our part yet. At half-past three we received our orders, and bidding good-bye to the firing party left behind, we quietly filed out of the "pits" and made our way back to camp. Stripping ourselves of everything cumbersome, taking only haversack, canteen, gun, and equipments, we took our place in line in rear of our camp, ready for the explosion and its subsequent work.

The troops forming the assaulting column were in position, ready to spring at the word of command. The artillery of 110 cannon and fifty mortars were waiting, already trained on the enemy's works and with the lanyards pulled taut,

ready to fire at the moment of the explosion, and all attention was directed to that doomed fort, which we momentarily expected to see rise in the air.

The rebel pickets continued their usual fire, all unconscious of the terrible power at work beneath them. The fuse was lighted at the proper time, but being of a poor quality, it burned but a little while and went out. It was again lighted, and every man watched eagerly the space the fort occupied, expecting to see it go up; but yet no explosion. The fuse had gone out again in the gallery. At quarter past four Lieutenant Douty and Sergeant Rees, of the Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, volunteered, and entering the chamber, once more lit the fuse. It was at this time daylight, and the rebel flag could be seen waving over the doomed garrison, and the silent excitement of our troops, kept waiting so long, became intense.

At twenty minutes of 5 o'clock, and just as the sun was rising in splendor in the eastern heavens, the hissing of the fuse ceased, the earth gave one great throb, and with a noise as of muffled thunder, the fort rose into the air in one huge jet, mingled with great clods of earth, guns, gun carriages, timber, and human beings. Slowly, and more slowly it ascended, spreading out like a great fan, until it reached an elevation of two hundred feet or more, when it balanced a moment in space, and fell back with a sound of thunder to the earth,— a complete wreck.

The sight,— most awful to behold,— the shrieks of the doomed garrison, the roar and rush of the huge guns and timber down from the great black clouds of smoke that were curling and unfolding over our heads, and the mingled noise and shock of the explosion, struck terror into the hearts of the bravest of our troops, and for a moment not a man stirred out of his tracks, not an eye was taken off that awful spectacle.

But the troops soon recovered from the effects of the explosion; the artillery opened along the line, and General Ledlie's division leaped our rifle-pits and charged over the field, followed by General Wilcox's division on the left, and by ours, General Potter's, on the right.

"Forward, Fourth Rhode Island," came the word, and we started up the hill towards the traverse. Halting here a moment to let the troops in front of us get out of the way, we received the compliments of the rebels in the shape of a shrapnel that burst over us, striking down Sergeant Jillson, color-bearer, and one or two others. This happened in less than ten minutes after the explosion, and yet General Grant says in his *Memoirs*, "it was an hour" before the rebel artillery began to play upon us.

Advancing through the traverse to the front line, we halted again. One of the miners was standing in front of the "gallery." A nine-inch mortar shell descended quickly, bursting in his face. He was torn to pieces, while his hat was blown straight up in the air for a height of fifty feet. The Fifth Corps in line here at the breast-works, were rapidly firing on the rebel line, above which could be seen the national colors, and the cry was raised "Cease firing, you are firing on your own men." But our boys of the Fourth, with the memory of that corn field at Antietam, responded, "Give 'em h—l. They played that on us at Antietam."

"Forward the Fourth" comes again, and we leap the breast-works, and with a cheer charge across the field to the "crater." The explosion has left a hole twenty feet deep and sixty long, and this hole we find filled with the men of Marshall's brigade of Ledlie's division. Bartlett's brigade of the same division is also here, crowded up, unable to advance. There is a conflict of orders. There seems to be no one in particular in authority. General Ledlie himself is not here; General Potter is endeavoring to

extricate our division from the mass of troops with which we have got entangled, and while waiting for orders we lie flat to the ground. All around us lies the *debris* of the explosion, and the bodies of the 200 men composing the rebel garrison are protruding from the earth in all directions, heads, hands, arms, and feet can be seen, some of the poor men in the last throes of dissolution.

The rebel line has recovered from its surprise, and is pouring in a concentrated fire upon us from front and flank, at close range, General Grant's *Memoirs* to the contrary, notwithstanding. We must do something; we can't lay here; we must advance beyond this line to the crest, if possible. Regiment after regiment in front of us is called to lead another charge on the crest, but the men heed it not. They are fortifying. That which Burnside feared — the old habit of sheltering themselves — is upon them. They are digging and tugging away at the dismounted guns of the fort, to mount them on the edge of the crater. They are turning the works to gain shelter from the tempest of shot and shell that is tearing them to pieces. Their officers shout in vain. Grasping the colors of their regiments, they leap the edge of the crater and call for their men to follow. A few respond, but once over in the face of that fire they recoil, and come bleeding back to the hole again.

“Fourth Rhode Island” comes from Colonel Buffum, on the other edge of the crater. We rally around the flag, a little party of fifty or sixty. “Keep your eyes on the colors,” “Forward the Fourth,” and away we go, and advance on a run toward the crest, through the hottest fire we ever experienced. But in spite of all their officers' exertions, the regiments back in the crater will not follow us. We reach a distance of 100 yards. We halt, and lie close to the earth waiting for support, and ready to advance again, ready to

lead *the whole Ninth Corps*, if need be, on to the works in front of us. Volley after volley sweeps over us, and in a moment the enemy has trained their guns and mortars upon the spot where we lie. We are digging our noses into the ground, to escape the fire. Whirr, chuck, comes a big rifle shell, directly in our midst. Striking the ground, it bounds away, but leaves a hole about four feet long scooped out in the earth. Comrade Frank Tompkins and I see it at the same time. Instinctively we both dive for it for a shelter, and reaching it together, quarrel for possession. "Get out of this hole, it's mine," "Get out yourself, I got here first," "Get out, or I'll knock you out," But the rebel settles the matter. A grape shot strikes Tompkins a glancing blow in the side. "I'm wounded" he cries. "Get to the rear then, where you belong," I answer, and dig my nose deeper into the ground. We have lain here probably three minutes and finding no support, start back again and enter the rifle-pit just to the right of the crater. No, not all of us. A few brave boys still lie out there; they are dead. A few more lie out there wounded, trying to crawl in, and calling for help. Lieut. George W. Field hears them. He leaps upon the edge of the crater. "Who will follow me," he cries. "I," "I," and a dozen respond. With sword uplifted, he advances one step and falls dead.

We gather in a little band of thirty or forty around our colonel. What is next to be done? Over yonder near the old barn they are getting a new battery into position to enfilade us. It is a part of Lee's forces that have just got back from the right. Comrades Billy Gates, Bob Hamilton, and myself, form ourselves into sharp-shooters, and try to pick off the gunners. Bob's little yellow dog has come into the fight with him, and is jumping around, yelling and barking, as if fully alive to the importance of the situation.

Suddenly a yip and a yell tells us the dog is hit. Bob drops his rifle, grabs and hurriedly examines the dog. A ball has skipped across his back and burnt off the hair, that is all.

Ferrero's division of colored troops is now coming in from our lines. They advance well, but seem to mistake us for the rebel line, and confusion ensues. Something is the matter with our batteries. Their shot and shell are coming too close to us. An officer leaps upon the top of the rifle-pit. Grasping a stand of colors, he waves them back and forth, facing our lines. We cannot tell whether this stops our batteries' fire or not. We are in the midst of a terrible storm. It would seem impossible to live a second longer, and the fire comes from all directions.

There goes the colored division. We are all ready to follow. But here they come back, rushing pell-mell over into our midst, knocking us down, shouting, panic-struck, and—with some noble exceptions—they fly to the rear. Struggling through the excited and confused mass, the old Fourth,—what few there are of us,—stand steady to the front. The field in front of us is thick with the rebel gray. On they come. With sleeves rolled up and rifle at trail, crouching like a tiger to spring upon its prey, they resolutely advance, and with a rush pierce our line and turn back our right. The Fifty-eighth Massachusetts boys, on our right, are out-flanked, cut off, taken prisoners, and away they run for the rebel lines, carrying their colors with them. "Drop your colors!" we cry, but with no effect. They are gone now. The rebels are pressing us on the right. As they creep along they find lying here and there some wounded colored men, and pounce upon them. The poor helpless blacks lift up their hands and beg for mercy. But there is no mercy in that rebel line of men for them. Down comes

the rifle-breech, crashing through their skulls, or the sharp bayonet, piercing them through and through.

Closer they press, and at last plant their colors within a dozen feet of ours. And now the air is filled with oaths, shouts, curses, shrieks, and groans. We are wild; we are crazy; we force them back; we fire in their faces; we beat them with the rifle breech. Down goes our colors. Two or three try to raise and plant them again, but it is no use, and they fall headlong over one another,—and the flag catches their blood in its folds.

But we are wearing out. Where are our reënforcements? What are those three lines of battle doing back of our main line? They are waiting for orders from General Meade to advance and help us out, but he is not disposed to give them. He is enraged at the failure of his *own plan of battle*, and is taking his ease in a shady grove beyond the reach of shot and shell, in blissful ignorance of all that is transpiring in his front.

At last an aide comes to us: “Colonel Buffum, take your regiment to the rear. We can get no support. The day is lost.” Another officer just at this time is borne past us, wounded, and cries out: “Every man of the Fourth Rhode Island deserves promotion.” We have done what we could; no one could do more. Securing our colors we make for our main line. The rebels are now sweeping the space between the lines with grape, canister,—everything that they can fire,—to prevent any man from reaching our lines alive. Many of our men prefer to stay in the line and surrender as prisoners, rather than run the risk of crossing this shot-swept plain. Our colonel and four other officers with eighteen men prefer to stay. The rest of us take the risk and run for it. Several fall on the way. We reach our lines, and stop to look back just in time to see the Johnnies

pile over into the crater, and take all that are left there prisoners.

The battle is over, but the firing on our lines is yet heavy. As we sit inside our works exhausted, out of breath, parching with thirst, Comrades William Noonan and Corp. John Ray Clarke, of Company B, come along. "Where are the colors?" they ask. "They came in ahead of us, and are somewhere on the left." "Let us go to find them." We three start towards the left, when a mortar shell bursts within a few feet of our heads, and knocks all three of us flat to the ground. We escape unwounded, however, though our heads ring with the concussion, and rising, pursue our way to the left. A few steps further we find Maj. J. T. P. Bucklin with a number of our men and the colors. We stand here a few minutes trying to collect all we can find of our regiment, and then count noses. There are only *seventeen* of us, all told, and as soon as the firing lulled down, we start back to camp.

The loss of our troops in this assault was 4,000, while that of the enemy was only about fourteen hundred.

The old Fourth Rhode Island went into the fight with about two hundred men and officers, and lost seventy-five, killed, wounded, and prisoners. One more such fight would wipe the little remnant of the Fourth out of existence. Such a looking set of men as we were when we entered our camp that afternoon! Faces and hands black with powder, clothes and equipments pierced and cut by minie-balls, and torn and begrimed with blood and dirt, rifles black and bloody,—our pictures taken just then and sent home to our friends, would give them a better idea of *war* than all that has been written and said upon the subject.

And now our forces being all drawn in, the two armies occupied the same position as before the fight. Let others

blame who they will for our defeat, *we that were there* know that if the plans of General Burnside had been approved, adopted, and supported as they should have been, it would have proved a success.

The battle was fought under the orders and plan of General Meade. The Ninth Corps was suffered to penetrate the rebel line, and to hold it against fearful odds from twenty minutes to five until half-past ten, nearly six hours. Four heavy lines of battle composed of the Fifth, Tenth, Eighteenth, and Second Corps lay waiting and anxious to support us, or at least to give us a chance to retreat and get out of it, but with the exception of a division of the Tenth and one of the Eighteenth Corps, *not a man was allowed to go to our assistance.*

Burnside's corps were in a box, and General Meade knew it, and it looked to us then, and does to-day, that he was perfectly willing we should *stay there.* Four thousand of them *did,* and we hope he was gratified.

Hundreds of our wounded lay out on the field and around the crater, suffering intensely from the heat of the sun, and the want of water. No aid could be given them until nightfall, when canteens of water were thrown over toward them, and those less wounded, crawled about, and administered to the wants of the rest as best they could. A few of those that were able to crawl, managed to get into our lines during the night.

A flag of truce to bury the dead and care for the wounded was sent out next morning, but for some reason unknown to the writer, remained unrecognized by the rebel authorities all day. The bodies were swelling from the heat of the sun to an immense size, and were filled with maggots and flies. The stench became unendurable. Another flag was raised on the following morning. This

received a response, and preparations were at once made to bury the dead.

Comrade Thomas Arnold and myself made our way out to the field in search of any dead or wounded of our company. The dead were then unrecognizable, except by medals or letters found upon them. Men were torn into all shapes, and the crater was filled with bodies lying in heaps, black as black could be, swollen out of all proportion, covered with flies and maggots, and emitting a stench sickening in the extreme. We found Augustus T. Thornton, of our company, but his body was too rotten to bring inside our lines, and we were obliged to leave him to be buried with the rest. I removed what few trinkets he had about him, and his medal, and a few days after sent them home to his father. He was a good soldier, and though laboring under the disadvantage of being a little deaf, never shirked his duty, and had at last given his all in defense of his country.

Those bodies that were recognized and could be lifted on to stretchers without falling to pieces, were carried into our lines and buried. Pits were dug twenty or thirty feet long and about four feet deep for the rest. The poor fellows were then rolled, and in some cases, *shovelled* onto the stretchers, and dumped or laid in the holes, one on top the other, until within a foot of the top, and then covered with loose earth.

In course of time these bodies decayed. Subsequent storms washed the loose covering of earth down through, and for months after, until the end of the war, long rows of bleaching skeletons marked this field of awful slaughter.

August, 1864.

CHAPTER XX.

WELDON RAILROAD.

BUT the excitement regarding this great defeat at length wore away, and we resumed our usual course of duties.

August 3d our regiment went out to our old position on the picket line again, but fewer in numbers than previously. We now mustered but 125, altogether. On the 5th, about 5 P. M., the rebels tried their hand at explosions. They had mined to reach one of our forts, but by some miscalculation had located their magazine just in front of our rifle-pits and while we were whiling away the afternoon in the pits, at our usual place, an explosion startled us, and looking down to the right about half a mile, we saw a huge cloud of dust and clods of earth rise to a height of fifty feet and fall.

The rebels jumped out of their works for a grand charge, but immediately our whole line, front and rear, opened upon them, and sent them back to their holes, in somewhat of a hurry, and before dark they quieted down.

The next day we were relieved by the Forty-eighth New York Regiment, and went back to camp. On the 7th returned to the pits for picket duty again, stayed two days and nights, without serious incident or accident, and came in again on the 9th. On the 11th were again detailed for

picket, remaining in the pits until the 14th when we came back to camp. Spreading ourselves for one night's good rest, listening to the flying bullets, and the crack of the pickets' rifles, and wondering when this cruel war would end, we dropped off to sleep, as we hoped, till morning, as we had not enjoyed scarcely a full night's sleep for the past six weeks.

Alas, vain hope. At 2 o'clock in the morning we were routed out, ordered to "Pack up and strike tents," and soon started out of these woods and this place called the "Nine Holes," bidding them good-bye forever, a fact that cheered us greatly. After marching the rest of the night by a roundabout way, at daylight we reached the front again about a mile to the left of our previous camp, but out of the woods, on the open ground. Here we relieved a division of the Fifth Corps which marched out to the left and rear.

This camp consisted of bomb-proofs, and all the name it ever received was the "Bomb-proofs." A bomb-proof is a large hole dug in the ground and covered with heavy logs and earth, looking very much like a tomb. Built strongly, as it should be, it is proof against the shot or shell of the enemy, hence its name, "bomb-proof." Bunks are fitted up on the inside, and entrance is gained by a door and steps.

We thought ourselves fortunate in getting such comfortable quarters, and another thing in our favor was the fact that here there was no firing between the pickets either night or day, and only an occasional artillery duel between the batteries, or a sharp-shooter's ball from the vicinity of the old blown-up fort of our last chapter, which we could plainly see about a mile on our right. It did seem good to be able to walk about straight without crouching and dodging, and the ever accompanying music of minie-balls on the way. We slept in our new quarters that night; slept

sound until reveille the next morning, with nothing to disturb us for the first time in six weeks, and we arose comfortable and contented. Well it was for those who were not on duty to enjoy this night of rest, for it was destined to be the only chance for some time.

The next afternoon a heavy shower of rain fell, lasting several hours. The water formed in ponds around our bomb-proofs, and there not being sufficient drainage to carry it off quickly, it rose higher and higher in front of our "cellar way," despite all our exertions to keep it out, until it suddenly overflowed and poured down the steps like a mill-stream. There was a grab for our traps, and a rush to get out, and "de'il tak' the hindmost," and in less than a minute our beautiful quarters were full of water, on top of which floated the caps, knapsacks, canteens, etc., that we were unable to rescue in our hasty exit. Our rations and ammunition were spoiled; and drenched to the skin, wretched and hungry, we took what little possessions we had saved from the flood, and sadly meandered down to the cook-houses in the rear, by the fires of which we tried to get the cold chill out of our wet bodies. The rain ceased after a while, and ourselves being supplied with a good cup of hot coffee, slice of toasted pork, and fried hard-tack (our mouth waters to this day at the remembrance of that supper), we pitched our tents on the wet ground, and spreading our blankets, lay down and went to sleep.

On the 17th, the writer was one of a detail for picket duty. We found the pickets about one hundred yards in front of our works, occupying a line of "horseshoes," or holes dug half round in the shape of a horseshoe. In front of us, only fifty yards away, the rebel pickets occupied a similar line. In their rear some two hundred yards, their first line was located, and in rear of this the ground rose in a series of hills or slight elevations, one above the other, crowned with fortifications and bristling with cannon.

The pickets of both lines here were disposed to be peaceable, and indulged in friendly chat, or traded for papers, coffee, tobacco, etc. Being much in need of tobacco, (an article the Johnnies always had plenty of,) I tried to trade with them a large jack-knife for three heads of tobacco, and writing my conditions on a piece of paper, I wrapped it around the knife and flinging the parcel over into their line awaited the result. They could have kept it if they so desired, as of course I could not cross to get it.

Quite a crowd of them gathered around, examined the knife and tested its merits. Finally one of them, an officer of some sort, produced a large piece of tobacco, wrote on the paper, and wrapping up the knife and tobacco, threw it back to me. On the paper were these words :

Friend Yank : The knife is a good one, but we are not allowed to trade. However, you are welcome to this piece of tobacco. Yours,

SOLDIER.

We were much pleased at getting the knife back, much pleased with their honesty, and more than pleased with the big piece of tobacco they gave us.

That night, while we lay here in the pits, conversing and watching the rebels across the way, at a little after midnight, suddenly we saw a flash and heard a heavy gun away down on the right near the Appomattox River, and before we had finished wondering what was the row, the whole rebel line of artillery, from right to left, opened a tremendous fire upon our works.

As we lay in our pits between the two fires, the scene became fearfully grand. The long red spouts of flame from the mouth of the guns here, there, and everywhere about us ; the glowing shot and shell flying over our heads from either line weaving a fiery net-work across the black heavens ; the twinkling light of the heavy mortar shells as they rose in great half circles in the air, seeming almost to

strike as they passed each other from opposite sides, formed an exciting and most beautiful picture.

For three hours this fiery storm swept the black space above us, passing from line to line, and we sat still in our pits watching the enemy's pickets closely to detect the first signs of an advance, and ducking our heads at each charge of grape that one of the enemy's batteries *would* persist in throwing directly into and around our pits.

At last the fire slackened, and about 3 o'clock ceased altogether. It was probably opened to find out the number and position of our batteries, or what is called in soldier parlance, "feel the lines," to ascertain if any of our forces had left this place and to call them back if possible. But it was a great waste of ammunition, with no adequate result, as although all our batteries were in position for an attack, but few of them were allowed to answer the rebel fire, thus leaving the enemy as much in doubt of any move on our part as ever, and from being well covered, our loss was but small.

The next morning, for some reason the company cook forgot or neglected to bring out our breakfast to the picket lines, and having been ordered out without rations we began to get desperately hungry. After waiting some time, I decided to go back into the lines for it. The space of open ground between us and the breast-works, was directly in line of fire from the rebel sharp-shooters in the vicinity of the old crater, and we had noticed the day previous that those jolly rebels were in the habit of drawing a bead upon any one who attempted to cross over to or from our lines to the picket post. I had not got any more than half way across, when I heard a minie-ball coming hissing along, its force nearly spent, and instantly dropped flat on my face that it might pass over, when chuck, it plowed into the ground about three feet from my side. Had the sharp-shooter but

raised his aim very slightly, it would doubtless have made a hole through me. I jumped up and made a run for the works, mounting which, the zip, zip, of several more of those little fellows told me they meant business, and I lost no time in getting to cover. Somewhat of a narrow escape, but a common every-day occurrence in these parts.

We were relieved of picket duty that afternoon and went into camp. Our bomb-proofs were now dry, and we once more moved into them. Nothing is so scarce or hard to get in siege life as sleep. Very seldom can one lie down at night and not be disturbed or woke up before morning, except it be that he receives special permission from the enemy's lines in the shape of a piece of lead or iron, and we defy any one to wake him then. Being off duty that night, we retired directly after tattoo, and hugging up to each other, spoon fashion, were very soon oblivious to all our surroundings.

At about midnight the roar of a heavy gun on our right again brought us to our feet in an instant. No matter how soundly a living soldier may be asleep, an unusual noise will always bring him to his senses in a hurry. Profiting by our experience of the night before, and knowing that in less than three minutes the air would be alive with shot and shell, we hastily grasped our rifle and equipments in one hand and shoes in the other,—we generally slept in our clothes during the siege,—and reached the breast-works just in time to escape the storm of missiles that burst upon us from every rebel gun and mortar in our front.

For another three hours they rained a perfect tempest of shot, shell, grape, canister, and shrapnel over into our works, but I believe without injury to our regiment. Several men of the regiment on our left were struck, a rebel solid shot taking one man's head off as he was looking

over the works. At 1 o'clock, during the bombardment, we received marching orders, but could not pack up until the fire slackened somewhat. At daylight the rebels ceased firing. At 9 A. M. a division of the Second Corps marched in to relieve us, and we shouldered our traps and started out to the rear, the Johnnies facilitating our exit with a few charges of shrapnel, by way of bidding us good-bye.

Soon after we struck the road in our rear, the heavy clouds that had been gathering above us all the morning, now sent down their treasures in copious showers of rain, drenching us to the skin, and quickly transforming the roads into an almost impassable sea of mud. We struck off towards the left, in company with the rest of our division, and trudged along as best we could through the mud and rain.

Our destination was now in support of the Fifth Corps, who, in advance, had reached the Weldon Railroad at a place called Six-mile Station. They had destroyed the track, and were endeavoring to lengthen their line and connect with the old line on their right, when the enemy struck them in force, and almost doubled them up.

Consequently our corps was sent for and succeeded in establishing themselves upon the right of the Fifth, our division holding the right of the line, and connecting with the left of the Second Corps in our old line of works, near the Jesuralem Plank Road, just in time to save the Fifth Corps, who were heavily pressed. The battle raged from noon to night, but being somewhat to the left of us, our regiment did not get very heavily engaged, the rebels falling back to their line of works. On the 20th we worked, strengthening the line, for it was not to be expected that General Lee would give up this railroad so easily, it being one of his main sources of supply. A detail was made

for picket upon the new line established, and nothing further transpired that night. On the morning of the 21st before guard mount, the enemy's pickets were seen advancing, supported by the heavy lines of battle composing A. P. Hill's corps. He opened with a heavy cannonade upon the right of the Fifth Corps and left of the Ninth, the assault being strongly made, and in some parts of the line left of us, reaching to our breast-works, but being over ground in an oblique direction to our left, our regiment was not heavily engaged, and the loss was slight. Our two left divisions, under Wilcox and White, made a noble stand behind their newly constructed works and successively repulsed each charge of the rebel lines, covering, and in some places piling, the field with their dead and wounded. This was their last attempt to retake this road from our forces, and we were permitted to finish the works we had begun, thus establishing a strong and continuous line from the right, near Richmond, to the left, beyond the Weldon Railroad.

Since the 3d of July previous, the writer had not enjoyed but one night's good sleep; had participated in two battles; marched about twenty-five miles; stood picket duty eighteen days and nights, and camp-guard five days and nights; been under continual fire for forty days and nights; laid out in the wet and cold three or four nights, besides doing fatigue duty of a hard and dangerous nature; and what was worse than all this, our rations had failed to arrive and for the last two days we had fought on empty stomachs. This was rather tough campaigning, and one evening after the battle above referred to, I started to find something to eat somewhere. Passing back through the woods, I saw a comrade of another regiment eating his supper, and after considerable begging and pleading, he took pity upon me and gave me one hard-tack and two raw potatoes. I was so hungry I did not wait to cook

them, but ate them raw. The result was, I was taken sick that night, and in the morning was sent to the division hospital, and here I lay completely played out and unable to stand.

The next morning the hospital was ordered to re-locate some distance to the rear of the line. The weakest of us were put into baggage wagons and jolted along the rough roads, and finally brought up at a place several miles in rear, from which, next day, we were transferred to City Point General Hospital, and arrived there more dead than alive; but were soon placed in good comfortable beds, and under the kind treatment of the Sanitary Commission I soon began to mend. In five days I was much better, and was transferred to the convalescent camp near by September 1st. On the 5th of September I had been in the service three years.

Being now rested and recruited sufficiently for active service, I ran away from the hospital camp with several other comrades, and started to rejoin my regiment at the front.

We footed it all the distance in two days, and found the regiment encamped just in rear of the breast-works, about where we left them, and took up our share of camp and picket duty with the rest of our comrades. And now we had quite a season of rest from our late arduous campaign, and enjoyed it much, making ourselves comfortable quarters in these shady woods, and those who were soon to return home anxiously waiting the day, and hoping they should not be called to battle again.

September, 1864.

CHAPTER XXI.

INCIDENTS OF SIEGE LIFE.

IN front of our line of works, close under which we were encamped, extended an open plain, about two miles long by one-quarter to one-half a mile wide. This had been the battle-field of our last chapter. The soil was a hard clay, and mostly devoid of vegetation.

Here and there all over the field were great black spots where the blood of our enemies had lately stained the ground, and which were scattered so thickly that one could walk but a few feet in any direction without stepping upon them, an evidence of the cost of human life which General Lee sacrificed here in his fruitless attempt to recapture the railroad.

On the opposite side of this field was a heavy strip of woodland. In the edge of these woods our picket lines were located, and were probably about half a mile in front of the rebel line of intrenchments. A cart path ran through these woods towards Petersburg, passing through that portion of our line occupied by our regiment's pickets.

It was thought prudent, on account of the density of these woods, to station a corporal and six men out on this cart path about a quarter of a mile in front of our picket line, to act as a "corps of observation," and to give timely notice of any advance movement of the enemy, and one day it was my luck to be put in charge of this party of vedettes.

I was ordered to pick out six of the best men I could find in our regimental detail, and to advance carefully beyond the lines, to where the post was located, and relieve the men found there, and keeping under cover all day, watch closely for any advance move on the part of the rebel line, perceiving which, we were to immediately fall back and report.

We started about nine A. M., and soon getting out of sight of our picket line, we skirmished from tree to tree, advancing slowly, till we descried our post of seven men lying flat on the ground, and creeping up to them received their orders and relieved them. I immediately posted my men in the form of a letter A, extending across the road, and each man facing a different direction, thus keeping all points of the compass under constant observation, though by the thickness of the woods our field of vision was somewhat limited.

Hiding among the grass or behind the butts of trees, we lay here watching closely to the front, flank, and rear for the first signs of a rebel, and keeping as quiet as possible. We found we were inside of the line that the rebels occupied during the night as vedette posts, and consequently were very near their main line; but we could not see their lines, which were probably located just beyond on the other side of the woods.

The day was pleasant and warm. The woods still as death. We could hear plainly the sounds of drums and bugles in our camps, and much more plainly the same sounds from the rebel camps, showing that we were much nearer their lines than ours. But after we had lain here for an hour or two and could see nothing to alarm us, we began to gain confidence, and as it was pretty hard work to watch so closely, we soon grew wearied, and began to relax our vigilance, and for a few moments rested our limbs by walking about and examining our immediate neighborhood.

Suddenly a sharp rattling report of rifles rang through the woods from the direction of our own picket lines, bringing us quickly back to our post, and grasping our rifles we pulled the hammer back and peered through the woods on all sides for the cause of this disturbance, while a scattering fire of musketry was ringing an alarm, accompanied by the yells of the rebels, and the minie-balls from our own pickets' rifles were zipping and striking all around us. And all this was taking place *between us and our own lines*, and we made up our mind we should be gobbled up shortly. We could not see them, but had plenty of evidence that they were there, and we lay low as possible that they might not see us if they came back to their own lines that way.

This affair kept up for about fifteen minutes, when it ceased. The rebel party, instead of coming our way, passed off down the line, and we heard them no more. But this kept us doubly guarded and watchful during the remainder of our stay at this post, and we more earnestly kept a sharp watch all about us for the first traces of a Johnnie Reb. At last the writer discovered one.

By the side of a tall tree, about a hundred yards on our left, stood a rugged looking Johnnie, wearing gray pants, butternut-colored jacket, and slouched felt hat, and with rifle at a "ready," was leaning over, peering at us, as if in great astonishment to see a party of Yanks in such a place. Yes, there he stood, a mighty good shot, yet as ready for that kind of work as we. None of the boys saw him. I spoke to them, and told them where he was, but they could not see any signs of a rebel, and I did not dare to take my eyes off of him, for fear he would draw a bead on me.

For five minutes he never moved from his tracks. I waved my hand but he would not answer. I concluded there were more of them there, and began to think we had discovered the party that caused all the firing that morn-

ing, and they might be trying to creep around us and gobble us up.

At length I moved slowly up to one of my comrades and directed his attention to my rebel by sighting him over the rifle. But the instant I did so he was gone,—probably dodged behind the tree. I crawled back to my place and watched closely in all directions, all of us lying low and keeping our eyes peeled, when chancing to glance at the tree again, there was the same rebel and in much the same position as when I first saw him.

The boys were getting worked up over the matter, and I desired to bring things to a crisis. So keeping my eyes fixed on Mr. Johnnie, and my rifle in readiness for quick work, I began crawling through the grass toward him. He never moved, but seemed to watch more closely. A thick stump of a tree stood directly in my path, and I crept to one side to get by it. As I did so he all at once seemed to separate, and as I got a few feet further to one side, I stopped, and the absurdity of the whole matter burst upon my mind.

The bright afternoon sunlight flashing through the trees, had so cast a combination of shadows upon the gray trunk of an old oak as to exactly resemble the living picture of a rebel, his rifle in hand, and in the position before described, and which could only be seen by a person in just such a direct line of vision as I at first occupied. Moving to the right or left would destroy the illusion, and that is why my comrades in those positions were unable to see anything that looked like a rebel, while I myself lost sight of it in trying to sight him over my comrade's rifle. Thus, both in day and night, is a person liable to be deceived while watching closely for an enemy, by purely simple, natural causes.

My comrades joked me a good deal and we talked the matter over, but did not relax our vigilance in the least, for

we knew not, isolated as we were from our own lines, what minute we might be discovered and captured by the enemy.

Nothing further occurred to disturb us, and we lay at our post, weary of watching, until at last the sun dropped to the horizon, and according to our orders, we gladly gave up our vigilance and started back to our picket lines.

Stepping boldly out into the road, we stopped a minute to look down towards the rebel lines. About three hundred feet in front of us a large fallen tree lay across the road, and from behind this rose *three genuine rebels*, who took off their hats and waved them at us as a sign of truce.

“How long have you been there?” we asked.

“We’ve been watching you uns all day,” they replied.

“What was that firing on our pickets this morning?”

“That was one of our scouting parties.”

“How many of them were there?”

“About sixty, I reckon.”

“Did they know we were here?”

“No; they came down between the lines from our right, and it was a right smart chance they didn’t gobble you uns up.”

“Where are your pickets?”

“Right jam by, I reckon.”

“Well, good-night.”

“Good-night.”

And both parties turned towards their respective camps with a friendly wave of our hats. After reporting to the officer of the picket, we were allowed to sleep all night on the line and next morning again went out to our post. We saw nothing more of our rebel friends, and at 9 o’clock were relieved and came back to camp. A few days after while a squad of men were on this same post in vedette, the rebels surrounded them and took them all prisoners without firing a shot, and there not being any need of placing men so far

away from our lines, the post was abandoned from that time forth. With the exception of a slight skirmish between the pickets, which was probably the result of another scouting party, nothing further of note occurred while we lay at this camp.

On the 25th of September we received marching orders, packed up, were relieved, and leaving our shady quarters, passed out on the road to the rear. Joining the rest of our division, we marched down to a point about in rear of our old position at the "Nine Holes." It was evident that another extension of the line was about to take place. On the 29th, the Tenth and Eighteenth Corps crossed the James River to make a heavy demonstration on the north side, and on the same afternoon we were massed in position to coöperate with the Fifth Corps in an attempt to turn the enemy's right, at Poplar Spring Church.

At this point we wish to state that although the regiment was mustered into the United States service Oct. 30, 1861, yet dated its organization as a regiment a month previous to that date, therefore the term of service of the three years' men who did not reënlist as veterans in January, 1864, was about to expire on the morrow, September 30th.

As on the morrow we should, in all probability, be called again into battle, much speculation was rife as to what should be done. The veterans and recruits, of course, would be expected to continue their service and go into the fight, but they would have to go without colors, without any name or number as a regiment, and therefore without any place in the brigade line.

Here was a quandary. Our generals seemed unable to give us any orders, as part must be considered as out of service, while the other part was disorganized. Some of the men whose time was out, especially the color guard, were willing to go into the fight, and carry the colors: Others

considered they had performed all the service they had agreed to, and consequently did not care to run any more risks just on the eve of departure for home.

On the morning of the 30th, the lines advanced to the assault at daylight. About one hundred and thirty of our men, consisting of the veterans, recruits, color guard, and a few others, followed on after our brigade down the road, and formed on the left of the Seventh Rhode Island. By 10 o'clock the action became general. Our regiment, or portion of a regiment being so few in number, was ordered to maintain a guard line in the rear of the line of battle.

While at this duty, lying upon the ground near a rail fence, a battery opened upon us, sending its shot crashing into the fence, throwing the rails and splinters in every direction. One shot struck into the midst of our color guard, shattering the staff and cutting down three of its bearers, killing one, and wounding the other two so badly that they soon died. Two of these men, Sergeant Peabody and Corporal Leddy, were to return home the next day with the rest of the three years' men, but had volunteered to carry the colors into this battle for the last time. After a loss of three killed and two wounded, the boys fell back a short distance, out of range of that rebel battery, and there held a guard line the remainder of the day.

With the approach of night, the battle ceased, the lines were established running through the Peeble Farm, the left being refused, and we bivouacked for the night. Rations were issued to the men at the front, but those who had staid in the rear were left without. During the next two days they made their way up to us, and the whole regiment was together once more.

On the 3d of October, with cheerful good-byes, and "How are you, vets?" "Come home when the war is over," and such remarks, the boys whose time was out and

who were now going home, took the colors, and with cheer and song started down the road for old Rhode Island.

We could not help feeling sad at parting with them, and wishing we were also of that happy number, and there we stood, a little party of a hundred or so, watching them out of sight, and as the last sound of their cheerful voices died away we turned again to our work,—to finish our term of service,—to fight the battle out, to see this rebellion put down, down where it never would rise again, and we believed in our hearts that not another year would elapse before this great result of our labor and hardships would be achieved, and, our lives being spared, we should see our homes, flushed with victory and blessed with peace, having fought this cruel war to the end, and bringing with us an experience of which we should ever more feel proud.

But here we were, a disorganized body of men: no colors, no commander, no name or place in line. But during the day Captain Brown, of our regiment, but now acting on the general's staff, arrived, and took command of us, and marched us over to the camp of the Seventh Rhode Island Volunteers.

Here we were formed into a battalion of three companies. What was left of Companies G, H, D, and A formed Company A of the new battalion. The "lost children" of Companies E, K, and B formed Company B, and the last sad relics of Companies I, F, and C formed Company C.

These were placed in charge of our officers, as far as we had any left, the residue being made up of officers from the Seventh Regiment, the whole being under the command of Lieut.-Col. Percy Daniels, of the Seventh, and to be called Battalion of the Seventh Rhode Island Volunteers. Though this was our military title, yet we never called ourselves other than as we were *once* and *always*, the Fourth Rhode Island Regiment.

October, 1864.

CHAPTER XXII.

HATCHER'S RUN.

THE consolidation of the remnant of our regiment with the Seventh Rhode Island did not meet with very great favor with us, and perhaps the following circumstance had something to do with it: A short time previous, while our division was marching in rear of the main line, back and forth from left to right, the Seventh Rhode Island, under Colonel Daniels, was some distance on our right, and generally went into camp or bivouac before us.

By the time we reached them they would be busy hewing logs, etc., as if to build barracks, and we got into the habit of shouting as we passed their camp, "Build a guard-house! Build a guard-house!" Although the boys took this all in good-nature, it seemed to rile their colonel up some, and he was reported to have said: "If I ever get that Fourth Regiment under my command, *I'll* build a guard-house for them that they won't like."

So we expected to catch it now that we had been placed under his control. And we did. Every morning at reveille we were ordered to turn out, armed and equipped, and go through the manœuvres of dress parade. All the extra duty that he could devise he forced upon us. The roll was called five or six times a day, and woe betide the unlucky man who was not on hand to answer. Fatigue

parties were formed of our men to go out slashing trees, while the Seventh Regiment proper were allowed to loaf in camp. Men were placed under guard upon the least provocation, and everything done to make us understand we were under *his* control. But he soon found he was making enemies faster than friends of our boys, and if he desired their coöperation in future battles he had best treat them more like men, and after a while he let up on us, and the reveille dress parades, etc., were discontinued.

One day, about noon, the pickets on our left opened a rapid and continuous fire, and upon looking down to the large fort which was in process of building, a short distance away, we saw the men flinging down their shovels and picks, and running to their camps for their rifles.

Dropping whatever we had in hand, we hurriedly buckled on our armor, and snatching our rifles, repaired to the breast-works in front of our camp. The pickets on our left fell back slowly, those in our immediate front still holding their position and fire. A strong rebel skirmish line advanced on our left till within 200 yards of our fort, A battery of artillery was quickly run into this half-finished work, and played on them at short range so vigorously that in a few minutes they retired to their former position, our picket-lines were reëstablished, and "all quiet along the lines" succeeded this demonstration.

In a few days we had aligned our tents in three company streets upon the left of the Seventh Rhode Island camp, and arranged them to our satisfaction. We were now put to work building a large earth-work, to be called "Fort Fisher." Trees were felled, abatis cut and planted, new breast-works laid out, and the whole line strengthened in various ways.

The paymaster arrived and left us with replenished purses and lightened hearts, and the time passed pleas-

antly until toward the end of the month, when suddenly things began to look like another move. Work was now hurried forward on the fortifications, night and day, strengthening them in such a manner that a very small force could hold and defend them, in case of our withdrawal for action elsewhere.

At length, on the 27th of October, at 2 o'clock in the morning, we were waked up from sleep, and received orders to "fall in" in fighting trim as quickly and quietly as possible. In a short time all the available troops in this corps, and also in the Second and Fifth Corps, were on the road, ready to proceed to the field of action. Moving a short distance to the rear, we halted near headquarters until daylight. Now, it seemed to our "unofficial" minds, that if a surprise movement on the left was to be attempted, there was a big blunder right on the start, in massing us on this hill near headquarters. It was in plain view of the rebel lines, and as soon as it became light enough to see us they crowded on the top of their works and watched to see which way we were going to move. When the lines did start off to the left, the rebels immediately knew where we were going, what we were going for, and how many troops we had for the expedition, and long before our part of the line started, we could see rebel troops swarming down to their right in the same direction, ready to give us a warm reception when we got there. Consequently, we were defeated before we started. Soon after daylight the line moved out beyond the left of our line, marching "left in front," out on the Squirrel Level Road.

The line of advance was formed as follows: Gregg's cavalry held the extreme left, followed by the Second Corps, under Hancock, and then the Fifth Corps, under Warren. Wilcox's division of the Ninth Corps came next, followed by Ferrero's division of colored troops, Potter's

division bringing up the rear, or extreme right of the whole line. The line advanced by the left flank until the cavalry had reached Hatcher's Run, and together with the Second Corps crossed it on the Boydton Plank Road, six miles from the Southside Railroad, when the whole line left of Potter's division faced to the front and advanced upon the enemy's works covering Hatcher's Run, in the attempt to clean them out, reach the railroad, and hold it. Soon after we started, the rapid fire of our skirmishers denoted that the rebels had been struck in force and were heavily disputing their ground. They were steadily forced back, however, uncovering in their retreat a battery, of which two guns were captured by our lines. Our division now faced to the front and advanced. The battle was now raging on our left, the Second and Fifth Corps, with Wilcox's and Ferrero's divisions of our corps, being hotly engaged. We advanced at regimental front for a distance of 500 yards, and halted in line of battle on a slight elevation, the right of our division being in communication with the left of our old line of works.

No fire was opened in our immediate front, and we were ordered to fall to and throw up a line of intrenchments as quickly as possible. We had no axes, picks, or shovels with which to accomplish this; but near by was an old barn. This would furnish material to build our works, and we fell upon it, wrenching and tearing it to pieces, using the heavy timber for a "backer" to our breast-works, and dug and threw up the dirt against them with the shingles from the roof. In fifteen or twenty minutes of lively work we had a line of breast-works built strong enough to hold our own against an assault.

The firing on our left lulled down, and at sunset had almost ceased. We pitched our tents *en bivouac* for the night, and after stationing pickets and guards, laid our-

selves down for a rest, and soon all save those on duty were asleep. Hancock was now somewhat to the left of Warren, and quite a gap was left between the two corps. Warren endeavored to close down and connect with Hancock, but before he could do so the rebels perceived their advantage, and rushing through this gap between the two corps, at about 8 o'clock that evening, fell with tremendous fury on Hancock's right flank, and at the same time upon Warren, doubling up his left.

The fiercest fire of musketry that the writer ever remembers of hearing, now burst upon the still night air, startling our part of the line to their feet in a hurry, and the battle again opened in the pitch darkness, with all its fury, the attack being principally upon the Second and Fifth Corps. These brave old veterans of many a field at once turned to meet it, and drove the rebels back into their works, and though with considerable loss, regained their former position, and under orders from Grant's headquarters began their line of retreat.

The battle of Hatcher's Run was now over, and early next morning the Second Corps passed us in retreat, followed by the Fifth Corps, by division, and in good order. At noon Wilcox's division of the Ninth Corps came out, and was followed by Ferrero's division of colored troops, thus leaving our division in the works.

We now changed front to rear by brigade, and established a line of battle at right angles with the breast-works, covering the retreat of the rest of our troops. The rebels advanced a heavy skirmish line upon us, though not venturing to attack us in force, evidently satisfied with the punishment they had received the night previous.

An attempt was now made by the enemy's cavalry to turn our right, but owing to a swamp lying between us, they were unsuccessful, and we moved by brigade from

front to rear, back the road we had come, the rebels following us to their original picket line, when they halted, the pops of the skirmishers' rifles ceased, and at 4 P. M. we arrived back in our camp.

Thus ended what might have proved an important and successful move on the great chess-board of this war. Many hundreds of valuable lives were sacrificed with no other result than to capture a couple of guns and replenish many a poor rebel's haversack.

Among the troops in the action was a new regiment just from the North, and who carried with them the usual heavy knapsack of the new recruit, filled to bursting with all the good things of home. These so hampered their movements that they were ordered to pile them all in one place, and put a guard over them while they took a hand in the conflict. But alas! they were outflanked and driven from their position, with no time to get their knapsacks, and the rebels found them and speedily appropriated their contents; and well it was, for the poor Johnnies, half clothed and half starved, needed them sadly.

An incident that well illustrated the critical condition of the rebel army at this time, transpired in our immediate front soon after.

Early in the morning of November 1st, being on duty in the picket line, I heard whistling out in front. It sounded like some one trying to call a dog. I looked over the pit to where Comrade Thomas Kelly was lying as vedette, a short distance away, and soon heard it again. Thinking it might be a signal for some advance movement of the rebel line, I went out to where Kelly was lying and asked him what was the matter with the Johnnies. He said they had been whistling that way for some time, and he thought they wanted to speak to us. It often happened that when the pickets were near together and maintained such

friendly relations with each other, if an advance was ordered, a short time before they were to start over they would warn each other by some means, and we thought this might be a hint from them to draw in our vedettes.

The whistling was kept up for some minutes. The night was very dark, but in the gloom we could just discern three figures creeping along the ground toward us, and immediately spoke to them in a low voice.

“Who goes there?”

“We want to come in.”

“How many of you are there?”

“Three of us.”

“Throw your rifles over into our line, and come quick.”

They tossed their rifles over and came in,—three big Johnnies,—and we went with them back into our picket line.

Their object was to desert the Confederacy, and when safely in our lines, their joy was boundless, and some time was spent shaking hands, and offering congratulations.

One of them burst into tears, saying he had left his wife, children, home, and everything back there, but he was nearly starved, sick and tired of fighting against his country, and he knew he should never see them again if he stayed any longer on that side, and added: “I tell you uns Yanks, there is no hope over yonner, and thousands of we’uns would desart fo’ daylight ef they wasn’t skeered to.”

One of the others showed us his three days’ rations, which consisted of a hoe cake the size of a pie plate, and an inch thick, made of meal and bran, and a small quantity of roasted peanuts ground for coffee.

We had often heard about three times a week, the whole rebel line set up a yelling, as if they had received a good piece of news, but it happened so regular and on just such days, that we were at a loss to account for it. So I asked Johnnie what it meant. He said that three times a week

they had meat rations issued to them, about eight ounces to a man, and it was this that caused them to yell for joy. These rations were all that were given to last them nearly three days in active service at the front.

With an army like this, of starved, half-clothed troops, impoverished in every way, weakened by desertions all winter long, disheartened, half-paid, and conscripted men and boys, was it not a cause of wonder that they held out until they had dwindled away to less than twenty thousand before they surrendered? *Was* it such a great and wonderful piece of generalship and military strategy, that after a siege of nine months, a general with an army of nearly or quite one hundred and fifty thousand men, well fed, well armed and equipped, could at last surround such a wretched mob as the Army of Northern Virginia, and compel its surrender?

But to resume our story.

These deserters told us that back of their picket line another line of vedettes was posted, whose orders were to watch their comrades on the picket line to see that they did not desert. Back of these again were posted men to watch the vedettes, and so on, back to camp.

One of the causes of the frequent desertions of the Johnnies was this: Printed circulars had lately been distributed to our pickets, with orders for us to affix them to the trees and bushes between the lines, near where the rebel pickets could get them. These circulars, with General Grant's name printed on them, held out an inducement to the rebels to desert, offering them a good sum of money for the horses, mules, rifles, or other property they might bring with them, and pledging the government to pass them to their homes, if within our lines; but if not, to give them work on government pay and rations, until such times as they could

reach their homes in safety ; or in lieu thereof, to send them North, if they so chose.

We fixed these circulars in the day-time close up to the line that the rebel vedettes occupied during the night. Thus, when they came out to their vedette posts they found them, and on their return to camp passed them around among their comrades. These three Johnnies told us that partly by means of these circulars they were induced to desert ; and we doubt not that many of such cases happened during the winter of 1864.

However novel the manner of "whistling them into the Union" as we had done, this time we were glad to get them here, and in a few minutes haversacks were opened, fires started up, each man of the detail chipped in his share of rations, and we soon provided a good hot supper for them, the like of which one of them said he had not seen "for mo'n a y'ar." They thanked us from the bottom of their hearts, and emptying their pockets and traps of all the tobacco they could find, made us accept it, as all they could give us in return for our kindness.

It was now drawing near day-break, and it would not do to keep them here till day-light, when they would be sure to be seen by the rebel pickets and fired upon, so the lieutenant detailed me to take them back to headquarters, where I left them with a cordial shake and good-bye, and returned to my post. I never saw nor heard of them again.

November 8th being election day all over the country for President and Vice-President of these United States, was a day of rest for us, nothing but guard and police duties being performed. It had been previously arranged by the authorities, in order to get the votes of the men in the field, that the legal voters of each state now in the army, and who were duly registered as such at home, should deposit

their votes with their respective adjutants in camp, he to forward them to their native state, to be counted in with the rest.

The opposing candidates were the present incumbent, Abraham Lincoln, and our old general, George B. McClellan, and the army gave its support to old "Father Abraham."

On this day, we of the Fourth Regiment were happily surprised by the appearance among us of our old adjutant, Henry J. Spooner, who had been appointed adjutant of our consolidated regiments, the Fourth and Seventh Rhode Island.

On the 15th we received orders to prepare winter quarters, and went to work cutting logs and building them up four feet high, setting our tent on top, and making bunks inside. An addition of a chimney of sticks and mud, with a barrel on top, provided facilities for keeping ourselves comfortable during the ensuing winter months.

The 24th brought around Thanksgiving Day and was duly observed by us at the front in various manners, to the exclusion of drill and all unnecessary duties. A large lot of cooked turkeys, chickens, and other "fixin's," arrived for our benefit from Rhode Island, and each mess was apportioned its share.

The writer's mess consisted of Comrades Bennett, Myers, and myself, and as our share we received half a turkey, and a good sized chicken. Comrade Bennett bought a few vegetables of a sutler near by, and I scouted around until I saw a stray bake-kettle, which I "borrowed," (for a soldier never steals,) and thus we managed to cook the turkey, etc., over again, and enjoyed a first-rate Thanksgiving dinner for the first time in four long years. The next day, another lot of chickens, roast beef, etc., arrived for us, and was duly devoured with hearty satisfaction and a healthy

soldier's appetite. This lot also came from Rhode Island, and could our kind-hearted people at home have seen the manner in which we appreciated this feast, they would have felt well repaid for their kindness to the poor, hard living soldier.

On the 29th we received marching orders. A division of the Second Corps relieved us, and took possession of our nice winter quarters, and our whole division was soon on the road toward the Jerusalem Plank Road, reaching which, we halted till dark. After nightfall we moved up to the front line of works and into Fort Sedgwick.

The Seventh Rhode Island took up quarters in the centre of the fort and found good strong bomb-proofs awaiting them. The Forty-fifth Pennsylvania at their right also occupied bomb-proofs, while our little battalion of three companies of the Fourth Rhode Island were assigned to the left, where there were no bomb-proofs, and pitched our tents in the open space of the fort, with no protection from the enemy's fire but the breast-works or parapet.

December, 1864.

CHAPTER XXIII.

“FORT HELL.”

FORT Sedgwick, better known among the troops as “Fort Hell,” was formerly a portion of the rebel works, being captured by our troops during this siege, and was situated on the Jerusalem Plank Road, about in the centre of our line of works, and two miles in a straight line from the city of Petersburg. Our front line extended out along here, at somewhat of an angle with the main line, Fort Hell occupying the extreme left of this extension, and was consequently nearest the rebel works, being only about three hundred yards from the rebel Fort Mahone. Directly in front of the right flank of Fort Hell the picket lines of both armies approached each other to within a distance of fifty yards, and then bore away to the right, left, and rear. At this point no firing between the pickets was allowed night or day.

The left of Fort Hell, where our little battalion was encamped, was without armament, though pierced with embrasures for six or eight guns, these embrasures now being filled with bags of earth, and so could quickly be made available for working a full battery of artillery in case of need.

In the centre and on the right, four pieces of artillery

were stationed, besides a battery of six eight-inch mortars. Two large magazines were located in the fort, and all appliances for a full complement of guns, should they be needed. A large and deep ditch surrounded the fort, protected in front by a heavy *cheval-de-frise*, and a line of "trip wires," and in rear by a gate and bridge, leading into the inclosure. Various traverses, flankers, etc., provided a covered way to the rear or main line, thus enabling reinforcements to reach us safely, though under heavy fire.

Directly in rear and about nine hundred yards distant, stood Fort Davis, another work of large proportions and great strength, on the main line, forming one of the links of the great chain that General Grant was slowly, but surely, twining around the rebel stronghold.

In the rebel line and opposite Fort Hell, stood Fort Mahone, better known as "Fort Damnation." It was pierced with embrasures, and was provided with facilities for working fourteen guns. On its left and connected with it, was a battery of thirteen, eight, and ten-inch mortars. On the left of this mortar battery was another strong earth-work, mounting eight guns, and in rear of these works a series of forts and batteries extended back to their main line, each one opening fire directly into the one in its front. It will readily be seen of what enormous strength these rebel works were, and what a struggle we might expect if we ever attempted to assault them. In front they were protected first by a line of whirling, sharpened stakes, that it was deemed impossible to get over, under, or around; then a line of torpedoes planted in the ground, and marked by little white flags to keep their own men from stepping on, and exploding them. In case of an attack their retreating pickets were supposed to pull up these markers and leave the ground unmarked, for our troops to pass over and get blown up. Next beyond these was a line of trip wires,

then a heavy *cheval-de-frise*, and then the deep ditch of the fort, and all the resistance of its men and armament.

There was no firing between the pickets except during the night, commencing about dark, and ending by mutual consent at daylight. December 2d I was detailed with others for picket duty. Our position was in front of the fort, and to the left of the centre. Both armies relieved their pickets at the same time, at about four o'clock in the afternoon each day. We occupied a line of horseshoe pits about fifteen feet apart, connected by breast-works. Each man detailed for picket duty was required to carry out a big stick of wood to keep the fire burning all night, thus adding much to our comfort this cold weather.

The first night of our experience on this picket line we were ordered to keep up a continual fire all night long on the rebel line. Being well provided with ammunition, we made things lively for the rebels that night, and they gave us as good as we sent. In the morning, after the firing had ceased, the Johnnies began to jump over to the front of their pits and commenced digging for the lead we had fired away during the night. Considerable conversation was kept up with them during the day, and we asked them the reason of their hunting so eagerly for our bullets. They told us that for each ten pounds of lead they gathered, they were granted one day's pass to Petersburg, and if they happened to secure a solid shot or an unexploded shell, three days' leave of absence rewarded them. During our bombardments a shell from our mortars would occasionally fall outside their works and plunge into the ground without bursting, the fuse being extinguished. They would watch it for a minute after it landed, and then make a rush to get it. A score or more of them, fighting, struggling, digging, for the possession of that shell, was fun for us to witness, and generally the strongest man in the mob carried away the heavy prize.

On the 8th we received marching orders, and were relieved of picket duty and ordered to leave our tents standing, and in light marching order to be ready to leave at a moment's notice. We remained in the fort under orders all that day and night. A cold driving storm of rain and sleet now burst upon us, making everything uncomfortable, especially the thoughts of moving in such a storm.

The next afternoon the cry "fall in" was heard. We were quickly in line, in fighting trim, carrying blankets, rations, and ammunition only, and soon started. The rain poured in torrents; the ground was one mass of sticky, slippery, yellow mud, and wallowing, stumbling along through the mire, we gained the main line in the rear, when a halt was ordered, the line faced about and marched back to our quarters in the fort.

We hoped this move had been countermanded, and were much disappointed when, at 6 o'clock, just at dusk, "fall in" was heard again, and forming line with much grumbling and growling, we again passed out to the rear. Reaching a point a mile or so from the camp, we halted, and here found nearly the whole of our division, ready to move, whither we knew not.

Rations of hard tack only were here issued to us, and we were told to take as much as possible, as we were going outside our lines, where we might be detained several days, and no teams were to accompany us. Orders were also given to keep together, avoid straggling, and all loud talk or unnecessary noise; and at 9 o'clock we started.

We passed through the left of our lines, past our pickets, and struck off to the south on the Jerusalem Plank Road. We were now drenched to the skin, the mud was ankle deep, the old plank road was much broken in places, and we often caught our feet in the holes, causing us to stumble and fall in the pitch darkness, tearing our shoes,

stockings, and pants in a fearful manner. And thus, wading, slipping, stumbling along through mud and water and the howling, driving storm, cold and foot-sore and miserable, we marched on, hour after hour, and mile upon mile, through the darkness of that dreadful night, until just at daylight we found ourselves on the banks of the Nottoway River, twenty miles from camp; and here the whole line filed into the fields and bivouacked. Rail fences were in demand, but were plenty around these parts, and each man soon procured an armful of rails, with which we built rousing good fires, and dried ourselves (the storm having ceased), cooked our breakfast, and lay down to get a few hours of much needed sleep.

The object of this move was now evident. On the 7th, two days previous, the Fifth Corps had started on a reconnaissance to the Weldon Railroad, beyond Nottoway Court House, and reaching south to Bellefield Station, on the Meherrin River, had destroyed the rebel works, depot, etc., at that place, and twenty miles of the railroad, and was now on its return. Fearing a strong attack from the enemy in its isolated position, our division had been ordered to its support.

About noon, its advance guard arrived, and soon the whole force crossed the river, and passing us, bivouacked a mile or two beyond. It had not met with any large force of rebels, and consequently the raid had been a success, but we always wondered why infantry had been taken for such a move as this, when cavalry was better fitted for it, especially at this season of the year.

It is a soldier's privilege to growl; but there were sometimes good grounds for growling, and especially so in this case.

All was done now that required our presence here, and at half-past one that afternoon we started again, heading

towards camp. Though the rain had ceased, the roads were in no better condition, but a cold, clear sky above us gave promise of a quick march. Sore and stiff from our march of the night previous, it was sometime, and with much suffering, before we got well limbered up. About 8 o'clock in the evening we had reached a point within supporting distance of our lines, and halted.

Word was passed along that the men might have their choice to remain here over night or keep on to camp. Much as we desired a rest, it was better for us to get back to camp as soon as possible, and cries of "Go on, go on," "Forward to camp," arose the whole length of the line, and we started on again.

The writer, as did many others, found himself in rather a poor condition to reach camp that night. My shoes were gone, torn off by this broken plank road, and cold, stiff, and sore, Comrade Bennett and I struggled on together, halting every half mile or so to rest. The regiment passed us. The whole line at length had gone by, and we followed slowly and as best we could. Along the road on either side were men of both corps lying down, unable to move a step farther, and were it not for the risk of being picked up by the rebel cavalry following in our rear, we should also have succumbed to worn-out nature and lain down to rest. But this danger spurred our flagging spirits, and we plodded along until at last we reached our advance picket lines.

Here we rested a short time and then passed inside our main line, and halted at the camp of one of our batteries. These noble artillery-men had turned out on the approach of our forces and made hot coffee for us, so that when we came through we were supplied with a cup of this refreshing beverage, most welcome to us, and for which they received our hearty thanks.

Forward again we started, and at half past ten that night arrived at Fort Davis. The minie-balls from the rebel picket line swept across the road between this and Fort Hell, but nothing daunted, we faced the music, and were soon safely in our quarters.

This was by far the hardest march we ever made. The Marlboro, Fredericksburg, or Peninsular marches were nothing to it. We had accomplished forty-two miles in twenty hours of marching, through a driving rain and sleet, mud nearly a foot deep, and over one of the worst roads we ever saw, and nearly two-thirds the distance in the pitch darkness of a stormy winter's night.

We were pretty well used up. Our feet were bare,—in many cases torn and bleeding,—and many of us, unable to obtain shoes, (the quartermaster's department being all out of them,) were forced to cut up our blankets and bind them in strips around our feet.

The rebels in small force followed our line of march, taking prisoners most of those poor fellows whom we left lying by the roadside, unable to get into our lines, and stripping them of all but their underclothes, paroled, and sent them into our lines during the next few days.

After I returned to camp I found that some one had "gone through" my knapsack during my absence, and stolen all my papers, letters, portfolio, and other things. I will take back my former assertion now, and say that soldiers *will* steal. Others had lost their goods in the same manner. Thus, while we were suffering the hardships of this march in the endeavor to do our duty, these dead-beats, who, somehow or other, always manage to get clear of such movements, took the opportunity of robbing us of our little effects. Filled as they were, with the most despicable meanness, of course it must crop out somewhere.

On the 17th, we received a pretty hot shelling from the

enemy's mortars, which lasted several hours without injury to any of the Fourth boys as far as I could learn, though several of the Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, on our right, were killed and wounded. Nearly every day we were treated to a salute of eight-inch mortars from Fort Damnation, and a little incident connected with these bombardments may be of interest here.

About a mile and a half in our rear ran the great "Transportation Railroad" leading from City Point, Grant's headquarters, to the left of our line, and operated to supply this immense army with forage and subsistence. Trains passed several times a day, and from our fort they were in plain sight for the distance of nearly half a mile, and could also be as plainly seen by the rebels over in Fort Damnation.

Immediately, on hearing the train coming up or down the road, the rebels would run out a gun and sight it on that open space and when a train appeared in sight let fly a "boot leg." Sometimes the shot would strike on this side of the train and bound over, doing no harm, and at other times, would crash through the cars with considerable damage, upon one occasion striking the locomotive plump and square, and knocking it over into the ditch. This was fun for the rebels, to be sure.

But one day a regular battery of three or four pieces happened to be located just on the right of Fort Davis, on our main line, who had among their men a gunner long in service and very accurate. That afternoon, upon hearing the roar of the train coming up the road, our regular gunner took his bearings, fixed his fuse, and sighted his gun on the embrasure of Fort Damnation, where the rebels were ready to fire at the train, as usual. We in Fort Hell watched the preparation and eagerly awaited the result.

Soon the train came in sight. Bang went the rebel gun, and the rebels peered through the embrasure to watch the

effect of their shot, when biff,— a twelve-pound shrapnel screeched over our heads from our regular battery, and hissing through the rebel embrasure dismounted the gun, and bursting in the midst of the gun's crew scattered them right and left, killing or wounding half a score of them. It was one of the prettiest shots we ever saw, and we stood up on top of our works, and swung our hats and yelled with delight, when suddenly Fort Damnation opened upon us with her battery of thirteen mortars and guns, and we hushed up quickly and began to look for some place to hide.

Over came the hissing shell, bursting over and around us in quick succession, and sending their shattered pieces whirring and whizzing around our ears.

Our mortars and artillery answered, while peal followed peal, and the big black "dinner pots" came crashing down amongst us continually.

In a short time the fort got too hot to hold us, and those who could not find some hole to crawl into betook themselves to the ditches outside the fort, or went out to the picket line. This kind of music was played nearly every other day until it got to be rather monotonous, and it was this that gave to the two forts opposed to each other the cognomens of "Hell" and "Damnation."

Toward night the firing would lull down and finally cease, but they had a bad habit of sometimes opening upon us in the dead of the night, when all, save those on duty, were asleep, and in these cases it was amazing to see how quick we could get out of bed when awakened from our sweet slumber by a nine-inch mortar shell rapping at the door, and acting as if it meant business.

Several were killed or wounded during these hot times, but mostly in the Seventh and Forty-fifth regiments, they being directly in the line of fire. At our first experience

of this shelling, we all felt "kinder worked up," and the boys of these two regiments would not stay in their bomb-proofs, fearing a shell might break through, as sometimes happened; but after a month's residence in this happy climate, we got somewhat used to it, and simply watched the course of the shell, and if we saw it was coming too near to be comfortable, get behind something and wait for it to burst.

Two old men, cooks of the Seventh Rhode Island, occupied a bomb-proof together in the fort, in which they lived and prepared the daily meals of their company. As they were within one afternoon, engaged in eating their supper, a solid shot from Fort Damnation struck their bomb-proof and went through over their heads like a thunderbolt. The door was their only means of exit, and was only wide enough for one to get out at a time. But when their iron visitor came tearing through and knocking pots and pans and kettles around their heads, they dropped their supper, and making a desperate leap for the door, reached it at the same time, and in their haste to get out, became wedged tight in the doorway. There they stuck, and squirmed, and kicked, and struggled, frightened out of their wits, and unable to get either way, out or in, while the fort resounded with the yells and laughter of their comrades. In a moment, however, they got loose, and as no one was hurt, joined in the laugh with the rest of us.

One day at guard mount, the rebels opened their mortar practice as usual, and the shell began dropping into the fort rather lively. On ordinary occasions the guard would have cut short their evolutions to shelter themselves, and they were becoming quite nervous, when Adjutant Spooner, who was in charge, determined to set them an example of coolness under fire, and ordered the "troops beat off."

The guard standing at parade rest, the fife and drum

passed slowly down the line. Just at this moment, a large mortar shell came over in a direct line for this guard and falling directly over and to within ten feet of Adjutant Spooner's head, it burst, sending its pieces flying in every direction over the fort. Our little adjutant never winked nor moved his head, but went through with the regular evolutions of guard mount as though never a shell had crossed the air.

Many incidents of these bomb-shell festivals occur to the mind of the writer as he pens these lines, that in themselves would fill quite a volume, but these few must suffice for the present.

December 25th, Christmas, passed off pleasantly with us, and everything glided along as usual until the 31st, when just at daybreak, the rebel pickets opened a rapid and continuous fire, which, of course, increasing the return fire of our pickets, speedily alarmed the whole line, front and rear.

Apprehending an immediate attack, we sprang from our beds, and hurrying on our equipments manned the works, ready to give the Johnny Rebs an unhealthy reception.

The artillery was double shotted, ammunition distributed, and everything in readiness for quick and close action, when suddenly the pickets' fire stilled down to its usual rate, and the excitement being over, we repaired to our quarters, not very much pleased at being turned out so early in the morning by that kind of a reveille.

It was evident they contemplated forcing the lines at this point, but found them too strongly guarded, as they afterwards forced them at Fort Steadman on our right,—of which in its place.

January, 1865.

CHAPTER XXIV.

SIEGE LIFE IN FORT HELL.

THE new year, 1865, dawned upon us pleasant and quiet. We had reason to expect that the next New Year's day would find our land at peace, and those among us who were spared to see that time, safe at home enjoying the fruits of our long, weary struggle with rebellion.

Both armies now seemed to settle down to a rest before going forward in the arduous duties of the spring campaign. Picket firing almost ceased in our front, the rebels reserving their ammunition for a more important use, and our boys refrained from keeping up a one-sided fire, and so the storm of shot and shell we had been so used to nearly every day ceased, and "all quiet along the lines" was the daily report.

During this mutual armistice the pickets of both sides amused themselves during the long hours of the night, by conversing across the lines, singing songs of the war, for each other's benefit, and doing a little trading when unobserved by their superior officers.

At various times a party of our men from the fort would engage in a match game of foot ball on the open space between the fort and picket line.

This never failed to interest the Johnnies, who would collect from all parts of their line and watch the progress of the game, taking as much pleasure therein as if no deadly feud existed between us.

On these occasions when so many of them were gathered in a crowd but half a stone's throw from us, we had a good opportunity to remark the vast difference between the clothing and general make-up of the two armies.

While our men were dressed in good warm pants, blouses, and overcoats, and evidently well fed and taken care of, the poor Johnnies could be seen, hardly two dressed alike, pants of blue, brown, or gray, ragged and worn with long service, a blanket with a hole in the centre placed over their shoulders forming jacket and overcoat, and with hats of all shapes.

Thus they would stand, in most cases, pitiful looking objects, evidently with not life enough to scratch themselves; but let them hear the word "forward" and you would be surprised to see what a lively set of men they could be.

Thus time passed in regular routine of camp, garrison, and picket duties, until January 12th, when the Seventh and Fourth regiments were relieved of picket duty and marched, armed only with axes and haversacks some distance to the rear, and halted in the midst of a forest. Here we were set at work making gabions.

The manner of procedure was as follows: A number of stakes were cut about four feet long, and sharpened at one end. They were then stuck in the ground, in a circle about two and a half feet in diameter. Small brush and vines were then woven in and out around the stakes from bottom to top like a basket, and fastened with bits of wire. Placed around the parapets or embrasures of the fort, they were solidly filled with earth, and served to strengthen and maintain the works.

The Seventh Rhode Island were experts at this business, but the Fourth boys were inexperienced. Instructions were given us by the men and officers of the Seventh, but somehow or other we failed to "catch on" to this species of military science, and after several ineffectual attempts to educate us, Colonel Daniels dismissed us in disgust, and we were detailed to do all the garrison and picket duty at the fort, while the Seventh were away at their daily labor in the woods. Having been more used to facing the rebels in our line of duty, this was a great deal more satisfactory to us than blistering our fingers making gabions.

With the exception of the arrival of a large lot of boxes from home for the boys on the 21st, and another on the 28th, and the consequent feasting and good time thereupon, nothing of special interest occurred to break the monotony of siege life here until the 30th, when a flag of truce was discovered floating over the rebel line and shortly after advanced to a position half way between the lines and halted.

A flag from our side immediately went out to meet it, when permission was asked for a party of the rebel authorities consisting of Alexander H. Stephens, Vice-President of the Confederacy, R. M. T. Hunter, of Virginia, and J. M. Campbell, of Alabama, commissioners from Jefferson Davis, to cross our lines at this point, and proceed to City Point and Fort Monroe, and there to meet President Lincoln and negotiate for an armistice and terms of peace.

This joyful news was hailed with great delight by both armies, and very soon a bit of white cloth stuck on the end of a stick or ramrod, could be seen floating from the top of each picket post on both sides. The excitement quickly spread, and the works were covered with men, yelling, cheering, and making every demonstration of joy at the prospect of having no more fighting to do.

Guards were posted on each picket line to keep the men from crossing over, for had not this precaution been taken the men of both sides, so long pitted against each other, would have crossed the lines and *fraternized*, and the blue and the gray would have got so mixed up, that so far as regards these two armies, the war would have been ended right *there* and *then*, in spite of all officers and orders to the contrary.

Thus ended the month of January. History has recorded the result of this interview at Fort Monroe, or more properly, Hampton Roads, and although it had terminated without the desired end of the war, still peace was maintained between both armies here until the 16th of February.

During this interval, parties of ladies accompanied by officers passed through our fort, upon several occasions, out to the point on the picket lines nearest the rebel line, and there enjoyed the novelty of viewing the great and intricate fortifications and the two antagonistic armies of this war as they lay at peace with each other. This was a privilege that was seldom enjoyed by any one outside the army. They were also allowed to converse with the rebels across the lines so long as they were careful not to impart any valuable information, and the lectures some of those women gave the rebels were cautions. Nevertheless, the Johnnies were greatly amused, if not edified, and listened patiently to all they had to say, and then would ask them where they got all their good clothes, or some such question.

But one day, one of a party of ladies so engaged in conversation with them, suddenly took from under her cloak a package of letters, and before any one could stop her she threw them over into the rebel line. She was quickly seized as a spy, and escorted back into the fort, where she was confined in the guard-house. She was soon after carried as a prisoner to headquarters, and what became of her subsequently I never knew.

The weather was now beautiful, pleasant, and warm. We spent our time in ordinary duties, visiting friends in other regiments on the line, and in various ways, until the afternoon of the 16th of February, when the report of a heavy gun down on the right, the first we had heard for twenty days, brought us to the top of our works, and told us that our spring campaign had begun, our truce ended, and that we must again accustom ourselves to the sound of shot and shell until the end of this cruel war.

An artillery duel was now in progress between a number of batteries on our right, and being half a mile away, we watched it with much interest. Crowds of men lined the tops of the works on both sides, and applauded the best shots.

On the 19th another such duel occurred between about the same batteries, and the boys, eager to witness the show, climbed to the top of the ramparts, magazines, bomb-proofs, and every other available place; and the interesting performance excited the same attention from our neighbors over in the rebel lines. Soon after the fun commenced, we noticed two men come into our fort from the rear, in citizen's dress, and in company with two officers. They were past the middle age, of fine appearance, and doubtless men of influence at headquarters, or at Washington; and as the opportunity to inspect the rebel line and to witness a real live artillery duel was now offered them, they, with their escort of two officers, mounted a convenient bomb-proof, and with field-glass in hand, watched with much interest the flying shot and shell down on the right.

But our rebel neighbors over in Fort Damnation fixed their eyes upon them, and, doubtless, believing that it was President Lincoln or some of his Cabinet, considered that this was too good a chance to throw away, and we noticed them jump down to their guns. In a few seconds

more, a puff of smoke from their gun, and with a roar a twelve-pound shrapnel came bounding over towards this group and burst nearly over their heads.

In less time than it takes to tell it, that bomb-proof was cleared of spectators, and those two old citizens never displayed so much agility since the days of their boyhood. With a leap like a cat they cleared the space before them, and crouched closely under our ramparts, scared almost out of their wits; but hardly had they reached them, when another shrapnel followed the first, and they both ran into our part of the fort.

Our men jumped to their guns and mortars, and began work, which speedily brought the rebel volley of thirteen, eight, and ten-inch mortar shells howling and bursting about our ears. The two old gents hugged the breast-works closely, while the boys yelled at them: "Go back to Baltimore," "Come in out of the draught," "Put 'em in the guard house," and other like *badinage*.

I picked up a piece of shell that fell near one of them, and as it was yet warm from the gun, I presented it to the old fellow, who said: "Thank you; I shall keep this to remember this occasion; but really I don't see what there is for you men to laugh at. I confess, we are in a critical situation, and would like to have you show us the way out." Just then the two officers who came in with them made their appearance, and quickly escorted them to the traverse, and so out to the rear, where they were soon out of harm's way; but we venture to assert they never forgot Fort Hell, or the warm reception they got from Fort Damnation that day.

We were kept dodging shells for the next half hour, when the firing quieted down and finally ceased.

News from Sherman's army on their march to the sea, now reached us. On the 20th a dispatch was read to us

that he had taken Columbia, S. C. Cheers resounded from fort to fort, and the rebel pickets being also desirous of learning the news, our men in the picket line told them, but not a cheer was heard from their side.

The next day another dispatch told us that Charleston, the hot-bed of the Rebellion, and the birth-place of this war, had succumbed to the onward and irresistible march of our brave comrades in Sherman's army. A salute from one of the large forts in our rear greeted its reception, and our hearts were cheered as we thus saw the Confederacy crumbling to pieces.

On the 22d and 23d, appearances in our front indicated an attack. Lines of rebels marched and counter-marched. Their works were crowded with them. Their pickets relieved two or three times a day, and they seemed to be massing troops to break through our lines at this point, and during these two nights, our works were manned all night, and every preparation made to give them a hot reception.

In that portion of the fort occupied by the Seventh and Forty-fifth regiments, there was a cistern or well dug, which supplied the cooks with water. One morning this well was found dry. What could have caused it? Nothing but a hole underneath it. *The rebels were mining Fort Hell*, and were almost ready to blow us up, as we had them last July. It was quickly reported at headquarters. Officers were sent over here to investigate. They had holes dug in the ditch outside the fort, and tried in various ways to reach the mine.

At 3 o'clock, each morning, the whole garrison was aroused, and fell in line at the breast-works, keeping the centre of the fort, where the mine was supposed to be, as clear of troops as possible, and ready to resist an assault if they completed their scheme of giving us a bird's-eye view of Petersburg and its surroundings. After two or three

days' investigation, it was reported that the rebels had really undermined us, but from the excess of water which flooded their mine, and which they could not pump out fast enough, they were obliged to suspend operations, and another illustration of the effect of powder and fuse was happily avoided.

On the 24th, another dispatch from Sherman informed us that Wilmington, N. C., was captured, and in honor thereof, a shotted salute, was ordered to be fired from our front line of works, each gun in battery firing one round, commencing on the extreme right. The rebels had a bright idea. They could tell by this the number of guns in each of our forts, but our artillery-men played a Yankee trick upon them. The pieces that fired first on the right flank of each fort were run over to the left flank, and fired again in their turn, so that a four gun battery could fire six shots, from as many different embrasures; and they must have thought we had an awful amount of artillery in position. One or two of their batteries replied, but not to any great extent.

Something was wrong again inside the rebel line. From being crowded to excess, as in the last few days, they were now at the other extreme, and scarcely any troops could be seen. For the last few days, they had hardly honored us with a shot. We had an idea that they were drawing their troops away from here, in order to pounce upon Sherman, and our batteries were ordered to open a heavy fire upon them. The bombardment began at half past three in the afternoon, and lasted till sunset, but failed to draw a response from them with the exception of one or two mortars.

The next morning, February 26th, a thick fog settled over both lines. We could neither see the rebel lines, nor yet hear a sound from them. The air was still as a Sun-

day morning in summer at home. It was rather suspicious, and our general thought best to feel them a little.

We were ordered to "fall in in light marching order," and were soon in line, stacked arms, and broke ranks, with orders to stay by, ready to advance across the line at a moment's notice. We hung around our breast-works, and watched and waited for the next move.

But about 9 o'clock the fog lifted its thick curtain, and revealed to us the rebel line *as thick with troops as ever*, and in position, as if *expecting* us to make a morning call. What a hornet's nest we should have got into if we *had* gone over in the fog! Of course, the idea was now abandoned and our orders countermanded.

Thus watching, waiting, ever on the alert, we passed the month of February, knowing that but a short time must elapse before one side or the other must make a break. There must be one more grand struggle before many days, and the result could not be doubted. Though many a poor fellow would be laid low, yet by their sacrifice the victory would be won, and the Confederacy sunk into oblivion.

March, 1865.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

THE month of March opened quietly with us and continued so until the evening of the 13th. About 8 P. M., of that day, a large flock of wild geese passed over our lines, and it being quite dark they flew very low and made considerable noise. Upon hearing them, the pickets of both sides opened fire upon them over their heads, bringing down a number, some of which fell within the rebel lines. The rebels yelled with joy, and, excited to find such a heaven sent addition to their scanty rations, poured volley after volley in the direction of the poor geese. But this continued fire and yelling alarmed our whole line. Those in camp hurried on their equipments and rallied at the breast-works. The batteries were double-shotted, and lively times were anticipated that night. The paymaster, who happened to be in Fort Hell engaged in distributing greenbacks to us, shut and locked his treasure-chest, and made quick time to the rear. But as soon as the firing lulled down and the real cause of it became known, the excitement died away, and the troops returned to their quarters. But this event serves to show how quick an unusual fire of the pickets will bring the whole line to their guns, ready for action.

For several days following, the Johnnies appeared very active in our front, showing themselves in great numbers on top of their works, marching and counter-marching, forming lines of battle as if for an assault, relieving their pickets three or four times in a day, and various other movements, probably intended to deceive us as to their real object or numbers.

About noon of the 15th their works were so crowded and their manœuvres so threatening that orders were received to "fall in" in fighting trim, stack arms, and be prepared to move at a moment's notice, "where circumstances might direct." We spent the rest of the day watching the active movements of the rebels over the way, expecting to see them jump their works and advance in line of battle upon us, and ready to give them "Hail Columbia" if they should. But night came without the expected attack.

On the 21st, by way of a reminder that they were still at home to visitors, they gave us a severe shower of shells, which lasted over three hours, and resulted in the loss of a few men in each of our regiments in the fort. Lieutenant Costello, of our company, was knocked over by the concussion of a shell and slightly wounded.

At half past four, on the morning of the 24th, we were awakened by the report of a heavy gun on our right, and immediately we were up and in arms. The pickets in front, along the whole line, rattled away furiously for a few minutes, but the artillery held its fire, as it was soon discovered that the assault was farther down on our right.

The rebels, taking advantage of the fact that many of their number were entering our lines nightly as deserters, tried to play a genuine Yankee trick upon us.

On the night of the 23d, General Gordon's (rebel) corps was massed in rear of their picket lines directly opposite Fort Steadman. Soon after midnight they began sending

small parties of men, selected for the purpose, over into our picket line as deserters from the Confederacy. Our men in the pits, accustomed to receiving such, more or less, every night, gave them, of course, a hearty welcome. But they kept coming until the boys began to joke about it, but none of them in the least suspected that anything was wrong. At 4 o'clock, a number equal to the number of our pickets were in our line, when, at a signal, they each grabbed a Yank, and the surrender of the picket line followed without a shot having been fired in its defense. Everything was done quietly. Gordon's corps now advanced to the assault, quickly and without noise. Passing over the captured portion of our picket line, they soon reached our main line at a point between Fort Steadman and Battery No. 10, and were in possession of these earthworks almost before our troops knew what was going on. It was a complete surprise. Pressing down upon Batteries 11 and 12, they also threatened the railroad to City Point, and the situation was indeed a critical one. Our main line was broken, the garrisons of Fort Steadman and three other batteries wiped out, and a strong base, from which to deploy and break up our line of siege, was gained. It was another "Mine" affair, without the explosion.

Had Gordon been supported as he should have been: had his men kept on, instead of stopping to hold what they had already gained; had the rest of the rebel army followed up, by assault, this grand achievement of Gordon's men, there is no telling what the result would have been. They had us in front and flank, and almost in rear, and we fully expected that they would follow up their brilliant success. But the poor, half-starved men, as soon as they gained the inside of our works, almost ceased their assault, and began to search the quarters of our troops for plunder.

This gave our line time to recover from the surprise, and

the artillery, in flank and rear, opened a heavy fire upon Fort Steadman. Hartranft's division of the Ninth Corps now formed on the right of Fort Steadman, and drove them into the fort. The artillery was massed in the rear, and Wilcox, with two divisions, charged down on the left, while Parke swept around to the picket lines in front, and they were surrounded. An hour's lively work, and they surrendered. We captured 2,000 prisoners,—seventy-one of whom were officers,—nine stands of colors, and a large number of small arms. Their loss was about four thousand, all told, while ours figured about half that number.

As in the battle of the Mine, (the forces being reversed), one general, with his corps, was unsupported—after he broke through the main line—by his superiors in rank, and was cut to pieces and left to get out of the scrape as best he could. Thus does history often repeat itself. General Gordon's assault, his success in breaking our line, his lack of support, his failure to hold his position, and his losses, were nearly identical with that of General Burnside on the 30th of July previous, with the exception of a mine explosion, or capturing the pickets by a ruse.

Soon after daylight, as it was seen that no attack in front of Fort Hell was contemplated, the pickets ceased firing, and the works on both sides were quickly covered with men, gazing intently upon the struggle at Fort Steadman on the right. At half past nine the battle was over.

Fearing that another surprise might be attempted, we were ordered to turn out at half past three every morning subsequently, armed and equipped, and man the works till daylight.

We have mentioned the fact of a large lot of gabions having been made by the Seventh Rhode Island. An incident occurred to the writer and several comrades in connection with these gabions the day following the above fight, which nearly cost us our lives.

A great number of them had been made, and were piled up in an immense heap in the woods, about one and a half miles in our rear. A guard of a corporal and three men from the regiment, were daily sent over to watch them, and keep them from being appropriated by other troops. The writer with his three men, duly reached the place that day, and relieved the old guard there.

In the midst of the huge pile, an open space had been made, for the comfort and convenience of the guard, and was reached by a narrow entrance, or lane, from the outside. In this space a large fire was built, to keep us warm, and enable us to cook our rations.

There being no special necessity of keeping awake all night, we fixed up a good fire of heavy logs and at about 10 o'clock turned in, and rolling ourselves in our blankets, were soon fast asleep.

Somewhere about midnight, a log laying across the fire burnt in two, and rolling down against the gabions, set them on fire. Being composed of dry twigs and vines, they burned like tinder, and very soon the inside of our little chamber was all ablaze.

The crackling of the flames as they spread around the inclosure and leaped high in the air above the top of the huge pile, awoke us, and seizing those of our effects we could most easily reach, we awoke the other men who were still asleep, and all four of us got out of that blazing inclosure in a hurry. One-half minute more and the flames would have seized upon our only means of exit, the little lane through the heap of gabions, and doubtless we should have been roasted to death, as there was no other possible way to get out.

The fire was now under great headway. It would not do to let all the gabions burn up, so with the help of some army butchers who were camped near by, we set briskly at

work on the windward side of the heap, overhauling them, and cutting a passage through ahead of the flames. After about an hour's lively work, we succeeded in saving about two-thirds of them.

As soon as daylight appeared we began to fix up matters as best we could, removing the traces of the fire, and piling up the remainder of the gabions in as near the former shape as possible, agreed to keep still about it, for fear we should be charged with neglect of duty or sleeping on our post.

When the new guard arrived next day to relieve us, we returned to camp. One of the party had lost his rifle, and as we passed by the camp of a regiment on the road, it being quite dark, he managed to borrow one that he saw sticking out under a tent. Each one of us lost something of his traps, but managed to obtain duplicates without exciting the curious inquiries of our comrades in camp, and secretly congratulated ourselves upon our narrow escape from being roasted to death in the midst of those gabions.

On the night of the 28th, our pickets again increased their fire, the line was alarmed, and we turned out and manned the works. After an hour's lively firing, they quieted down to their regular night's work. These frequent alarms of the pickets show how close each line watched the other for an advance, and how ready they were to repel it.

Orders now came for us to pack up, and be ready to move at daylight. We knew that our forces on the extreme left were advancing to turn the rebel right, and at the proper moment we should be ordered to strike him here in the centre, and therefore we kept everything prepared for sharp work at an instant's notice.

At half past eleven on the night of the 29th, the line was again alarmed, and seriously.

The pickets' fire increased to a constant roar. The

enemy's batteries opened on us, and we were treated to another exhibition of midnight fire-works. Shot and shell flew over and around us continually till about 3 o'clock, when it slackened, and at sunrise had ceased.

Thus during nearly the whole of the month of March we were kept constantly "on our muscle," sleeping at night with all our clothes on, with equipments strapped around us, and our rifles lying loaded by our side.

Often, both day and night, we could hear the boom of the guns of Warren and Sheridan, miles away on our left, and news reached us that they were slowly but surely gaining the rebel right and rear, and we knew that a few days more must decide the fate of Petersburg and Richmond.

Just after dark, on the night of April 1st, I took the canteens of our mess and went down to the well in the rear of the fort to fill them and have things ready in case of emergency. There I found close under the rear of our fort, the remainder of our division lying on the ground, closed *en masse*, and ready to advance on Fort Damnation. As far as I could see to the right were masses of troops, advanced from the rear line, and awaiting orders. General Hartman's division lay at the rear of Fort Rice, the next fort on our right, with two brigades of Wilcox's division in his support.

I immediately returned to my quarters with this information, and we began to make final preparations for the coming break.

Breaking open our packages of cartridges, we filled the pockets of our blouses with them, it being much handier in action to take them from the pocket than the cartridge box. Stowing away in our haversack a little roll of lint and a small four-ounce bottle of whiskey to use in case of accidents, and reloading our rifles, our "decks were cleared for action," and we sauntered around the fort and awaited events.

Pioneers were sent out with axes to clear away a space through the abatis in front of our fort, for the troops to pass through, and everything was prepared for action, when, at 11 o'clock, news was received from the left, of the total rout of the enemy in front of Warren and Sheridan.

Orders were at once given to open our batteries on the rebel line, and immediately the night air resounded with the roar of our artillery as shot and shell swept over the works or burst in the rebel lines. Though they replied occasionally, it was evident they were saving their ammunition for the last great struggle.

At half-past four the next morning, Sunday, April 2d, 1865, the word "Forward" was heard, and the assaulting column moved quietly by the left flank from the rear of Fort Hell until the fort was uncovered, and then forward at a "right oblique," and "front forward by division" at a double quick, jumping the rebel rifle-pits in our front, with a cheer they charged home. Mounting the ramparts of Fort Damnation, they planted their colors, and upon the right of this fort swept over the rebel mortar battery and all the rest of the works clear to the Appomattox River, driving them back upon their inner line and turning the works against them. The battle now raged fiercely from right to left, and the bright sun of that beautiful Sabbath morning arose on a field covered with the battle smoke of the two contending armies.

The artillery-men of our fort unable to get their guns out of the works, seized their sponge staffs and other equipments, and rushed across to the batteries on the right, to work the guns already captured. Company B, of the Fourth, was ordered to bring out intrenching tools. Away we went through storms of grape that hopped and skipped along our path. Our captain dropped, wounded through the leg. Here another one fell, and begged us to stop and

take him to the rear. But matters were too pressing just then. Reaching the fort, we jumped down into the ditch, which was filled with our troops of the assaulting column.

The rebels ran out a gun through the embrasure over our heads and enfiladed the ditch. "Fill up that embrasure." Three or four of us clambered up into the embrasure, and dug away with our shovels to fill it up. But it was useless. The gun was run out almost in our faces, and we got back into the ditch. Our company was now ordered to the rear, to bring out ammunition for the captured rebel guns. We passed through the mortar battery, and looked for a moment on those black devils that had so often made us dodge and hustle around over in Fort Hell. They were faced the other way now. No more would they cast their black shell into our midst, and we rejoiced. Back over the lines we ran, and leaping our works, each two of us seized a box of fixed artillery ammunition, and out again to the captured lines: and so the struggle went on.

And now the lines were as far as they could go, and I mounted our works and took in the situation. All the main line of rebel works, from Fort Damnation to the river, were filled with our troops. A thin line of blue stretched along to the right, lying close under cover. The firing lulled down, and both sides rested to get their breath for the next struggle, and watched each other like two wild beasts, ready to take any advantage that might be given.

Reënforcements were sent for, and about 2 o'clock, two brigades from City Point and one from the Sixth Corps arrived. These were immediately put into action, and succeeded in forcing the rebels back a short distance.

Among these troops were the One Hundred and Fourteenth Pennsylvania, a regiment of zouaves, who had been acting as Grant's headquarter guard, and many of whom were now under fire for the first time. Their bright red

and blue uniforms and brand new colors quickly attracted the attention of the rebel sharpshooters, and as they passed out to our picket-line, they drew such a fire that several of them dropped. Their officers now cheered them on, and after several ineffectual attempts to get them out of the pits, they at length started and charged forward on the run, straight for the batteries of the inner line. They charged home splendidly, and mounting the ramparts, planted their colors, while our batteries and line of men in the captured works seconded their noble efforts, but without avail, and they fell back, leaving over one hundred of their brave comrades dead or wounded on the ramparts of that rebel fort.

This line of inner works, defended as it was by one of General Lee's veteran corps, was impregnable to the assaults of this force of men, and soon after this attempt the firing almost ceased; both parties held on to their respective positions, but neither was able to advance a foot.

About 4 o'clock in the afternoon the rebels made one grand effort to break through, or, at least, to regain a portion of their lost line, and jumping over their works, they came down upon us in a furious charge, and succeeded in starting for a moment the whole of this portion of our lines. Things began to look as if they might break through, but our batteries concentrated a rapid and deadly fire upon them, our men rallied, and with a wild cheer charged them, driving them headlong back to their holes, capturing several battle-flags and many prisoners.

It was no use, and at 5 o'clock this sudden storm had subsided. This was the last attempt to assault upon either side, and at dark, after an all day's struggle, we held about the same relative position as gained in the first assault of the morning.

At about 10 o'clock that night we were startled by a

heavy explosion, and a bright glare of light in the direction of the city told us that Petersburg and its defenses were being evacuated. Our skirmish line was immediately advanced over the rebel works and found them deserted to the outskirts of the town.

The troops in front of us marched down into the city, and the rest of us began to get ready to follow. The whole rebel army was now on the move down the Southside Railroad, towards Burkesville. Pressed vigorously on all sides, the enemy was routed at all points, and our army was mostly underway, close upon his heels. We immediately made preparations to follow, and three days' rations were cooked up in a hurry. Soon after sunrise, on the 3d, we left our old position at Fort Hell, and crossing the rebel lines that we had been pounding away at so long, halted on the hills just in the suburbs of Petersburg.

Everybody was happy at the turn events had taken, and we were confident that we were rapidly nearing the end of our long, long struggle for the "suppression of rebellion and the preservation of constitutional liberty."

Word was now passed along the line that President Lincoln (who had been watching events from Grant's headquarters at City Point) was now approaching, to lead our victorious columns into the city of Petersburg. Soon, he appeared in sight, coming over the hills, followed by his staff. Immediately the whole force was in commotion, and without stopping to form a line, we gathered in a crowd alongside the road, and prepared to give him a joyful welcome.

As he reached us he took off his hat and held it down at his side, and with a countenance radiant with joyous gratification at the result of our labors, he proudly rode through the assembled multitude of his brave soldier-boys amid the shouts, cheers, waving of hats, and the music of the bands, and took his place at the head of the line.

We quickly formed in column of companies, and with the old hero at our head, with our war-worn and ragged banners floating over us, and stepping to the time of "Yankee Doodle," we made at last our triumphant entry into the long besieged city of Petersburg.

I will state here that this was the last time we ever saw our noble old President, Abraham Lincoln. He left us in the city, and proceeded to Richmond. Shortly after he returned to Washington, and on the night of the 14th of April, five days after the surrender of Lee's army and the virtual end of this war, he was inhumanly murdered by one John Wilkes Booth, an emissary of the Confederate Government.

He had labored hardest of any man since the beginning of this war; and now, just as he had witnessed the downfall of the rebellion, and had begun to enjoy the fruits of his labor, he was suddenly taken from among men. His great work upon earth was ended, his mission fulfilled, and the angels of heaven, bending over his dying bed, softly whispered: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

We again took up our line of march through the city. There were many of the townspeople left, among whom we observed several, here and there, in citizen's clothes, who bore unmistakable evidence of having been engaged with us in the lines about this city, and we found afterwards that many of the rebel troops during their retreat through the town skedaddled into houses and by-ways, unwilling to longer serve in the rebel army, and removing their equipments, sauntered out on the street to see us pass through.

After half an hour's halt on the other side of the city, we started on, and at dark arrived at a point twelve miles from Petersburg, and encamped for the night. Here we received the news of the surrender of Richmond to the

Army of the James, on our extreme right. At last the old rebel capital had fallen, and with prolonged cheers and much gratification, we laid our tired bodies on the ground, and tried to get a little rest.

At eight the next morning, April 4th, we were again under way, and reaching Dinwiddie Court House, again encamped. April 5th we were up with the first streaks of daylight, and soon the line of march was taken up, and we traveled on in rear of General Ord's columns, mile after mile, scarcely halting to rest, until we had put twenty-three miles between us and our last night's bivouac, when we again halted for the night. A few hours' sleep, and the drums and bugles awakened us, to resume our chase after Lee's flying forces. We ate a hasty breakfast, and shouldering our traps, again took the road. We passed through Nottoway Court House in the early afternoon, and halted for the night within four miles of Burkesville Junction, having footed twenty-six miles that day.

We were now ordered to encamp here for the present, the Ninth Corps holding Burkesville, the junction of the Danville and Southside railroads. The rebel army was now nearly surrounded, and we had nothing to do at present but hold this place and guard our wagon trains.

On the 7th, my company (B) of the Fourth was detailed on a foraging expedition. We traveled back on another road to within two miles of Nottoway Court House. Here we entered the plantation of a colonel in the rebel army, and were ordered to confiscate whatever we could find. The mansion was furnished splendidly with everything to make life enjoyable, showing that the owner was a man of taste and culture. After collecting such things as we could carry, we gave the slaves of the plantation leave to enter the house and appropriate whatever they wanted. They were not slow to accept this offer, and immediately

men, women, and children could be seen emerging from the house, loaded down with all kinds of furniture, bedding, clothing, pictures, etc. In the afternoon we were ready to return to camp, having obtained a good supply of pork, bacon, hams, and apple-jack,—the latter article we carried inside of us,—and setting fire to the old mansion house, we started back, reaching camp just in the early evening, having marched about twenty-five miles.

At 2 o'clock in the afternoon of the 8th, we struck camp and stretched out on the road again, passing through and beyond Burkesville. The afternoon passed away. The sun sank in the west, and still we plodded along through the dark woods and fields until about 10 o'clock, when our hearts were gladdened by seeing the bright camp-fires of our advance, and soon we filed into the woods on our left, and halted for the night.

On entering this camp I caught my foot in the root of a tree badly spraining the ankle. We had made about sixteen miles that day, and were very tired, and after cooking and eating our humble supper of hard-tack and coffee, lay down and slept undisturbed until morning.

On the 9th, early, the line again started forward, and though my sprained ankle was very stiff and painful, yet with my rammer for a cane, I managed to hobble along and keep up with my regiment, when late in the afternoon we reached Farmsville, and passing through, encamped on the other side.

We were now within a short distance of Lee's army and expected to receive orders to move at once to the front. Soon after dark an orderly rode on a gallop through our camp and halted at the colonel's tent.

We began to roll up our blankets and get ready to leave, supposing, of course, our orders had arrived to advance to a position in line of battle and strike them in the morning.

We of the rank and file knew nothing as yet of the position or circumstances of Lee's army. We knew that our advance had harrassed his every movement, and drove him from every standpoint all the way from Richmond and Petersburg. We knew his men were rapidly deserting him, for we met them now and then upon the road. But we supposed he was making for Lynchburg, and reaching there, would doubtless find fortifications sufficiently strong to hold us back for some time yet.

I venture to say that not one man in ten among us expected the turn affairs had now taken, for with much grumbling and growling we turned to and packed up ready to start forward again.

Imagine our surprise when, a few minutes later, orders were received by each company sergeant to "fall in the men with equipments and side-arms and report up at the colonel's quarters."

The regiment was soon in line at the colonel's tent. Colonel Daniels stood there with a paper in his hand, and called "attention to orders"; and then read to us an order from headquarters to the effect *that Gen. Robert E. Lee, of the Army of Northern Virginia, had just surrendered his entire forces to General Grant, at Appomattox Court House.*

Words cannot describe the feeling of surprise and joy with which we listened to this most welcome dispatch, that we had waited, fought, and struggled four long years to hear. The enthusiasm was immense, and as each regiment and brigade around us also received the good news, cheer upon cheer rose upon the night air for miles through the length of this great army.

We would hardly believe it; no more fighting; no more toilsome, weary marches; no more to hear the roar of shot and shell, and no more to face the storm of death upon the

battle-field. The dogs of war were chained at last. But little sleep was obtained that night. Crowds of men flocked down into the village of Farmsville close by. The meeting-house bell was rung with a will. A large number of rebel prisoners under guard in the town was set free and fraternized with the boys in the heartiest manner.

The whole army, both of blue and gray, seemed to be wild with delight. This rejoicing continued through all that night and the next day, and my pen fails to describe the tenth part of the scenes witnessed all around us.

We were anxious to see the surrender of this old gray-backed army that had fought against us so long. But this was not allowed us; and none but the command of General Gibbon, the Fifth Corps, and Mackenzie's cavalry, received the surrender of arms, guns, and public property.

“The rebel army reduced by desertions, killed, wounded, and the events of the past few days, numbered only about twenty thousand when it surrendered, and with only 170 pieces of artillery.”

When it is considered that these men had fought in the face of *certain defeat*, in the face of *starvation* and *despair*, and against us, an overwhelming army of well fed and equipped troops, backed by the unlimited resources of the Nation, it is a wonder they held out as long as they did, and, though in behalf of a mistaken cause, adds another tribute to the courage, patriotism, and endurance of the American soldier. With an army and navy composed of such material as was exhibited on both sides of this great struggle, our united Nation may safely challenge the armies of the world.

April, 1865.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ON THE ROAD HOME.

ON the 11th, the second day after this great event in our history, we broke camp, and with light hearts, about face and started on the back track. At a distance of about five miles we halted and pitched our tents for a few days, under orders to repair the roads, in order to get our artillery through to Burkesville.

On the 12th, both armies began to pass us on their return march, the rebel army, or what was left of it, sometimes by regiments, but oftener in squads of from two to twenty, jogging along, well pleased that the war had at last closed, giving them also a chance to return home in peace. Most of them, however, still retained the old feeling against us, and remarked, that though beaten this time, they were not subdued, and might have another chance at us yet. On this day the Sixth Corps passed us, and on the 13th, the Second Corps.

Our little brigade now experienced the cravings of hunger once more, and for the last time. We were entirely without rations since leaving Farmsville, and could not get any, our teams from Burkesville not having reached us. The country round about was bare of forage, and we were forced to live on corn for two days.

One evening the writer and Comrade Bennett ventured out on a foraging expedition among a large pack of mules; and though these mules and battery horses were guarded by their drivers, who, with whip in hand, stood watching, to repel any attempt of the starving *men* to steal the *mules'* food, yet we managed to crawl underneath the mules at the risk of getting our brains kicked out, and pick some half-chewed ears of corn from amidst the mud and dirt and other refuse matter, and getting safely back to our quarters, washed them and roasted them in a half-canteen,—the soldier's fry-pan,—and with some pine-root bark we dug up and boiled, managed to live comfortably for these two days.

At length on the 14th the teams arrived with our rations. All this time a continuous crowd of rebel soldiers straggled along by us, sometimes stopping at our camp over night, and having been supplied with rations by our commissaries, their haversacks were generally pretty well filled. They would sometimes cook at our fires, and often there would be seen on one side of the fire a big Johnny, with plenty to eat, frying his pork and hard-tack, and devouring the same with great satisfaction: while opposite him was a poor, half-starved "Yank" trying to roast a little shell corn, or stew a little mess of pine-root bark, with which he must be satisfied for his supper.

On the 15th, a detail was sent over to High Bridge, about a mile away to repair, if possible, a portion of the west end of the bridge, that had been destroyed during the action at Sailor's Creek, over which it passed. This was a well built, very long, and very lofty bridge of masonry, over which ran the Southside Railroad. It was found on our arrival, that without regular engineering tools to work with, we could accomplish nothing, so towards night we came back to camp. The next day we changed camp to a position about a mile farther back.

On the 17th, the Fifth Corps passed us, and on the 18th the Twenty-fourth Corps, one division of which encamped near us for the night.

The 19th of April was a mournful one for us in camp, as well as all over the country, it being the day appointed for the funeral of our noble and well beloved President, Abraham Lincoln. The colors of every regiment in the field were draped in mourning; no duty was performed, and the minute guns of the different batteries boomed forth a mournful salute the entire day.

It was a sad day all over the length and breadth of our land. Never did a whole nation feel its loss so keenly as when our dear old Commander-in-Chief was taken from his post of duty by the cruel mission of a rebel bullet. Wherever in this broad land floated our triumphant banner, there the funeral notes were heard. Bells were tolled in sorrow, that but a few days ago were ringing with joy. Artillery with guns scarcely cold from triumphant action at the front, now woke the echoes with their sad, funereal salute; and a people just in the height of their rejoicing over our victories and the prospects of peace, now wended their way with heads bowed down and hearts filled with grief, to their respective places of worship, where solemn funeral services were held. Public and private buildings, churches and stores, and the streets, were trimmed in mournful black and white; everything was hushed and still, and thus the saddest day in the history of our country passed into eternity.

On the 20th the armies having gone by, and there being nothing further for us to do here, we broke camp and started for Burkesville. All along the road the air was filled with the stench arising from decaying carcasses of horses and mules, which, scattered here and there, made our march anything but pleasant. At evening we arrived and camped near the railroad.

On the morning of the 21st, we shouldered our traps, and started down the road towards Petersburg. Marching at a lively pace all day, and in good humor, we halted at nightfall many miles nearer our destination.

Sunrise of the 22d saw us again on the road, and though the day was hot and dusty, we tallied mile after mile, and night found us some twenty-five miles from our last night's camp.

Again at sunrise, on the 23d, we started on, marching one hour, and halting fifteen minutes to rest, until at 10 o'clock we reached Petersburg, and passing through went into camp near Cemetery Hill, the very spot we tried so hard to get possession of at the battle of the Mine. After fixing up our quarters for the night, we strolled around these old rebel works, taking in our various positions while we were encamped at the "Nine Holes."

On the 24th, we bade good-bye to these old lines of fortifications and the ground between them, where lay so many of our brave comrades who there gave up their lives to accomplish the victory we now, and should evermore, enjoy. We felt sad, as we thought of many of them lying there whom we brought with us to this place, and who could not accompany us home, but we remembered the words of Him who has said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

They had lain down their lives for us, and we felt that their sacrifice had gained for them a far greater crown of rejoicing in that beautiful world beyond their humble graves. Farewell, comrades, the ties of love and fellowship that have bound us together can never be broken, and not many years shall pass away before, with you again, we, too, shall answer "Here" to the final roll-call.

A twelve-mile march brought us to City Point. We lay over here one day and replenished our wardrobe, for the

campaign of the last few days had left us in rather a rusty condition in regard to clothing.

On the 26th, we packed up, struck tents, and, marching down to the wharf embarked aboard the steamer *Nereus*. After taking on board four other regiments, until we were so crowded that there was hardly room to lay down, we left the wharf and anchored out in the river.

At 5 o'clock, on the morning of the 27th the anchor was hove home, and we steamed away down the James River. We passed Fort Monroe at noon, and at half-past nine that night dropped anchor off Point Lookout.

With the first streak of dawn we again started, sailing grandly up the old Potomac, and at two in the afternoon touched the wharf at Alexandria. We at once went ashore, and forming line, marched up through the city and outside to a point north of old Fort Ellsworth.

This not being a desirable place for a camp, on account of its low, marshy ground, the next day we moved up on the hill and established our *last camp* as a regiment directly in rear of the fort.

We now received news of Johnson's surrender, which ended the war; and much rejoicing was indulged in.

No duty was now required of us, save guard and fatigue and the regular dress parade, with an occasional battalion drill. The weather was most beautiful, and we thoroughly enjoyed our camp-life and a long rest after the arduous duties of our late campaign.

About 8 o'clock on the evening of the 12th, one of the regiments on our right appeared in company formation on their parade ground, each man bearing a lighted candle. As they made a pretty show, marching back and forth, the idea soon spread to the other regiments, and in an hour's time every regiment far and near was parading with

lighted candles. It was a novel and beautiful sight, and will not soon be forgotten by the participants.

On the 16th I received a ten days' furlough and started for Rhode Island, and after a short visit, arrived back in camp on the 26th. On the 24th, the regiment took an honorable part in the great review at Washington, but being on my furlough, I missed the opportunity of witnessing it.

About June 1st the troops began to be mustered out of service and leave us for home. On the 9th, the Seventh Rhode Island, with whom we were consolidated, were mustered out. This included nearly all of the recruits of the Fourth, and left us but a small battalion of veterans, under command of Captain Bowen.

On the 10th, they broke camp and started, accompanied by the Thirty-fifth and Fifty-eighth Massachusetts regiments, with many cheers, overflowing with joy at the prospect of reaching their homes so soon.

On account of the threatening attitude of the French troops in Mexico, it was thought prudent to hold the re-enlisted men in service a while longer, for fear Uncle Sam might be obliged to take a hand in that struggle. With the overthrow of Maximilian and the withdrawal of his army from Mexico, ended any necessity of keeping us in service, and orders were received to begin the muster out of all volunteer troops in either department.

After the Seventh had left us, we numbered about one hundred and fifty, all told; and newly aligning our tents together, waited patiently the day of our deliverance. With nothing to do except camp guard and police duty, we passed our time in various ways, making excursions to Mount Vernon for blackberries, or to Washington or Alexandria to see the sights, and in discussing the news relative to our muster out. The camp was full of rumors,—of dis-

charge; of consolidation with other Rhode Island veteran battalions; of going to Mexico, etc.,—all of which found ready listeners, and obtained more or less credit.

July 4th found us still in camp here. A programme of amusements was gotten up among the officers for the benefit of the few troops remaining in camp. This consisted of horse-racing, hurdle-jumping, and other sports. During the races, the writer, with several comrades, took a position in the rear of one of the hurdles, the better to watch the horses jump; when suddenly one of the beasts became unmanageable, and jumped over the side of the hurdle on top of us, throwing all of us violently to the ground and causing considerable injury. One man was badly cut in the breast; another had his head split open; another suffered a broken leg, and another a broken arm. The rest of us were more or less injured; while the writer escaped with a badly bruised knee, and was laid up for the next week or so.

On the evening of the 7th of July the long-wished-for order was read to us on parade, to immediately prepare for muster out. The company clerks set to work on the muster rolls on the 10th, and working night and day, finished them up by noon of the 11th. The discharge papers were quickly made out, and the reports sent in early on the 12th.

On the 13th our mustering officer arrived, and we were duly mustered *out of the service of the United States*. And now began another season of rejoicing. Tearing down our brush arbors from in front of our quarters, we piled them in three immense heaps on the parade, and as soon as it became twilight set them on fire, as a grand *feu de joie*, in honor of the successful ending of our service for Uncle Sam; and as the flames leaped high in the air, we danced and shouted and sang and yelled and cheered around those heaps like a tribe of Comanches at a war-

dance. An old axe was brought forth, a hole dug, and the ceremony of "burying the hatchet" duly performed; and finally we lay down to sleep for the last time on the soil of Virginia.

Daylight the next morning found us astir; and never a camp came down quicker than that one. We had been allowed to carry all our traps home, upon paying the sum of \$6.00 into Uncle Sam's Treasury; and nearly if not quite all of us preferred to take with us those old companions of many a march, field, and camp.

The line was soon formed. There were not many of us; but what we lacked in numbers we made up in enthusiasm, and bidding good-bye to the few troops left behind, we started down the road towards home.

Arrived at the wharf in Alexandria, we took the boat for Washington, and landing there, marched over to the Baltimore & Ohio Depot. Here we found a great many regiments awaiting transportation to their homes, and it was 6 o'clock that evening before we got away.

At half-past ten that night we arrived at Baltimore, and marched over to the "Soldiers' Rest," where we refreshed the inner man, and then continued our march across the city to the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore Railroad, and again stowed ourselves away in the cars.

At 2 o'clock next morning, July 15th, we left Baltimore, and reached Philadelphia at noon. We landed, and marched over to the old Cooper Shop Refreshment Saloon. Here we partook of a substantial dinner, after which we crossed on the ferry to Camden, and got aboard the cars for Amboy.

We arrived at Amboy about seven in the evening, and embarked on a large tug-boat for New York. Feeling tired from our travels and the excitement of our journey home, we lay down on the deck of the steamer to get a

little sleep. About 10 o'clock we were aroused by the startling cry of "man overboard!" Jumping up, we ascertained that one of our company, Benjamin Arnold, had arisen in his sleep and deliberately walked overboard, the decks being almost flush.

As he struck the water he uttered a cry,—the last in life, as he probably sank instantly. For a few moments all was confusion. Planks were thrown over, the steamer stopped, turned back, and slowly sailed over the place, while all hands shouted and tried to get a glimpse of him in the surrounding darkness, but it was all of no use, and the poor boy, who had so longed to reach his home with us once more, had at last found a watery grave.

His relatives, we knew, were anxiously awaiting our arrival at Providence, to embrace their dear soldier boy, but, alas! were destined to meet with a disappointment a thousand times more bitter to bear than as if we had left him on the battle-field. We were at last obliged to put about and resume our journey, leaving our poor comrade sleeping down in the dark waters around us. His body was found a day or two later, and sent forward to his friends.

This sad occurrence cast a shadow over our joviality, and warned us not to rejoice too much until we found ourselves safe in the arms of our friends at home.

At half past twelve that night we reached New York, and took up quarters for the remainder of the night in the barracks near the Bowery. Here we staid until 3 o'clock the next afternoon, Sunday, when we again took up our line of march for the New Haven Depot.

On our way up Broadway we met the old Ninth New York, Hawkins' Zouaves, our old comrades of so many fields. They, in company with another regiment, were marching down to receive a regiment of state troops, just

landed. Both columns halted, and much hand-shaking and joyful congratulations were the result.

With cheerful good-byes we parted from them, and arriving at the depot, went aboard the cars. At 5 P. M., Sunday, July 17th, we started out of New York City, and at half past one the next morning, we were, most of us, sound asleep in the cars, when, bang! went a piece of artillery close beside us. We woke up with a jump, and from sheer force of habit, grasped our rifles and equipments, *ready for business*.

An instant's reflection, and we found we had reached home. There were no enemies to oppose. The battery outside was firing a salute of welcome, and we were quickly out on the platform. Marching over to a hall near by, we stacked arms, and those of us living within the city limits immediately made tracks for home.

On the 25th of July we mustered together once more, squared accounts with Uncle Sam, doffed our long-worn suit of blue, and came out in citizen's clothes, for the first time in nearly four years.

My work is done. I have tried to give a faithful picture and record of our forty-six and a half months' service under the colors of the Fourth Rhode Island Volunteers in the late war, stating matters only that came under my personal observation, and relying upon the testimony of my comrades for all other important points of our mutual history in this service.

For the whole term of our service I kept the notes from which this book is compiled, knowing that when years had passed over us their perusal would bring back fresh to our minds the scenes of our soldier life; that we should again and again go through our experience in this great struggle for a nation's life: and that our children should ever have

these memoirs to remind them of the sufferings, hardships, and dangers incurred, bravely borne, and successfully ended by the old soldiers of the war "for the suppression of rebellion and the preservation of constitutional liberty."

And ever, as we see that old Star Spangled Banner floating over us, our thoughts will be carried back to the days when in the roar and thunder of battle, we have followed its torn and blood-stained folds through the fiery storm of shot and shell, even to victory.

Long may it wave over our land. May its bright stars never again be dimmed by fratricidal strife, but floating pure, bright, and triumphant with the breezes of a thousand centuries, may it ever be supported with arms and hearts as brave and loyal as those which have once and forever redeemed it from the curse of slavery.

Thus supported, it can never fall; and while *our* hearts beat, and *our* arms can be raised in its defense, it shall have *our* sympathy and aid "against all its enemies or opposers whatsoever."

THE END.

THE ORIGINAL ROSTER
OF COMPANY B,
FOURTH REGIMENT R. I. VOLUNTEERS,
WITH ADDITIONS
BY RECRUITS AND TRANSFERS.

APPENDIX.

DAVID B. CHURCHILL.

Recruited Company B, at a small office on Broad Street, Providence, R. I. We expected he was to go with us as Captain, but upon the formation of the company he resigned his charge, and the Captaincy was left open to his successor. He subsequently was commissioned as Second Lieutenant of Company F, Third Rhode Island Heavy Artillery. Received promotion to First Lieutenant, then to Captain, and served three years with his regiment.

MARTIN PAGE BUFFUM.

Recruited Company B, in connection with Captain Churchill, and was commissioned First Lieutenant, Oct. 4, 1861; as Captain, Oct. 11, 1861; as Major, Oct. 10, 1862; as Lieutenant-Colonel, Dec. 24, 1862. Was taken prisoner at battle of the Mine, July 30, 1864. Released by close of the war, and entered the United States Regular Army as Major. Resigned, and in April, 1884, committed suicide in Texas, by reason of dissipation.

CHARLES H. GREENE.

Went out with us as Second Lieutenant. Commissioned as Captain, Aug. 11, 1862. Resigned Sept. 30, 1862. Joined us again as Captain, April 15, 1863, at Suffolk, Va., and was mustered out with the regiment.

JOHN HUGHES.

Went out with us as Orderly-Sergeant, which position he held until during the North Carolina Campaign, when he was reduced to the ranks for drunkenness on duty. The boys hated him, and plagued him so much that he got disheartened, was taken sick, and entered the hospital at Newport News, Va. He received a discharge for disability, March 13, 1863, but afterward enlisted again in a regiment from another state, and we saw him often during the campaign of 1865.

STAUNTON A. GRAY.

Went out as Second Sergeant and held this position during his term of service, most of the time on detached duty. Was mustered out with the regiment.

FREDERICK A. HUNT.

Went out as Third Sergeant. Was reduced to the ranks at Beaufort, N. C., for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. On the morning of Sept. 17, 1862, at the battle of Antietam, he was missing, and was reported as a deserter.

ANDREW T. GRAY.

Brother of Staunton. Went out as First Corporal. Promoted to Sergeant, and subsequently discharged by reason of disability.

JAMES HUYBERTS.

Went out as Second Corporal, but resigned his warrant at Bladensburg, Md. Served his time honorably in the ranks, and was discharged with the regiment.

BENJAMIN C. GREENE.

Went out as Third Corporal, which position he held during his

connection with the company. Was wounded at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862, and was discharged by reason of his wounds Dec. 1, 1862.

AUSTIN A. PERKINS.

Went out as Fourth Corporal. Deserted at Antietam about the same time as Hunt.

CHARLES LARKHAM.

Went out as Fifth Corporal. Served with naval detachment on board United States gun-boat *Commodore Perry* during the North Carolina Campaign, and most of the rest of his term on recruiting service at the North. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

SILAS ARNOLD.

Served as Private. Was discharged Feb. 9, 1863, by reason of general disability. Returned home, and reënlisted in Second Rhode Island Volunteers, in which regiment he served honorably until the close of the war.

THOMAS ARNOLD.

Son of Silas. Served as Private during his three years' term, and was honorably discharged with the regiment. He afterward reënlisted in the Veteran Reserve Corps.

GEORGE H. ALLEN.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal May 9, 1863. Served in naval detachment on board United States gun-boat *Commodore Perry* during the North Carolina Expedition. Reënlisted Jan. 5, 1864, for the second term of three years. Resigned his Corporal's warrant at close of the war, and was mustered out with the veterans July 25, 1865.

ALBERT BATES.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal, and deserted.

GEORGE E. BATES.

Served as Private. Reënlisted for second term of three years. This term he served mostly as Teamster in Quartermaster's Department. Was honorably discharged with the veterans.

CHARLES BUDLONG.

Served as Private. Served in naval detachment on board United States gun-boat *Commodore Perry* in North Carolina Expedition. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

STEPHEN M. BURDICK.

Served as Private. Was shot at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862, and shortly after died of his wounds, much lamented by all of his comrades. A faithful soldier and kind friend.

CYRUS S. BEERS.

Served as Private. Was wounded at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862, and was discharged by reason of his wounds Jan. 7, 1863.

WILLIAM H. BANE.

Served as Private. Taken sick and died at Camp California, Va., Jan. 3, 1862. This was the first death in Company B.

TIMOTHY BURNS.

Served as Private. Taken sick, and died at Beaufort, N. C., June 17, 1862.

HENRY S. BROWN.

Served as Fifer. Was discharged for general disability during the summer of 1862.

JONATHAN A. BROWN.

Served as Private, and was honorably discharged with the regiment.

GILBERT BOWEN.

Served as Teamster. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

JOHN RAY CLARKE.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal, and served as such to the close of his term of three years. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

ALBERT G. CORNELL.

Served as Private. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

ALPHONSO COON.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal. Promoted to Sergeant and to Orderly, and during the spring of 1863 was discharged for disability.

ALBERT R. COLLINS.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal, March 2, 1862. Promoted to Sergeant, July 16, 1862, and on the consolidation of the veterans with the Seventh Rhode Island Volunteers, to Orderly-Sergeant. Reënlisted for the second term of three years. Commissioned as Second Lieutenant, June 1, 1865; and as First Lieutenant, July 24, 1865. Was mustered out with the veterans.

ALVIN L. CARD.

Served as Private. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

JONATHAN CARD.

Served as Drummer. Taken sick and died at Roanoke Island, N. C., March 2, 1862.

AMOS P. CHAPMAN.

Served as Private. Discharged by reason of general disability, July 27, 1862.

ARTEMAS S. CHACE.

Served as Private. He reenlisted for the second term of three years, and served honorably till close of the war. Was discharged with the veterans, and died in New Bedford during the winter of 1865.

The writer's messmate and friend during most of our term of service.

JOHN R. CONGDON.

Served as Private. Discharged for disability Jan. 7, 1862. Died at Providence, R. I., Jan. 16, 1875.

GEORGE ERWIN.

Served as Private. Wounded at Hill's Point, Va., May 3, 1863, and discharged by reason of disability.

CHARLES L. FISKE.

Served as Private and was honorably discharged with the regiment.

STEPHEN H. FORD.

Served as Private. Was reported as deserter, Sept. 17, 1862.

WILLIAM D. GARDINER.

Served as Colonel's Cook. Discharged by reason of disability, Dec. 14, 1861.

JAMES P. GARDINER.

Served as Hospital Nurse. Discharged by reason of general disability, Oct. 30, 1862. Since died.

REYNOLDS GORTON.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal. Served in the Color Guard. Honorably discharged with the regiment.

JOHN GAVIN.

Served as Private. Reported as a deserter, at Washington, D. C., Sept. 6, 1862.

EPHRAIM GIBSON.

Went out as Private. Was promoted to Corporal, and discharged by reason of general disability.

SAMUEL HARVEY.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal. Wounded at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862, and died of his wounds, June 11, 1863.

ELISHA S. HOLLOWAY.

Served as Private, Wounded at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862, and was discharged by reason of his wounds, Dec. 10, 1862.

JAMES F. HERVEY.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal. Taken sick and sent to Portsmouth Grove Hospital, R. I., and served most of his term at the North.

REUBEN A. HEALEY.

Served as Private. Wounded at Newbern, March 14, 1862, and was discharged by reason of his wounds.

ALLEN M. HOPKINS.

Served as Private. Was killed at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

ELIJAH JOHNSON.

Served as Private. Was killed at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

JOSEPH JENKINS.

Served as Private. Was discharged after a few weeks' service, by reason of disability.

DANIEL KELLY.

Served as Private. Served in naval detachment on board United States gun-boat *Commodore Perry*, in North Carolina Expedition. Subsequently deserted. Died suddenly at Providence, R. I., Jan. 16, 1886.

DAVID KEACH.

Served as Private. Was confined for disgraceful conduct, at Beaufort, N. C., jail, from whence he escaped, and deserted.

ROBERT KENWORTHY.

Served as Private. Was shot at battle of Newbern, March 14, 1862, and died of his wounds the next day.

JAMES KENNEY.

Served as Private. Reënlisted for second term of three years, and served honorably till close of the war. Was mustered out with the veterans.

GEORGE P. LUTHER.

Served as Drummer. Transferred to Company I.

JOHN LIVESEY.

Served as Private. Discharged by reason of disability. Dec. 6, 1862.

SAMUEL MYRICK.

Served as Private. Killed at Newbern, March 14, 1862.

CROMWELL P. MYRICK.

Brother of Samuel. Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal. Promoted to Sergeant. Was shot while on duty in front of Petersburg, Va., July 18, 1864, and died of his wounds July 20, 1864.

SOLOMON MYRICK.

Also brother to Samuel and Cromwell P. Served as Private, and was honorably discharged with the regiment.

JOSIAH MOON.

Served as Private. Killed at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

JEREMIAH MOON.

Twin brother to Josiah. Served as Private, and was honorably discharged with the regiment.

PATRICK McNEAL.

Served as Private. Was killed at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

ARTHUR McCANN.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal and to Sergeant. Was badly wounded while on duty in the trenches in front of Petersburg, Va., July 21, 1864, and was subsequently discharged by reason of his wound.

EDWARD McDONALD.

Served as Hostler. Died sometime in 1864.

RHODES E. MATHEWSON.

Served as Private. Wounded at battle of Newbern, March 14, 1862. Was discharged with the regiment.

WILLIAM NOONAN.

Served as Private. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

JOSEPH OLIVER.

Served as Private. Killed at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

SAMUEL F. PRESTON.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Sergeant and to Orderly-Sergeant. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

GEORGE W. PRESTON.

Served as Private. Wounded at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862. Reënlisted for second term of three years. Wounded again at Fort Hell, assault on Petersburg, Va., April 2, 1865. Sent to hospital and was subsequently discharged. Since died.

CHRISTOPHER PLUNKETT.

Served as Private. Wounded while on duty in the trenches in front of Petersburg, Va., July 15, 1864. Carried to hospital, and leg amputated. Subsequently discharged. Since died.

JACOB ROE.

Served as Private. Killed at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

JOHN READY.

Served as Private. Taken sick and died at Hatteras Inlet, N. C., about Feb. 1, 1862.

HENRY ROBERTS.

Served as Private. Served in naval detachment on United States gun-boat, *Commodore Perry*, during North Carolina Expedition. Killed at battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862. The writer's schoolmate, messmate, and intimate friend. We enlisted together in three different regiments and one battery before being enlisted in the Fourth Rhode Island, and slept under the same blanket, until poor Harry was killed. A good soldier and kind, jovial friend, he was greatly missed by all his surviving comrades. Slightly wounded at first, he tried to crawl off the field, when another fatal ball laid him low, and his young life went out, another sacrifice upon the altar of his country. He went into the fight with a premonition of death,—a forewarning that he should not come out of it alive,—and fearlessly met his fate like a good soldier.

JAMES H. RANDALL.

Served as Private. Died of small pox at Getty's Station, Va., March, 1864.

JOSEPH J. REYNOLDS.

Served as Private. Wounded at Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862, and subsequently discharged by reason of disability.

FERDINAND RICHMOND.

Served as Private. Was discharged by reason of disability after a few months' service.

STEPHEN H. SAUNDERS.

Served as Private, and was discharged with the regiment.

CHARLES E. SULLIVAN.

Served as Private, and was discharged with the regiment.

WILLIAM B. STARKEY.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal. Was discharged with the regiment.

DAVID A. SHELDON.

Served as Private. Reënlisted for second term of three years, and was discharged at close of war with the veterans. The writer's messmate and intimate friend.

ABIEL SHERMAN.

Served as Private. Was discharged with the regiment.

AUGUSTUS T. THORNTON.

Served as Private. Killed at battle of the Mine, front of Petersburg, Va., July 30, 1864. A genial and pleasant friend and comrade.

GEORGE TYSON.

Served as Private. Discharged by reason of disability, Dec. 13, 1862.

CHARLES E. TURNER.

Served as Private. Served in naval detachment, North Carolina Expedition. Discharged by reason of disability, Jan. 30, 1863.

JAMES TURNER.

Served as Private. Was discharged for disability after a few months' service.

URIAH WHITEHEAD.

Served as Private. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

NATHAN B. WILMARTH.

Served as Wagoner. Was honorably discharged with the regiment.

ARCHELAUS A. WILLIAMS.

Served as Private. Served in the naval detachment, North Carolina Expedition, on board United States gun-boat *Commodore Perry*. Taken sick near the end of his term. Was honorably discharged with the regiment, and in December, 1865, died of disease contracted in the service. The writer's schoolmate, messmate, and intimate friend from the age of seven years until death.

WILLARD P. WILLCOX.

Went out as Private. Promoted to Corporal, and was killed at the battle of Antietam, Sept. 17, 1862.

WILLIAM A. WATERMAN.

Served as Hostler. Reënlisted for second term of three years, and was honorably discharged with the veterans.

EDWIN W. WESTGATE.

Served as Private, and was honorably discharged with the regiment.

Number of non-commissioned officers and men that left Camp Green, Oct. 6, 1861, in Company B, 86; of whom there were

Killed in battle,	10
Died of wounds,	4
Died of sickness,	6
Discharged by reason of wounds,	8
Discharged by reason of general disability,	16
Deserted,	7
Discharged at end of term with the regiment,	26

Discharged at close of war as veterans.	8
Transferred to other companies,	1
	—
Total,	86

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF COMPANY B.

The following were in command of Company B at one time or another, during its term of service :

Capt. M. P. BUFFUM.	Lieut. CHARLES E. ELDRIDGE.
Capt. CHARLES H. GREENE.	Lieut. GEORGE W. FIELD.
Lieut. ALBERT N. BURDICK.	Lieut. ALBERT R. COLLINS.
Lieut. BENJAMIN F. MORSE.	Lieutenant COSTELLO.

LIST OF RECRUITS ADDED TO COMPANY B AT VARIOUS TIMES.

NICHOLAS B. ARMS.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Pleasant Valley, Md. Served honorably till close of the war. Was mustered out with the Seventh Regiment.

GEORGE AMBROSE.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Fredericksburg, Va., in 1863. Deserted at Norfolk, Va., a few months later.

BENJAMIN F. ARNOLD.

Served as Private. Joined the company in front of Petersburg, Va. Served honorably till close of war. Was mustered out with the veterans, and drowned in New York Harbor on the way home.

CHARLES E. BURDICK.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Pleasant Valley, Md., and served honorably till the close of the war. Was mustered out with the Seventh Regiment.

FRANCIS BOUTON.

Served as Private. Joined the regiment at Pleasant Valley, Md., and was discharged for disability, Feb. 14, 1863.

GEORGE W. BENNETT.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Fredericksburg, Va., and served honorably till close of the war. Was mustered out with Seventh Regiment. Since died.

EDWARD CARY.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Newport News, Va. Served honorably till close of the war. Was mustered out with Seventh Regiment.

RICHARD EVANS.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Fredericksburg, Va. Soon after deserted.

JAMES JEFFERS.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Fredericksburg, Va. Soon after deserted,—went to find Evans, and for all we know, is looking for him yet.

LUTHER R. RANDALL.

Served as Private, and subsequently as Wagoner. Joined the company at Pleasant Valley, Md. Served honorably till close of the war, and was mustered out with the Seventh Rhode Island. Died at Providence, R. I., June 3, 1880.

WILLIAM TAYER.

Served as Company Cook. Joined the company at Fredericksburg, Va. Served honorably till the close of the war, and was mustered out with the Seventh Regiment. Since died.

EDWARD VOSE.

Served as Drummer. Joined the company at Newport News, Va., and on the march to Antietam he deserted.

WILLIAM B. WEST.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Pleasant Valley, Md., and was transferred to the navy at Point Lookout, Md.

GEORGE WATERMAN.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Petersburg, Va., Aug. 17, 1864, and was mustered out with the veterans.

EUGENE FLYNN.

Served as Private. Joined the company at Point Lookout, Md., and served till close of the war.

The following men were added to Company B by transfer from Company I, and were subsequently returned to that company :

PRIVATES.

WILLIAM ASHTON,	GEORGE CROCKER,
JOHN BARRINGTON,	CHARLES FULLER,
THOMAS BARBER,	WILLARD MORSE,
RICHARD BETHEL,	BARTHOLOMEW SEXTON,
ABIEL BROWN,	WILLIAM BROWN.
MATTHEW COLLINS,	

FROM COMPANY A.

GEORGE AYLESWORTH,	SILAS SABIN.
--------------------	--------------

Aylesworth was returned to Company A.

Silas Sabin remained in Company B. Was taken prisoner at

battle of the Mine, July 30, 1864, and liberated at close of the war.

TOTAL NUMBER OF MEN, in service as Company B, not including commissioned officers, 114.

LIST OF BATTLES

in which Company B *took an active part, or was represented by the naval detachment*:

ROANOKE ISLAND, N. C.

Feb. 8 and 9, 1862.—With the regiment, and also represented by the naval detachment on board United States gun-boat *Commodore Perry*. No loss in Company B.

ELIZABETH CITY, N. C.

Feb. 10, 1862.—A naval battle between the United States fleet of fourteen gun-boats and the rebel fleet of six gun-boats, one armed schooner, and a land battery of four guns. Company B represented by the naval detachment. No loss to the company.

WINTON, N. C.

Feb. 20, 1862.—Skirmish between three United States gun-boats and a land force of about two thousand rebels. Company B represented by the naval detachment. No loss to the company.

NEWBERN, N. C.

March 13 and 14, 1862.—With the regiment and also represented by the naval detachment. Company B lost one killed and three wounded, of whom one died of his wounds the day after the battle.

Soon after the above engagement the naval detachment was returned to the regiment.

FORT MACON, N. C.

April 24, 1862.—No loss in Company B.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN, MD.

Sept. 14, 1862.—No loss in Company B.

ANTIETAM, MD.

Sept. 17, 1862.—Company B lost seven killed and eight wounded, of whom two died of their wounds shortly after.

FREDERICKSBURG, VA.

Dec. 13, 1862.—No loss in Company B.

SUFFOLK, VA.

April 24, 1863.—No loss in Company B.

HILL'S POINT, VA.

May 3, 1863.—Company B lost one man, wounded.

BATTLE OF THE "MINE."

[Front of Petersburg, Va.]

July 30, 1864.—Company B lost one man killed, and one taken prisoner.

WELDON RAILROAD.

[Siege of Petersburg.]

Aug. 18, 1864.—No loss in Company B.

POPLAR SPRING CHURCH, VA.

[Siege of Petersburg.]

Sept. 30, 1864.—No loss in Company B.

HATCHER'S RUN.

[Siege of Petersburg.]

Oct. 27, 1864.—No loss in Company B.

ASSAULT ON PETERSBURG.

April 2, 1864.—Company B lost one man, wounded.

FORTY DAYS IN THE "NINE HOLES."

[Siege of Petersburg.]

Company B lost one man killed and two wounded.

GARRISON OF "FORT HELL."

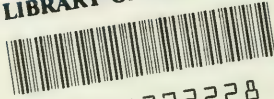
[Siege of Petersburg.]

Company B lost one man, wounded.

H 5. 78 . 4



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00023372228

