
SKEDADDLE

NINETEENTH CENTURY ANECDOTES, POETRY, AND INCIDENTS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

DECEMBER 31, 2004

A RAILROAD ADVENTURE.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

HEROIC DEEDS OF HEROIC MEN

series of articles in Harper's Monthly

The War in Tennessee.—General Mitchel's Plans. The Bold Enterprise. Penetrating the Rebel Lines.—Adroit Seizure of the Locomotive.—The Flight. —The Pursuit. — Capture of the Adventurers. —Their Sufferings. —Trial and Execution of Eight. —The Escape of Party. —Final Exchange of Survivors.

One of the most chivalric and daring deeds performed during the civil war in America, was enacted by a band of twenty-four young men in Georgia in the month of April, 1862. General O. M. Mitchel was then marching across the State of Tennessee, having descended from the Ohio, and was aiming for Chattanooga, a strategic point of great importance. There was a very important railroad which ran from Memphis, on the Mississippi River, to Charleston, South Carolina, on the Atlantic coast. This road passed through the important points of Corinth, Huntsville, Chattanooga, and Atlanta, Georgia.

General Mitchel, with his division, was at the time lying at Murfreesborough, and was moving on to Shelbyville, a very pleasant town on Duck River. The rebels held Chattanooga and the railroad from that place to Atlanta. Thus troops and munitions of war could easily be transported from one of these important points to the other. Could we succeed in cutting the railroad between these two points and in destroying the bridges we might then seize Chattanooga before reinforcements could be sent from Atlanta for its relief. We should thus gain possession of all of East Tennessee. The rebel army would be cut in two. And, indeed, injury would be inflicted which seemed almost to threaten the very existence of the Confederacy.

It was not possible at that time to send an army by a long march to attack the rebels, who were stationed in considerable force along the road, and to take it from



them by main force. The most feasible plan was to send a detachment of bold men, in the common dress of the country, on a secret expedition to burn the bridges. The only way in which this daring exploit could be accomplished was for the adventurers to work their way through the rebel lines to Atlanta, there seize by surprise a locomotive, urge it at its fullest speed toward Chattanooga, stopping only to apply the torch to the bridges behind them, and to rush on by Chattanooga till they reached a point of safety within our army lines near Huntsville, to which point General Mitchel was rapidly moving.

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A deed of more perilous and romantic courage has perhaps never been undertaken. The results to be attained were commensurate with the hazards of the adventure. The *Southern Confederacy*, a prominent rebel journal, commenting upon the enterprise, says:

The mind and heart shrink back appalled at the bare contemplation of the awful consequences which would have followed the success of this one act. We doubt whether the victory of Manassas or Corinth were worth as much to us as the frustration of this one *coup d'etat*. It is not by any means certain that the annihilation of Beauregard's whole army at Corinth would have been so fatal to us as would have been the burning of the bridges at that time by these men.

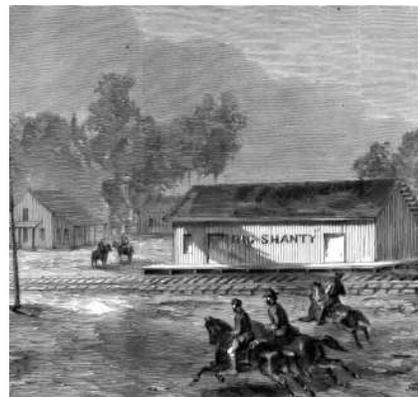
Twenty-four young men of established reputation for intelligence and bravery were selected for the chivalric adventure. In parties of two and three, in citizen's dress, they met at an appointed rendezvous in a grove near Shelbyville, Tennessee. It was Monday the 10th of April, 1862. Here they matured their plans. Assuming that they were Kentuckians, disgusted with the Government of Abraham Lincoln, and that they were seeking an asylum in the South, they broke up into squads of three or four and traversed as rapidly as possible the sparsely settled country to rendezvous on Thursday, the 13th, at Chattanooga, in the midst of one of the thronging encampments of the rebels. The distance to be traveled on foot was a little over one hundred miles. Through multiplied difficulties and many hair-breadth escapes they worked their way along over the rugged spurs of the Cumberland mountains until they reached the Tennessee River, nearly opposite Chattanooga.

There was a horse ferry-boat there, and a great and motley crowd of people drawn by curiosity or the exigencies of war were waiting to be conveyed across. After many embarrassments the adventurers succeeded in crossing the river, having eluded all the surveillance of the patrols and guards. The news had just reached Chattanooga that General Mitchel had taken possession of Huntsville, on the railroad, scarcely one hundred miles west of their encampment. These tidings created great excitement and almost consternation in the rebel ranks. Chattanooga had been until about that time a small, unknown village, buried from the world in the midst of towering mountains, and situated on the eastern or rather southern bank of the Tennessee. The little town presented an air of great tumult and bustle, crowded as it

then was with soldiers and civilians and all the followers of an army.

Our adventurers, mingling with the crowd and wearing the common dress of the country, hastened to the *dépôt*, purchased their tickets for Atlanta and entered the cars. Some of their comrades had arrived earlier, and had already taken a train of cars for Marietta, but a few miles this side of Atlanta. It was late in the afternoon. The cars were crowded mostly with soldiers, so that there was scarcely standing room. The rebels had just received false news of some astounding victories. They were greatly elated. As the cars rolled along jokes, laughter, and oaths rang through the night air.

Marietta was the point at which they were to take the cars preparatory for their bold achievement. At midnight the cars reached that station. The party repaired to different hotels, having arranged to meet in the dept at four o'clock in the morning, to take the train going back to Chattanooga. J. J. Andrews, of Kentucky, a man of extraordinary character, and who was perfectly familiar with the South, was chief of the expedition, and managed all its details with great sagacity. By the casualties of the journey two of the young men were absent, and there were but twenty-two who took passage on the train.



Big Shanty Station

A short ride brought them to a station called Big Shanty. There was at this place an encampment of nearly ten thousand conscripts. Here the cars stopped for a few moments while the engineer, conductor, and many of the passengers stepped into an eating-house for refreshments. Andrews rose from his seat and said, calmly, "Let us go, boys!" Mingling with the crowd of passengers, and of course attracting no attention, they moved forward leisurely to the head of the train. Two of them, W. W. Brown and William Knight from Ohio, were accomplished railroad engineers. One of the men stealthily uncoupled the baggage cars, upon which the rest had clambered from the remainder of the train, while the two engineers, who were at their post, pulled open the valve and put on all steam. In less time than we have

taken to describe it the locomotive was rushing forward at its highest speed. There were four or five rebel regiments within forty rods of the spot from which the locomotive started. We may imagine the bewilderment with which they gazed upon the receding engine as it disappeared in the distance.

Our brave adventurers were too much exhilarated by the excitement of the hour to observe the amazement with which the sudden flight of the engine was regarded by the thousands who were grouped around. Onward they rushed, with almost lightning speed, in silent sublimity of emotion too deep to find expression in smiles or words. Thus far everything had succeeded according to their most sanguine expectations. With some anxiety, however, they looked upon the telegraph wires, running along by their side. Though they had taken the precaution to start from a *dépôt* where there was no telegraph station, still it was a matter of much moment that as speedily as possible they should cut the wires.

Having run about four miles they stopped, and while one of their number, John Scott, of Ohio, climbed the pole and sawed off the wire, others tore up a rail to retard any pursuers. They were now all overjoyed with their success, and warmly they congratulated each other with the prospect of the triumphant termination of their chivalric enterprise.

Andrews had taken the precaution to ascertain what down trains he had to pass, and where to pass them. There was, as they supposed, but one train for them to meet on that day. But in consequence of some military necessity the rebels had put on that day two special trains. When they had arrived at the point where the down train was to pass, quite to their consternation they found that it bore a red flag, thus announcing that another train was following behind. They had, however, still the track for a little time to themselves, and they moved along slowly, for they were ahead of time, to a side track where they were to wait for the special train to pass.

Thus they lost twenty-five precious minutes. It was an awful loss. The pursuers were now upon their track. As soon as the waited-for train was in sight, and they were just ready to push on with renewed velocity; much to their dismay they saw that this train also bore a red flag, announcing still another train behind. They, however, pushed on to the next station, hoping there to pass the train. In the mean time they cut the wires between the two stations, and hurriedly threw such impediments as were at hand behind them upon the track. Just as they were trying with almost the energies of despair to wrench up one of the rails, they heard the

whistle of an engine in pursuit. With frantic strength they broke the rail in two and threw the fragment upon their car as they sprang upon it.

Encouraged by the hope that this would delay their pursuers for some time, they rushed onward and reached a spot where they passed the down-coming train in safety. They now goaded their engine to its utmost possible speed; at times attaining a velocity of sixty miles an hour. Still the foe crowded closely behind. No longer was there any thought of burning the bridges or tearing up the road. Indeed only a miracle could enable them to escape with their lives. Onward and still onward they dashed, passing stations and villages with meteoric speed and roar, exciting amazement in all beholders as they witnessed the apparently terrific flight of the locomotive, followed with equal velocity by an engine with three cars attached, loaded with excited soldiers.

After running in this manner about one hundred miles their wood and water gave out, their oil was expended, and the foe was in sight. They were then within about fifteen miles of Chattanooga. Their pursuers were close upon them. Their situation was desperate, and there was no alternative before them but to leap from the train and take to the woods, each one to save himself as he might. They jumped from the car while still in motion, and running, some to the right and others to the left, were soon dispersed through the forest of pines. Escape, however, was, under the circumstances, almost hopeless.

It was Saturday the 12th day of April. It so happened that there was a regimental muster near by, and many planters were present with their horses and blood-hounds. This whole force of soldiers, planters, and hounds was immediately put upon the pursuit of the fugitives. By means of these fierce dogs, who had been trained in the pursuit of the unhappy slaves, every one of these heroic adventurers was captured. There was one orphan boy, Jacob Parrott, only eighteen years of age. He belonged to the Thirty-third Regiment of Ohio Volunteers. When seized by the infuriated rebels, who manifested a degree of ferocity which would have disgraced savages, they took the poor boy, bent him down almost double over a large stone, and while four of the "chivalry" held him down in that stooping posture, by his hands and his feet, a rebel officer, in a lieutenant's uniform, with a raw hide laid upward of a hundred lashes upon his bare back. A riotous crowd were shouting around, all the time clamoring for his blood. A rope was brought with which they insisted that he should be hung. Three times during the progress of this merciless scourging it was suspended, when they demanded of the heroic young patriot that he should divulge the names of

his comrades, the designs of the expedition, and especially the name of the engineer who ran the train. But all the torment which their savage ingenuity could devise could not extort any confession from him. They only ceased their brutal work when they found that the task of subduing their victim was hopeless.



Capture of the Fugitives

The twenty captives, when taken, were all thrust into the negro jail at Chattanooga. They were thrown into a damp, dirty, miserable cell half underground, as gloomy as the world-renowned *oubliettes* of the Bastille. This dungeon was thirteen feet square. In this room over thirty victims of Southern barbarism were crowded together. Many of them were Southern men, who, for the "crime" of refusing to join in rebellion and treason, had been subjected to almost every conceivable outrage. The only entrance was by a trapdoor opening from the floor above. Two small windows thickly barred with iron let in a few rays of light and scarcely air enough to support life. The horrors of the "black hole" in Calcutta were unsurpassed by those endured in this miserable dungeon. There was not space enough for all to lie down together, and these heroic men, whose sublime daring should at least have won respect, were exposed to barbarities which were a disgrace to the nineteenth century. There is not a civilized nation on the globe which would have treated prisoners of war, or even the most loathsome criminals, with cruelty so revolting. But slavery had converted the South into a state of semi-barbarism. The pursuit, as described by the rebels, must have been nearly as exciting as the flight. The conductor and engineer of the train were quietly breakfasting in the Big Shanty Hotel, at Camp McDonald, when to their indescribable amazement the locomotive with the baggage car took its flight. The rebels seem ever to have been inspired with an instinctive consciousness of the audacity of the Yankees. It was at once surmised that this was a chivalric adventure of their terrible foes. The engineer, conductor, and foreman of the wood department, immediately started upon the run, apparently chasing the engine, which was whirling away

at the rate of twenty miles an hour. This at first excited the most boisterous shouts of laughter from the thousands of soldiers who were standing around.

But the pursuers knew well what they were about. Having run about three miles they came to a hand-car. This they seized and pushed forward with new speed. When they came to an up grade they pushed it before them. On the down grades they could advance with great velocity. At length they came to a place where the patriots had torn up a rail. In their eagerness, not noticing this, they were all thrown, car and men, pell-mell on one side of the road. The car, however, was uninjured, and no bones were broken. The car was replaced on the track, and the rebels were again in full pursuit.

Thus they pushed on for twenty miles, till they came to Etowah Station, where there chanced to be a locomotive fired up and all ready for a start. This they seized. Putting on a full head of steam they soon reached Kingston, where they learned that the adventurers were but twenty minutes ahead of them. Here they found a locomotive capable of much higher speed, which was fired up, waiting for the arrival of a passenger train, when it was to proceed by a branch road to Rome.

A large number of soldiers and planters had now joined them with swords, revolvers, and muskets. Aided by their fresh engine, and with their little army, onward they now flew with almost the speed of the wind. The obstructions which the fugitives threw behind them upon the track were speedily removed. At length they came to a place where three rails had been torn up and carried away. They could drive their locomotive no farther. With great promptness and energy they abandoned the engine; ran along the track two miles; met the down freight train near Adairsville; reversed the train; ran back to the station; switched the train off upon the side-track; turned the engine, and rushed on to Calhoun.

Here they gathered a new force of armed men to pursue the fugitives, a telegraph operator, and workmen to repair the road. Again they were rushing forward with almost frenzied speed. As they were turning a curve they caught a glimpse of the now crippled engine they were pursuing scarcely a mile ahead of them. The adventurers had stopped a moment to tear up the track. Hearing the approach of the foe they sprang upon their car, and again sped away. The pursuers pressing on in hot haste came to the spot where the rails were torn up. Their workmen, with the necessary tools, instantly tore up the rails behind them, and replaced those which were taken away.

The flight and the chase were now exciting beyond all power of words to describe. The locomotives were frequently in sight of each other. The engine of the patriots was rapidly failing. Wood and water were nearly gone, and the unhoiled boxes were almost melting with

heat. In this their extremity they uncoupled two of the box cars, and left them to retard the pursuers. But the energetic pursuers pushed the cars before them to the first turn out, and were soon within four hundred yards of their victims. Only then our adventurers leaped from their car and took to the woods.



The Prison at Chattanooga

We now return to the prisoners in their dismal dungeon.

Their trapdoor was opened twice a day, when their food was let down to them in a bucket. There were no opportunities for washing clothes or person. There was no permission to leave the dungeon for any of the wants which these frail bodies require. They were, of course, soon covered with vermin. The heat in that almost tropical region where so many were huddled together, was so insupportable that they were often obliged to strip themselves entirely naked to be able to bear it. In addition to all this they were cruelly handcuffed, and with trace-chains, secured by padlocks around their necks, were fastened to each other in companies of twos and threes. Such was the treatment, in the American village of Chattanooga, on the beautiful banks of the Tennessee, of the noblest of American citizens for the crime of loyalty to the Stars and the Stripes.

The prisoners descended into this cell by ladder, which was then drawn up. Many of the victims of these rebel atrocities were Tennessee Union men, the noblest men of the State. Their food consisted of a small piece of meat, and a little flour mixed with water and baked, presenting a substance about as hard and indigestible as lead. The rebels rifled the pockets of the captives, leaving not a solitary copper behind.

Mr. Andrews, the leader of the railroad party, was a man of unusually heroic and noble character. After several weeks of imprisonment an order came for twelve of the captives to be sent to Knoxville for trial. Andrews, with several of his comrades, was left behind. A week

after the departure of those who were taken to Knoxville an officer came into the prison and carelessly handed to Andrews his death-warrant. He made a desperate attempt to escape, but was recaptured, the whole force of the garrison at Chattanooga being sent in pursuit of him, aided by blood-hounds. After suffering more than can well be imagined, torn and bleeding he was taken back to Chattanooga, and so heavily chained that he could scarcely move. As there was danger that General Mitchel might make an advance upon Chattanooga his execution was ordered to take place at Atlanta. He was taken there in the cars, exposed all the way down to jeers and insults from the brutal people who frowned around. Tottering beneath the weight of his clanking chains, he walked to the scaffold. Through the whole trying scene he displayed the firmness of the patriot.

"Boys," said he to his comrades, as they were taken from him to be carried to Knoxville, "if I never see you here again try to meet me on the other side of Jordan."

Physically he was one of the noblest specimens of manhood. As he was swung food the scaffold his great weight so stretched the rope that his feet touched the ground. The wretches got some shovels and dug away the earth beneath his feet. Thus this patriot and Christian died. He was but thirty-three years of age, and was to have been married in the very month in which, by traitorous hands, he was hung.

The twelve who were removed to Knoxville were arraigned for trial, one by one. They were brought before a court-martial, one each day, the trial lasting about an hour. They were charged with being spies, and were allowed to employ counsel. The defense was, that being in citizens' clothes did not take from them protection belonging to citizens of war, since the Confederate Government authorized all the guerrillas in their service to wear citizens dress. Moreover, it was a common custom for them, whenever it would serve their purpose, to dress their troops even in the United States uniform. It was also urged that the object of the expedition was purely a military one, for the destruction of communications, which was lawful according to the rules of war.

The defense was apparently so conclusive that several members of the court-martial, who had some humanity still remaining in their bosoms, called upon the captives and assured them that, according to the laws of war, they, under the circumstances, could only be regarded as prisoners of war, and not as spies. It was proved that they had entered the rebel camp not as spies seeking information, but to accomplish a definite object which war allowed.

After seven of the captives had been tried the rapid advance of General Mitchel upon Chattanooga broke up the court-martial, as all the officers composing it were compelled to hasten to their regiments to resist his march. Knoxville was also threatened, and the captives were hurriedly removed to Atlanta. The ferocity which has characterized the conduct of the rebels throughout this war has always been incited by those men in high stations who were its leading spirits. The remorseless despotism at Richmond was determined that no clemency on the part of the court-martial should spare the captives.

On the 18th of June the clanking of the sword of some officers was heard ascending the stairs of the prison at Atlanta. The door was thrown open, and the seven young men, who had been already tried, were called into another room. One, who was so sick of fever that he could not stand, was lifted from his cot and supported, with tottering steps, out of the room. In a few moments they returned, with their hands tied behind them, and with the announcement that they were immediately to be led out to execution. Not a moment was allowed to bid adieu to their comrades, to write a parting word of love to mother or sister, or even to fall upon their knees and implore the pardon and sustaining grace of God. The young men were entirely unprepared for this dread announcement, for they had scarcely a doubt that they were to be regarded as prisoners of war. One of them exclaimed in anguish to a friend, "Oh! try to be better prepared when you come to die than I am!" Another, who had been a merry, thoughtless boy, cried out in agony, which touched all hearts but those of his unfeeling executioners, "Boys, I am not prepared to meet Jesus. I *know* that I am not prepared." Another, Samuel Slavens, who had left a young family in his native State, was heard to murmur with trembling voice, "Wife—children—tell—" when emotion overwhelmed him and he could say no more. John Scott had been married but three days when he entered the army. As he thought of his young bride he could only clasp his hands in speechless agony. Marion A. Ross, of Ohio, seemed to be endowed with supernatural strength. His cheek glowed and his eye flashed with animation. Fully comprehending the sublimity of the sacrifice he was making, he said, with firm voice, "Tell them at home, if any of you escape, that I died for my country, and did not regret it."

All this occurred in a moment. "Come, hurry up there!" exclaimed the brutal marshal who stood at the door with other officers; "come on, we can't wait." Samuel Robinson, of Ohio, the young man who was too sick to walk, was hurried away with the rest. The death-cart was at the door. The seven captives were crowded into it. A company of mounted rebels surrounded them.

When placed upon the scaffold with ropes around their necks George D. Wilson, of Ohio, asked permission to speak a few words. His request was granted, probably with the expectation that he was to make some confession. In eloquent words, and with Roman heroism, this young American citizen then said:

"I have no hostile feelings toward the Southern people. Their rulers, not they, are responsible for this rebellion. I am no spy, but a soldier regularly detailed for military duty. I do not regret dying for my country, I only regret the manner of my death. You may all depend upon it that this rebellion will yet be crushed down. You will all regret the part you have taken in it. The time will soon come when the flag of our Union will float over our whole undivided country, and over the very spot where this scaffold now stands."

There were about four hundred of low, uncultured men, such as compose the rank and file of the rebel army, surrounding the gallows. With oaths and ribald jests they assailed the patriots. As the platform fell five only were seen struggling suspended in the air. Two ropes had broken, and William Campbell of Kentucky, and Samuel Slavens of Ohio, fell to the ground bruised, bleeding, and almost insensible. Soon they slightly recovered and begged that a few moments might be granted them that they might pray for the forgiveness and the help of God. The request was insultingly refused. New ropes were provided. They were again dragged upon the scaffold and launched into eternity. The mob shouted, and dispersed to drink themselves drunk in their merriment over hanging these "Yankee Abolitionists."

The four captives who were left in the prison behind, simply because their trial had not yet taken place, in gloom unspeakable soon saw the cart return empty, thus announcing that the terrible tragedy was finished.

The energetic movements of General Mitchel kept the rebels in a constant state of alarm. The surviving captives were frequently moved from one prison to another, and there was no time to convene another court-martial. They were most of them collected in the jail at Atlanta. The execution of their comrades and the peril to which they were exposed of meeting at any day the same fate, so affected them that by a unanimous vote they established morning and evening prayers. Each one in turn, as they all kneeled together, offered his brief and fervent petition. A more touching scene can not well be imagined, or one which more impressively shows what a support true religion is to the human soul in the hour of sorest trial. There was a Methodist clergyman in Atlanta by the name of McDonnell, who was very kind to these men, lending them books and speaking to them words of Christian sympathy. We mention this that should any of our soldiers chance to meet him, they may remember his

kindness to their imprisoned brethren. The negroes were as ever the firm friends of our soldiers. They were unwearied in their endeavors to help the captives, even exposing themselves to cruel scourgings that they might befriend them.

After writing most of the above I chanced to come across a little book, entitled "Daring and Suffering," written by Lieutenant William Pittenger, of Ohio, who was one of the adventurers in this heroic enterprise, and who, after many hair-breadth escapes, succeeded in reaching friends and home. In his interesting narrative he gives a minute detail of those scenes of which here we can give but a brief sketch.

"We had friends in the waiters of the prison, though their faces were black. They assisted us by every means in their power. It was not long till they found that there was nothing we desired so much as to read the news; and they taxed their ingenuity to gratify us. They would wait till the jailer or some of the guard had finished reading a paper and laid it down and then slyly purloin it. When meal time came it would be put into the bottom of the pan, in which our food was brought, and thus handed in to us. The paper had to be returned in the same way to avoid suspicion. For several months it was only through their instrumentality that we could obtain any definite information of what was going on in the world without."

"Having found the negroes thus intelligent and useful, far beyond what I had supposed possible, I questioned them about other matters. They were better informed than I had given them credit for, and knew enough to disbelieve all the stories the rebels told. When the whites were not present they laughed at the grand victories the papers were publishing every day. They imagined that all the Northern troops were chivalrous soldiers, fighting for the universal rights of man. They never wavered in their belief that the Union troops would conquer, and that the result of the victory would be their freedom. I never saw one who did not cherish an ardent desire for freedom, and wish and long for the time when the triumph of the national forces would place the coveted boon within his grasp."

The months rolled heavily along, and summer and autumn passed sadly away. Many plans were talked over by the survivors, now fourteen in number, for attempting an escape. But they were guarded with such vigilance that no plan could be presented which did not seem utterly desperate. At length the provost marshal came into their room one day and informed them that he had received a letter from the Secretary of War at Richmond, inquiring why all the party engaged in the railroad adventure had not been executed. And soon they

received intelligence that another dispatch had come ordering their immediate execution. The frantic struggles of despair now became prudence. They seized their jailer, gagged him, wrenched from him his keys, rushed down stairs and sprang upon the guard, tore their guns from them, scaled the walls, and ran for the woods. The whole garrison in Atlanta was immediately in commotion. A regiment of cavalry was started off in pursuit. Their chivalric commander, Colonel Lee, said,

"Don't take one of the villains alive. Shoot them down, and let them lie in the woods for the birds and hogs to eat."

Eight of the heroes escaped. J. A. Wilson and Mark Wood, both from Ohio, after adventures as marvelous as were ever detailed in the dreams of romance, pushing south directly through the densest throngs of rebeldom, at last reached the Gulf of Mexico, where they succeeded in getting beneath the protection of the Stars and Stripes, on a United States gun-boat. J. B. Porter and John Wollam, also from Ohio, ran in a westerly direction. Traveling by night and hiding by day, after a month of hunger, toil, and peril which no pen can describe, they reached Corinth, where the national banner received them under its protecting folds. M. J. Hawkins and D. A. Dorsey, both also from Ohio, after wandering through the woods for three weeks, traveling only by starlight, living upon roots and raw sweet-potatoes, finally aided by Union men, whom they found scattered through the mountains, reached Somerset, Kentucky, from which place they were transported to their regiments, where they were received as from the dead. Two, W. W. Brown and William Knight, also from Ohio, were never afterward heard from. They probably perished of hunger and exposure in the woods. All the rest, six in number, were recaptured.

It was now October. As the jail was not deemed a safe place for their confinement they were removed to the city barracks, where their situation was much less uncomfortable. Several Union Tennesseans were imprisoned with them. Weeks of the dreary monotony of prison-life rolled on. One day, when in the lowest depths of despondency, they were roused to almost a frenzy of joy by the tidings that they were exchanged, and were immediately to be sent to the Union lines. On the 3d day of December, a bitter cold, wintry day, our captives, in only summer clothing, and those ragged and threadbare, were placed in a boxcar, and, almost perishing with cold, were borne over the frozen roads toward Virginia. After a long ride, in which they suffered excessively from hunger as well as cold, they reached Richmond. It was the 7th of December, 1862. To their infinite disappointment they found that they had been deceived.

Instead of being exchanged they were placed in Castle Thunder, the Bastile of the South. Here they remained in bitter confinement during the months of December and January, hope every day growing more and more faint. They had no fire, very scanty food, and scarcely any clothing. It seemed to be the endeavor of the barbarian rebels to kill them by the lingering tortures of starvation and freezing. In view of the sufferings inflicted upon them one of their jailers was overheard to say, influenced by a spark of humanity which still remained in his bosom,

"If you want to kill the men, and I know the rascals deserve it, do it at once. But don't keep them there to die by inches, for it will disgrace us all over the world."

In March it was announced that arrangements had been made for a general exchange. The joy this excited no tongue can tell. On the 17th of March an officer entered the prison in the evening, and stated that our captives, with several others, were to leave the next morning in a flag-of-truce boat, to be conveyed to the American lines.

"The evening," writes Mr. Pittenger, "was one of wild excitement. Nearly all acted like men bereft of reason. Their joyousness found vent in vociferous cheers, in dancing and bounding over the floor, in embracing each other and pledging kind remembrances."

Early the next morning they took the cars, and at City Point were received into a flag-of-truce boat—the State of Maine—over which the Star-Spangled Banner was gloriously floating. Down the James and up the Potomac they went, their hearts throbbing with joyous excitement. Here they met with that honorable reception which they so richly merited. Each one received a beautiful medal in commemoration of his heroic though unfortunate adventure. All their arrearages were paid, the money taken from them and other property of which

they had been robbed were refunded, and a purse of a hundred dollars placed in each one's hand. They then received a furlough to visit their friends. Before they left Washington they were received by the President, who greeted them with his characteristic fatherly affection.



Under the Flag

The names of these young men should be handed down to posterity with honor. We give them as we find them recorded in the very interesting personal narrative of William Pittenger. Eight of them were executed. Their names were J. J. Andrews, Kentucky, and William Campbell, George D. Wilson, Marion A. Ross, Perry G. Shadrack, Samuel Slavens, Samuel Robinson, and John Scott, all from Ohio. The following, eight in number, who were also from Ohio, escaped in October, though the first two mentioned probably perished in the woods, as they were never heard from. They were W. W. Brown, William Knight, J. B. Porter, Mark Wood, J. A. Wilson, M. J. Hawkins, John Wollam, and D. A. Dorsey. The following six were finally exchanged: Jacob Parrott, Robert Buffam, William Bensinger, William Reddick, E. H. Mason, and William Pittenger



Ruins of the Acquia Creek and Fredericksburg R.R. Bridge, over Potomac Creek

A Rebel War Clerk's Diary

by John Beauchamp Jones

The Early Days of the War

April 8th, 1861. Burlington, New Jersey

The expedition sails to-day from New York. Its purpose is to reduce Fort Moultrie, Charleston harbor, and relieve Fort Sumter, invested by the Confederate forces. Southern born, and editor of the *Southern Monitor*, there seems to be no alternative but to depart immediately. For years the *Southern Monitor*, Philadelphia, whose motto was "The Union as it was, the Constitution as it is," has foreseen and foretold the resistance of the Southern States, in the event of the success of a sectional party inimical to the institution of African slavery, upon which the welfare and existence of the Southern people seem to depend. And I must depart immediately; for I well know that the first gun fired at Fort Sumter will be the signal for an outburst of ungovernable fury, and I should be seized and thrown into prison.

I must leave my family — my property — everything. My family cannot go with me — but they may follow. The storm will not break in its fury for a month or so. Only the most obnoxious persons, deemed dangerous, will be molested immediately.

8 O'CLOCK P.M. — My wife and children have been busy packing my trunk, and making other preparations for my departure. They are cheerful. They deem the rupture of the States a *fait accompli*, but reckon not of the horrors of war. They have contrived to pack up, with other things, my fine old portrait of Calhoun, by Jarvis. But I must leave my papers, the accumulation of twenty-five years, comprising thousands of letters from predestined rebels. My wife opposes my suggestion that they be burned. Among them are some of the veto messages of President Tyler, and many letters from him, Governor Wise, etc. With the latter I had a correspondence in 1856, showing that this blow would probably have been struck then, if Fremont had been elected.

April 9th

My adieu over, I set out in the broad light of day. When the cars arrived at Camden, I proceeded, with the rest of the *through* passengers, in the boat to the navy yard, without going ashore in

the city. The passengers were strangers to me. Many could be easily recognized as Southern men; but quite as many were going only as far as Washington, for their reward. They were bold denouncers of the rebellion; the others were silent, thoughtful, but in earnest.

The first thing which attracted my attention, as the cars left the Delaware depot, was a sign-board on my left, inscribed in large letters, "UNION CEMETERY." My gaze attracted the notice of others. A mocking *bon-mot* was uttered by a Yankee wit, which was followed by laughter.

For many hours I was plunged in the deepest abstraction, and spoke not a word until we were entering the depot at Washington, just as the veil of night was falling over the scene.

Then I was aroused by the announcement of a conductor that, failing to have my trunk rechecked at Baltimore, it had been left in that city!

Determined not to lose it, I took the return train to Baltimore, and put up at Barnum's Hotel. Here I met with Mr. Abell, publisher of the *Baltimore Sun*, an old acquaintance. Somewhat contrary to my expectations, knowing him to be a native of the North, I found him an ardent secessionist. So enthusiastic was he in the cause, that he denounced both Maryland and Virginia for their hesitancy in following the example of the Cotton States; and he invited me to furnish his paper with correspondence from Montgomery, or any places in the South where I might be a sojourner.

April 10th

Making an early start this morning, I once more arrived at Washington City. I saw no evidences of a military force in the city, and supposed the little army to be encamped at the west end of the Avenue, guarding the Executive Mansion.

We took an omnibus without delay and proceeded to the steamer. As soon as we left the shore, I fancied I saw many of the passengers breathing easier and more deeply. Certainly there was more vivacity, since we were relieved of the presence of Republicans. And at the breakfast table

there was a freer flow of speech, and a very decided manifestation of secession proclivities.

Among the passengers was Major Holmes, who had just resigned his commission in the U. S. army. He had been ordered to proceed with the expedition against Charleston; but declined the honor of fighting against his native land. The major is a little deaf, but has an intellectual face, the predominant expression indicating the discretion and prudence so necessary for success in a large field of operations. In reply to a question concerning the military qualities of Beauregard and Bragg, he said they were the flower of the young officers of the U. S. army. The first had great genius, and was perhaps the most dashing and brilliant officer in the country; the other, more sedate, nevertheless possessed military capacities of a very high order. President Davis, in his opinion, had made most excellent selections in the appointment of his first generals. The major, however, was very sad at the prospect before us; and regarded the tenders of pecuniary aid to the U. S. by the Wall Street capitalists as ominous of a desperate, if not a prolonged struggle. At this time the major's own State, North Carolina, like Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, and Missouri, yet remains in the Union.

We were delayed several hours at Aquia Creek, awaiting the arrival of the cars, which were detained in consequence of a great storm and flood that had occurred the night before.

April 10th and 11th

These two days were mainly lost by delays, the floods having swept away many bridges, which had not yet been repaired. As we approached Richmond, it was observed that the people were more and more excited, and seemed to be pretty nearly unanimous for the immediate secession of the State. Everywhere the Convention then in session was denounced with bitterness, for its adherence to the Union; and Gov. Letcher was almost universally execrated for the chocks he had thrown under the car of secession and Southern independence. I heard very many who had voted for him, regret that they had ever supported the clique of politicians who managed to secure his nomination. And now I learned that a People's Spontaneous Convention would assemble in

Richmond on the 16th of the month, when, if the other body persisted in its opposition to the popular will, the most startling revolutionary measures would be adopted, involving, perhaps, arrests and executions. Several of the members of this body with whom I conversed bore arms upon their persons.

April 12th

To-day I beheld the first secession flag that had met my vision. It was at Polecat Station, Caroline County, and it was greeted with enthusiasm by all but the two or three Yankees in the train. One of these, named Tupps, had been questioned so closely, and his presence and nativity had become so well known, that he became alarmed for his safety, although no one menaced him. He could not sit still a moment, nor keep silence. He had been speculating in North Carolina the year before, and left some property there, which, of course, he must save, if needs be, at the risk of his life. But he cared nothing for slavery, and would never bear arms against the South, if she saw fit to "set up Government business for herself." He rather guessed war was a speculation that wouldn't pay. His volubility increased with his perturbation, and then he drank excessively and sang Dixie. When we reached Richmond, he was beastly drunk.

Arrived at the Exchange Hotel, Richmond. A storm rages above, and below in the minds of men; but the commotion of the elements above attracts less attention than the tempest of excitement agitating the human breast. The news-boys are rushing in all directions with extras announcing the bombardment of Fort Sumter! This is the irrevocable blow! Every reflecting mind here should know that the only alternatives now are successful revolution or abject subjugation. But they do not lack for the want of information of the state of public sentiment in the North. It is in vain that the laggards are assured by persons just from the North, that the Republican leaders now composing the cabinet at Washington were prepared to hail the event at Charleston as the most auspicious that could have happened for the accomplishment of their designs; and that their purpose is the extinction of slavery, at least in the border States; the confiscation of the estates of rebels to reimburse the Federal Government for the expenses of the war

which had been deliberately resolved on; and to gratify the cupidity of the "Wide-Awakes," and to give employment to foreign mercenaries.

But it is not doubtful which course the current of feeling is rapidly taking. Even in this hitherto Union city, secession demonstrations are prevalent; and the very men who two days ago upheld Gov. Letcher in his *conservatism*, are now stricken dumb amid the popular clamor for immediate action. I am now resolved to remain in Richmond for a season.

After tea I called upon Gov. Wise, who occupied lodgings at the same hotel. He was worn out, and prostrated by a distressing cough which threatened pneumonia. But ever and anon his eagle eye assumed its wonted brilliancy. He was surrounded by a number of his devoted friends, who listened with rapt attention to his surpassing eloquence. A test question, indicative of the purpose of the Convention to adjourn without action, had that day been carried by a decided majority. The governor once rose from his recumbent position on the sofa and said, whatever the majority of Union men in the Convention might do, or leave undone, Virginia must array herself on one side or the other. She must fight either Lincoln or Davis. If the latter, he would renounce her, and tender his sword and his life to the Southern Confederacy. And although it was apparent that his *physique* was reduced, as he said, to a mere "bag of bones," yet it was evident that his spirit yet struggled with all its native fire and animation.

Soon after President Tyler came in. I had not seen him for several years, and was surprised to find him, under the weight of so many years, unchanged in activity and energy of body and mind. He was quite as ardent in his advocacy of prompt State action as Wise. Having recently abandoned the presidency of the Peace Congress at Washington, in despair of obtaining concessions or guarantees of safety from the rampant powers then in the ascendency, he nevertheless believed, as did a majority of the statesmen of the South, that, even then, in the event of the secession of all the Southern States, presenting thus a united front, no war of great magnitude would ensue. I know better, from my residence in the North, and from the confessions of the Republicans with whom I have

been thrown in contact; but I will not dissent voluntarily from the opinions of such statesmen. I can only, when my opinion is desired, intimate my conviction that a great war of the sections might have been averted, if the South had made an adequate *coup d'etat* before the inauguration of Lincoln, and while the Democratic party everywhere was yet writhing under the sting and mortification of defeat. *Then* the arm of the Republican party would have been paralyzed, for the attitude of the Democratic party would at least have been a menacing one; but now, the Government has been suffered to fall into the possession of the enemy, the sword and the purse have been seized, and it is *too late* to dream of peace — in or out of the Union. Submission will be dishonor. Secession can only be death, which is preferable.

Gov. Wise, smiling, rose again and walked to a corner of the room where I had noticed a bright musket with a sword-bayonet attached. He took it up and criticised the sword as inferior to the *knife*. Our men would require long drilling to become expert with the former, like the French Zouaves; but they instinctively knew how to wield the bowie-knife. The conversation turning upon the probable deficiency of a supply of improved arms in the South, if a great war should ensue, the governor said, with one of his inevitable expressions of feeling, that it was not the improved *arm*, but the improved *man*, which would win the day. Let brave men advance with flint locks and old-fashioned bayonets, on the popinjays of the Northern cities — advance on, and on, under the fire, reckless of the slain, and he would answer for it with his life, that the Yankees would break and run. But, in the event of the Convention adjourning without decisive action, he apprehended the first conflict would be with *Virginians* — the Union men of Virginia. He evidently despaired, under repeated defeats, of seeing an ordinance of secession passed immediately, and would have preferred "resistance" to "secession."

April 13th

After breakfast I accompanied Gov. Wise to his room. He advised me to remain a few days before proceeding elsewhere. He still doubted, however, whether Virginia would move before

autumn. He said there was a majority of 500 Union men then in the city. But the *other* Convention, to meet on the 16th, might do something. He recommended me to a friend of his who distributed the tickets, who gave me a card of admission.

April 14th

Wrote all day for several journals.

April 15th

Great demonstrations made throughout the day, and hundreds of secession flags are flying in all parts of the city. At night, while sitting with Captain O. Jennings Wise in the editorial room of the *Enquirer*, I learned from the Northern exchange papers, which still came to hand, that my office in Philadelphia, "*The Southern Monitor*," had been sacked by the mob. It was said ten thousand had visited my office, displaying a rope with which to hang me. Finding their victim had escaped, they vented their fury in sacking the place. I have not ascertained the extent of the injury done; but if they injured the building, it belonged to H. B., a rich Republican. They tore down the signs (it was a corner house east of the Exchange), and split them up, putting the splinters in their hats, and wearing them as trophies. They next visited the mansion of Gen. P., who had made his fortune dealing in cotton, and had been a bold Northern champion of Southern rights. But the general flinched on this trying occasion. He displayed the stars and stripes, and pledged "the boys" to lead them in battle against the secessionists.

During the evening, a procession with banners and torch-lights came up the street and paused before the *Enquirer* office. They called for Captain Wise, and I accompanied him to the iron balcony, where he made them a soul-stirring speech. At its conclusion, he seized me by the arm and introduced me to the crowd. He informed them of the recent proceedings in Philadelphia, etc., and then ceased speaking, leaving me to tell my own story to the listening multitude. That was not my fault; I had never attempted to make a public speech in my life; and I felt that I was in a predicament. Wise knew it, and enjoyed my embarrassment. I contrived, however, to say to the people that the time for speaking had gone by, and there was no time left for listening. They proceeded up the street,

growing like a snow-ball as they rolled onward. At every corner there were cheers uttered for Davis, and groans for Lincoln.

Upon returning to my boarding-house (the hotel being found too expensive), kept by Mrs. Samuels, and her sister, Miss Long, I found the ladies making secession flags. Indeed, the ladies everywhere seem imbued with the spirit of patriotism, and never fail to exert their influence in behalf of Southern independence.

To-day the secession fires assumed a whiter heat. In the Convention the Union men no longer utter denunciations against the disunionists. They merely resort to pretexts and quibbles to stave off the inevitable ordinance. They had sent a deputation to Washington to make a final appeal to Seward and Lincoln to vouchsafe them such guarantees as would enable them to keep Virginia to her moorings. But in vain. They could not obtain even a promise of concession. And now the Union members as they walk the streets, and even Gov. Letcher himself, hear the indignant mutterings of the impassioned storm which threatens every hour to sweep them from existence. Business is generally suspended, and men run together in great crowds to listen to the news from the North, where it is said many outrages are committed on Southern men and those who sympathize with them. Many arrests are made, and the victims thrown into Fort Lafayette. These crowds are addressed by the most inflamed members of the Convention, and never did I hear more hearty responses from the people.

April 17th

This was a memorable day. When we assembled at Metropolitan Hall, it could be easily perceived that we were on the threshold of momentous events. All other subjects, except that of a new political organization of the State, seemed to be momentarily delayed, as if awaiting action elsewhere. And this plan of political organization filled me with alarm, for I apprehended it would result in a new conflict between the old parties — Whig and Democrat. The ingenious discussion of this subject was probably a device of the Unionists, two or three of them having obtained seats in the Revolutionary Convention. I knew the ineradicable instincts of Virginia politicians, and their inveterate habit of public speaking, and knew there were well-

grounded fears that we should be launched and lost in an illimitable sea of argument, when the business was Revolution, and death to the coming invader. Besides, I saw no hope of unanimity if the old party distinctions and designations were not submerged forever.

These fears, however, were groundless. The Union had received its *blesure mortelle*, and no power this side of the Potomac could save it. During a pause in the proceedings, one of the leading members arose and announced that he had information that the vote was about being taken in the other Convention on the ordinance of secession. "Very well!" cried another member, "we will give them another chance to save themselves. But it is the last!" This was concurred in by a vast majority. Not long after, Lieut. Gov. Montague came in and announced the passage of the ordinance by the other Convention! This was succeeded by a moment too thrilling for utterance, but was followed by tears of gladness and rapturous applause. Soon after, President Tyler and Gov. Wise were conducted arm-in-arm, and bare-headed, down the center aisle amid a din of cheers, while every member rose to his feet. They were led to the platform, and called upon to address the Convention. The venerable ex-President of the United States first rose responsive to the call, but remarked that the exhaustion incident to his recent incessant labors, and the nature of his emotions at such a momentous crisis, superadded to the feebleness of age, rendered him physically unable to utter what he felt and thought on such an occasion. Nevertheless, he seemed to acquire supernatural strength as he proceeded, and he spoke most effectively for the space of fifteen minutes. He gave a brief history of all the struggles of our race for freedom, from *Magna Charta* to the present day; and he concluded with a solemn declaration that at no period of our history were we engaged in a more just and holy effort for the maintenance of liberty and independence than at the present moment. The career of the dominant party at the North was but a series of aggressions, which fully warranted the steps we were taking for resistance and eternal separation; and if we performed our whole duty as Christians and patriots, the same benign Providence which favored the cause of our forefathers in the Revolution of 1776, would again crown our efforts

with similar success. He said he might not survive to witness the consummation of the work begun that day; but generations yet unborn would bless those who had the high privilege of being participators in it.

He was succeeded by Gov. Wise, who, for a quarter of an hour, electrified the assembly by a burst of eloquence, perhaps never surpassed by mortal orator. During his pauses a silence reigned, pending which the slightest breathing could be distinctly heard, while every eye was bathed in tears. At times the vast assembly rose involuntarily to their feet, and every emotion and expression of feature seemed responsive to his own. During his speech he alluded to the reports of the press that the oppressors of the North had probably seized one of his children sojourning in their midst. "But," said he, "if they suppose hostages of my own heart's blood will stay my hand in a contest for the maintenance of sacred rights, they are mistaken. Affection for kindred, property, and life itself sink into insignificance in comparison with the overwhelming importance of public duty in such a crisis as this." He lamented the blindness which had prevented Virginia from seizing Washington before the Republican hordes got possession of it — but, said he, we must do our best under the circumstances. It was now Independence or Death — although he had preferred fighting in the Union — and when the mind was made up to die rather than fail, success was certain. For himself, he was eager to meet the ordeal, and he doubted not every Southern heart pulsed in unison with his own.

Hon. J. M. Mason, and many other of Virginia's distinguished sons were called upon, and delivered patriotic speeches. And finally, *Gov. Letcher* appeared upon the stage. He was loudly cheered by the very men who, two days before, would gladly have witnessed his execution. The governor spoke very briefly, merely declaring his concurrence in the important step that had been taken, and his honest purpose, under the circumstances, to discharge his whole duty as Executive of the State, in conformity to the will of the people and the provisions of the Constitution.

Before the *sine die* adjournment, it was suggested that inasmuch as the ordinance had been passed in secret session, and it was desirable that the

enemy should not know it before certain preparations could be made to avert sudden injury on the border, etc., that the fact should not be divulged at present.

April 18th

In spite of every precaution, it is currently whispered in the streets to-day that Virginia has seceded from the Union; and that the act is to be submitted to the people for ratification a month hence. This is perhaps a blunder. If the Southern States are to adhere to the old distinct sovereignty doctrine, God help them one and all to achieve their independence of the United States. Many are inclined to think the safest plan would be to obliterate State lines, and merge them all into an indivisible nation or empire, else there may be incessant conflicts between the different sovereignties themselves, and between them and the General Government. I doubt our ability to maintain the old cumbrous, complicated, and expensive form of government.

April 19th

Dispatches from Montgomery indicate that President Davis is as firm a States right man as any other, perfectly content to bear the burdens of government six years, and hence I apprehend he will not budge in the business of guarding Virginia until after the ratification of the secession ordinance. Thus a month's precious time will be lost; and the scene of conflict, instead of being in Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, will be in Virginia. From the ardor of the volunteers already beginning to pour into the city, I believe 25,000 men could be collected and armed in a week, and in another they might sweep the whole Abolition concern beyond the Susquehanna, and afterward easily keep them there. But this will not be attempted, nor permitted, by the Convention, so recently composed mostly of Union men.

To-night we have rumors of a collision in Baltimore. A regiment of Northern troops has been assailed by the mob. No good can come of mob assaults in a great revolution.

Wrote my wife to make preparations with all expedition to escape into Virginia. Women and children will not be molested for some weeks yet; but I see they have begun to ransack their baggage.

Mrs. Semple, daughter of President Tyler, I am informed, had her plate taken from her in an attempt to get it away from New York.

April 20th

The news has been confirmed. It was a brickbat "Plug Ugly" fight — the result of animal, and not intellectual or patriotic instincts. Baltimore has better men for the strife than bar-room champions. The absence of dignity in this assault will be productive of evil rather than good. Maryland is probably lost — for her fetters will be riveted before the secession of Virginia will be communicated by the senseless form of ratification a month hence. Woe, woe to the politicians of Virginia who have wrought this delay! It is now understood that the very day before the ordinance was passed, the members were gravely splitting hairs over proposed amendments to the Federal Constitution!

Guns are being fired on Capitol Hill in commemoration of secession, and the Confederate flag now floats unmolested from the summit of the capitol. I think they had better save the powder, etc.

At night. We have a gay illumination. This too is wrong. We had better save the candles.

April 21st

Received several letters to-day which had been delayed in their transmission, and were doubtless opened on the way. One was from my wife, informing me of the illness of Custis, my eldest son, and of the equivocal conduct of some of the neighbors. The Rev. Mr. D, son of the late B——p, raised the flag of the Union on his church.

The telegraphic wires are still in operation.

April 22nd

Early a few mornings since, I called on Gov. Wise, and informed him that Lincoln had called out 70,000 men. He opened his eyes very widely and said, emphatically, "I don't believe it." The greatest statesmen of the South have no conception of the real purposes of the men now in power in the United States. They cannot be made to believe that the Government at Washington are going to wage war immediately. But when I placed the President's proclamation in his hand, he read it with deep emotion, and uttered a fierce "Hah!" Nevertheless, when I told him that these 70,000 were designed to

be merely the videttes and outposts of an army of 700,000, he was quite incredulous. He had not witnessed the Wide-Awake gatherings the preceding fall, as I had done, and listened to the pledges they made to subjugate the South, free the negroes, and hang Gov. Wise. I next told him they would blockade our ports, and endeavor to cut off our supplies. To this he uttered a most positive negative. He said it would be contrary to the laws of nations, as had been decided often in the Courts of Admiralty, and would be moreover a violation of the Constitution. Of course I admitted all this; but maintained that such was the intention of the Washington Cabinet. Laws and Courts and Constitutions would not be impediments in the way of Yankees resolved upon our subjugation. Presuming upon their superior numbers, and under the pretext of saving the Union and annihilating slavery, they would invade us like the army-worm, which enters the green fields in countless numbers. The real object was to enjoy our soil and climate by means of confiscation. He poohed me into silence with an indignant frown. He had no idea that the Yankees would dare to enter upon such enterprises in the face of an enlightened world. But I know them better. And it will be found that they will learn how to fight, and will not be afraid to fight.

April 23rd

Several prominent citizens telegraphed President Davis to-day to hasten to Virginia with as many troops as he can catch up, assuring him that his army will grow like a snow-ball as it progresses. I have no doubt it would. I think it would swell to 50,000 before reaching Washington, and that the people on the route would supply the quartermaster's stores, and improvise an adequate commissariat. I believe he could drive the Abolitionists out of Washington even yet, if he would make a bold dash, and that there would be a universal uprising in all the border States this side of the Susquehanna. But he does not respond. Virginia was too late moving, and North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Missouri have not seceded yet — though all of them will soon follow Virginia. Besides, the vote on the ratification in this State is to take place a month hence. It would be an infringement of State rights, and would be

construed as an *invasion of Virginia!* Could the Union men in the Convention, after being forced to pass the ordinance, have dealt a more fatal blow to their country? But that is not all. The governor is appointing his Union partisans to military positions. Nevertheless, as time rolls on, and eternal separation is pronounced by the events that must be developed, they may prove true to the best interests of their native land.

Every hour there are fresh arrivals of organized companies from the country, tendering their services to the governor; and nearly all the young men in the city are drilling. The cadets of the Military Institute are rendering good service now, and Professor Jackson is truly a benefactor. I hope he will take the field himself; and if he does, I predict for him a successful career.

April 24th

Martial music is heard everywhere, day and night, and all the trappings and paraphernalia of war's decorations are in great demand. The ladies are sewing everywhere, even in the churches. But the gay uniforms we see to-day will change their hue before the advent of another year. All history shows that fighting is not only the most perilous pursuit in the world, but the hardest and the roughest work one can engage in. And many a young man bred in luxury, will be killed by exposure in the night air, lying on the damp ground, before meeting the enemy. But the same thing may be said of the Northmen. And the arbitrament of war, and war's desolation, is a foregone conclusion. How much better it would have been if the North had permitted the South to depart in peace! With political separation, there might still have remained commercial union. But they would not.

April 25th

Ex-President Tyler and Vice-President Stephens are negotiating a treaty which is to ally Virginia to the Confederate States.

April 26th

To-day I recognize Northern merchants and Jews in the streets, busy in collecting the debts due them. The Convention has thrown some impediments in the way; but I hear on every hand

that Southern merchants, in the absence of legal obligations, recognize the demands of honor, and are sending money North, even if it be used against us. This will not last long.

April 27th

We have had a terrible alarm. The tocsin was sounded in the public square, and thousands have been running hither and thither to know its meaning. Dispatches have been posted about the city, purporting to have been received by the governor, with the startling information that the U. S. war steamer Pawnee is coming up the James River for the purpose of shelling the city!

All the soldiery, numbering some thousands, are marching down to Rocketts, and forming in line of battle on the heights commanding the approaches. The howitzers are there, frowning defiance; and two long French bronze guns are slowly passing through Main Street in the same direction. One of them has just broken down, and lies abandoned in front of the Post-Office. Even civilians, by hundreds, are hurrying with shot-guns and pistols to the scene of action, and field officers are galloping through the streets. Although much apprehension is apparent on many faces, it is but just to say that the population generally are resolved to make a determined defense. There is no fear of personal danger; it is only the destruction of property that is dreaded. But, in my opinion, the Pawnee is about as likely to attempt the navigation of the River Styx, as to run up this river within shelling distance of the city.

I walked down to the lower bridge, without even taking a pocket-pistol, and saw the troops drawn up in line of battle awaiting the enemy. Toward evening the howitzers engaged in some unprofitable practice, shelling the trees on the opposite side.

It was a false alarm, if not something worse. I fear it is an invention of the enemy to divert us from the generally conceived policy of attacking Washington, and rousing up Maryland in the rear of Lincoln.

Met with, and was introduced to, Gov. Letcher, in the evening, at the *Enquirer* office. He was revising one of his many proclamations; and is now undoubtedly as zealous an advocate of secession as any man. He said he would be ready to

fight in *three or four days*; and that he would soon have arrangements completed to blockade the Potomac by means of formidable batteries.

April 28th

Saw Judge Scarburg, who has resigned his seat in the Court of Claims at Washington. I believe he brought his family, and abandoned his furniture, etc. Also Dr. Garnett, who left most of his effects in the hands of the enemy. He was a marked man, being the son-in-law of Gov. Wise.

Many clerks are passing through the city on their way to Montgomery, where they are sure to find employment. Lucky men, some of them! They have eaten Lincoln bread for more than a month, and most of them would have been turned out of office if there had been no secession. And I observe among them some who have left their wives behind *to take care of their homes*.

April 29th

I wrote to my agent on the Eastern Shore to send me the last year's rent due on the farm. But I learn that the cruisers in the bay are intercepting the communications, and I fear remittances will be impracticable. I hope my family are ready by this to leave Burlington. Women and children have not yet been interfered with. What if they should be compelled to abandon our property there? Mrs. Semple had her plate seized at New York.

At fifty-one, I can hardly follow the pursuit of arms; but I will write and preserve a DIARY of the revolution. I never held or sought office in my life; but now President Tyler and Gov. Wise say I will find employment at Montgomery. The latter will prepare a letter to President Davis, and the former says he will draw up a paper in my behalf, and take it through the Convention himself for signatures. I shall be sufficiently credentialed, at all events — provided old partisan considerations are banished from the new confederacy. To make my DIARY full and complete as possible, is now my business. And,

“When the hurly-burly's done,
When the battle's lost and won,”

if the South wins it, I shall be content to retire to my farm, provided it falls on the Southern

side of the line, and enjoy sweet repose “under my own vine and fig-tree.”

April 30th

APRIL 30th.-Gen. Kearney has been brought here, having been taken on his way to Washington from Missouri. He manifested surprise at his captivity, and says that he is no enemy; being, I believe, Southern born. I learn it is the purpose of the governor to release him. And this may be a blunder. I fear about as much from ill-timed Southern magnanimity as from Northern malignity.

The Pawnee “scare” turned out just as I thought it would. She merely turned her nose up the river, and then put about and steamed away again. It may do good, however, if it stimulates the authorities to due preparation against future assaults from that quarter.

May 1st

Troops are coming in from all directions, cavalry and infantry; but I learn that none scarcely are accepted by the State. This is great political economy, with a vengeance! How is Gov. Letcher to be ready to fight in a few days? Oh, perhaps he thinks the army will spontaneously spring into existence, march without transportation, and fight without rations or pay! But the Convention has passed an act authorizing the enlistment of a regular army of 12,000 men. If I am not mistaken, Virginia will have to put in the field ten times that number, and the confederacy will have to maintain 500,000 in Virginia, or lose the border States. And if the border States be subjugated, Mr. Seward probably would grant a respite to the rest for a season.

But by the terms of the (Tyler and Stephens) treaty, the Confederate States will reimburse Virginia for all her expenses; and therefore I see no good reason why this State, of all others, being the most exposed, should not muster into service every well-armed company that presents itself. There are arms enough for 25;000 men now, and that number, if it be too late to take Washington, might at all events hold this side of the Potomac, and keep the Yankees off the soil of Virginia.

May 2nd

There are vague rumors of lawless outrages committed on Southern men in Philadelphia and New York; but they are not well authenticated, and I do not believe them. The Yankees are not yet ready for retaliation. They know that game wouldn't pay. No — they desire time to get their money out of the South; and they would be perfectly willing that trade should go on, even during the war, for they would be the greatest gainers by the information derived from spies and emissaries. I see, too, their papers have extravagant accounts of imprisonments and summary executions here. Not a man has yet been molested. It is true, we have taken Norfolk, without a battle; but the enemy did all the burning and sinking.

May 3rd

No letters from my wife. Probably she has taken the children to the Eastern Shore. Her farm is there, and she has many friends in the county. On that narrow peninsula it is hardly to be supposed the Yankees will send any troops. With the broad Atlantic on one side and the Chesapeake Bay on the other, it is to be presumed there will be no military demonstration by the inhabitants, for they could neither escape nor receive reinforcements from the mainland. In the war of the first Revolution, and the subsequent one with Great Britain, this peninsula escaped the ravages of the enemy, although the people were as loyal to the government of the United States as any; but the Yankees are more enterprising than the British, and may have an eye to “truck farms” in that fruitful region.

May 4th

Met with. H. B. Custis, Esq., to-day in the square, and had a long conversation with him. He has made up his mind to sign the ordinance. He thinks secession might have been averted with honor, if our politicians at Washington had not been ambitious to figure as leaders in a new revolution. Custis was always a Democrat, and supported Douglas on the ground that he was the regular nominee. He said his negro property a month before was worth, perhaps, fifty thousand dollars; now his slaves would not bring probably more than five thousand; and that would be the fate of many slaveowners in Virginia.

May 5th

President Tyler has placed in my hands a memorial to President Davis, signed by himself and many of the members of the Convention, asking appropriate civil employment for me in the new government. I shall be content to obtain the necessary position to make a full and authentic Diary of the transactions of the government. I could not hope for any commission as a civil officer, since the leaders who have secured possession of the government know very well that, as editor, I never advocated the pretensions of any of them for the Presidency of the United States. Some of them I fear are unfit for the positions they occupy. But the cause in which we are embarked will require, to be successful, the efforts of every man. Those capable of performing military duty, must perform it; and those physically incapable of wielding the bayonet and the sword, must wield the pen. It is no time to stand on ceremony or antecedents. The post of duty is the post of honor. In the mighty winnowing we must go through, the wheat will be separated from the chaff. And many a true man who this day stands forth as a private, will end as a general. And the efficient subordinate in the departments may be likewise exalted if he deserves it, provided the people have rule in the new confederacy. If we are to have a monarchy for the sake of economy and stability, I shall submit to it in preference to the domination of the Northern radicals.

May 6th

To-day a Yankee was caught in the street questioning some negroes as to which side they would fight on, slavery or freedom. He was merely rebuked and ordered out of the country. Another instance of Southern magnanimity! It will only embolden the insidious enemy.

May 7th

Col. R. E. Lee, lately of the United States army, has been appointed major-general, and commander-in-chief of the army in Virginia. He is the son of "Light Horse Harry" of the Revolution. The North can boast no such historic names as we in its army.

Gov. Wise is sick at home, in Princess Ann County, but has sent me a strong letter to President

Davis. I fear the governor will not survive many months.

May 8th

The Convention has appointed five members of Congress to go to Montgomery: Messrs. Hunter, Rives, Brockenborough, Staples, and ———. I have not yet seen Mr. Hunter; he has made no speeches, but no doubt he has done all in his power to secure the passage of the ordinance, in his quiet but effective way. To-day President Tyler remarked that the politicians in the Convention had appointed a majority of the members from the old opposition party. The President would certainly have been appointed, if it had not been understood he did not desire it. Debilitated from a protracted participation in the exciting scenes of the Convention, he could not bear the fatigue of so long a journey at this season of the year.

May 9th

The *Examiner* still fires shot and shell at Gov. Letcher and the dominant majority in the Convention, on account of recent appointments. It is furious over the selection of Mr. Baldwin, recently a leading Union man, for inspector-general; and seems to apprehend bad results from thrusting Union men forward in the coming struggle. The *Enquirer* is moderate, and kind to Gov. Letcher, whose nomination and subsequent course were so long the theme of bitter denunciation. It is politic. The *Whig* now goes into the secession movement with all its might. Mr. Mosely has resumed the helm; and he was, I believe, a secessionist many years ago. The *Dispatch*, not long since neutral and conservative, throws all its powers, with its large circulation, into the cause. So we have perfect unanimity in the press. Per contra, the New York *Herald* has turned about and leap-frogged over the head of the *Tribune* into the front ranks of the Republicans. No doubt, when we win the day, the *Herald* will leap back again.

May 10th

The ladies are postponing all engagements until their lovers have fought the Yankees. Their influence is great. Day after day they go in crowds to the Fair ground where the 1st S. C. Vols. are encamped, showering upon them their smiles, and all the delicacies the city affords. They wine them

and cake them — and they deserve it. They are just from taking Fort Sumter, and have won historic distinction. I was introduced to several of the privates by their captain, who told me they were worth from \$100,000 to half a million dollars each. The Tribune thought all these men would want to be captains! But that is not the only hallucination the North labors under, judging from present appearances; by closing our ports it is thought we can be subdued by the want of accustomed luxuries. These rich young men were dressed in coarse gray homespun! We have the best horsemen and the best marksmen in the world, and these are the qualities that will tell before the end of the war. We fight for existence — the enemy for Union and the freedom of the slave. Well, let the Yankees see if this “new thing” will pay.

May 11th

Robert Tyler has arrived, after wonderful risks and difficulties. When I left Mr. Tyler in the North, the people were talking about electing him their representative in Congress. They tempted him every way, by threats and by promises, to make them a speech under the folds of the “star spangled banner” erected near his house. But in vain. No doubt they would have elected him to Congress, and perhaps have made him a general, if he had fallen down and worshiped their Republican idol, and fought against his father.

May 12th

To-day I set out for Montgomery. The weather was bright and pleasant. It is Sunday. In the cars are many passengers going to tender their services, and all imbued with the same inflexible purpose. The corn in the fields of Virginia is just becoming visible; and the trees are beginning to disclose their foliage.

May 13th

We traveled all night, and reached Wilmington, N. C., early in the morning. There I saw a Northern steamer which had been seized in retaliation for some of the seizures of the New Yorkers. And there was a considerable amount of ordnance and shot and shell on the bank of the river. The people everywhere on the road are for

irremediable, eternal separation. Never were men more unanimous. And North Carolina has passed the ordinance, I understand, without a dissenting voice. Better still, it is not to be left to a useless vote of the people. The work is finished, and the State is out of the Union without contingency or qualification. I saw one man, though, at Goldsborough, who looked very much like a Yankee, and his enthusiasm seemed more simulated than real; and some of his words were equivocal. His name was Dibble.

To-day I saw rice and cotton growing, the latter only an inch or so high. The pine woods in some places have a desolate appearance; and whole forests are dead. I thought it was caused by the scarifications for turpentine; but was told by an intelligent traveler that the devastation was produced by an insect or worm that cut the inner bark.

The first part of South Carolina we touched was not inviting. Swamps, with cane, and cypress knees, and occasionally a plunging aligator met the vision. Here, I thought the Yankees, if they should carry the war into the far south, would fare worse than Napoleon’s army of invasion in Russia.

But railroads seldom run through the fairest and richest portions of the country. They must take the route where there is the least grading. We soon emerged, however, from the marshy district, and then beheld the vast cotton-fields, now mostly planted in corn. A good idea. And the grain crops look well. The corn, in one day, seems to have grown ten inches.

In the afternoon we were whisked into Georgia, and the face of the country, as well as the color of the soil, reminded me of some parts of France between Dieppe and Rouen. No doubt the grape could be profitably cultivated here. The corn seems to have grown a *foot* since morning.

Diary of a Yankee in the Patent Office

by Horatio Nelson Taft

The early Days of the War

April 8th

Rained all day or rather drizzled all day. No new excitement today. No removals from the Pat office today. Got letter from Bro C.R. Went over to the Post office and got his "papers" taken up. His appointment as Post Master at Wmstown Mass will be made out in a day or two. Wrote to him tonight at home, most of my private letters I write in the office. Handed Green my revolver to draw the charges, it has been loaded two months. Have spent the entire evening at home with one girl & three boys round the table with me writing.

April 9th

Rained again all day, and a perfect tempest of wind and rain all last night as well as today. Much anxiety is felt on account of the fleet which for two or three days past has been leaving NY with troops &c for the South. E G Allen of Boston in our Rooms today. Singular man. Many are fearing an attack upon the City now, as it is thought that a War is about commencing. Have been at home all the evening hearing the boys read, and cleaning my "revolver" after they went to bed. It rains yet at 11 o'clock, fair prospect for it tomorrow.

April 10th

Rain again until noon. It has rained all the time since Sunday morning, and the water in the Potomac is higher than it has been before in some years. The District Militia were all out on parade and eight Companies entered the service of the U.S. upon requisition of the Secy of War for the Protection of the City. The guards are doubled at all the Public Buildings, and Military companies were on duty all last night. Exciting rumors from the South & exciting news expected. Was on the Ave, at the Hotels, much excitement.

April 11th

A delightful morning and a very pleasant day. City full of Military and full of excitement. Nothing heard from Charleston unusual, but news expected by tomorrow. Fort Sumpter, it is now thought, is without doubt to be relieved in some way. The Cotton States are all up in Arms, while Ben McCulloch is threatening Washington. He is fearless and desperate. Chas took dinner with us and came up in the evening with Miss Woodward and staid till 10. Sent young H N to the Ave for the NY papers early in the evening. Retired at 11 o'clock.

April 12th

It has been rainy the latter part of the day and rains hard tonight. Went with Juliet and the boys to see the soldiers over to the Long Bridge. Nothing but the guard there. Visited the City Armory, a company of U.S. Artillery stationed there. The Military companies are now divided and stationed at various points all over the City. Treason is in our midst. One hardly knows whom to trust. But I speak my own sentiments freely as I have all the time and denounce "seceders" as Traitors. Went down to the Ave & got the NY papers. It is said today that Fort Sumpter has been provisioned without bloodshed.

April 13th

This has been the most exciting day yet. The last report about the provisioning Ft Sumpter was untrue and today or early this morning news came that the Rebels were bombarding it and tonight the report is that Maj Anderson has surrendered, it being on fire. The last report is not generally credited. Even if true, it is not astonishing. The Rebels have ten thousand men & nineteen Batteries. Anderson had 70 men only. I went on to the Ave after 3 o'clock, a great crowd round all the Printing or News paper offices. Everybody much excited, and all will soon be compelled to "show their hands," for or against the Union.

April 14th

A fine cool day. Went to church in the morning with all the children, wife staid at home and went in the afternoon. The excitement in the City increases all the time now the war has begun. But the reports from Charleston are mostly "bogus." Maj Anderson has probably not surrendered, but there is fighting there. I left Willards about 1/2 past

10 this evening, never saw a more excited crowd. It is said that Martial law will be proclaimed tomorrow morning, and that the Prest has made requisition upon the States for 75,000 men or Volunteers to defend the Government. Think of sending my family out of the City immediately.

April 15th

It seems pretty probable that "Sumpter" is taken but I think that we cannot rely entirely upon the news. There seems to be a great war spirit up throughout the Country. Washington will soon be a great Military Camp. My wife is not so much frightened today. I think we will not hurry in getting the family off. It has rained some today, and it [is] threatening a storm tonight. Applicants for office are less pertinacious than they were and many have left for their homes. I was down at Willards. The same crowd seems to be there still.

April 16th

Another rainy day, a continuation of the Easterly Storm. The public buildings are all strongly guarded, from 150 to 300 men being quartered in each. There are now about three thousand men under arms in the City, all in the service of the U.S. Some thousands more from the North will be here this week. The excitement at the Hotels is not quite so great tonight. I was at the "National" and "Willards." NY papers scarce, could get only the Tribune. Came home about 9, read till 11. Cold wet evening. Everything looks gloomy.

April 17th

Cold and windy day, fire in the office and as much in the house as on a winters day. Soldiers are now met with at every turn and the drum and bugle are heard almost all the time from some quarter of the City. Went down to the Hotels after dinner (Chas dined with us), the crowd not so great tonight and less excitement. All the papers from the North indicate but one feeling in reference to the coming contest. Men and money to any extent are offered to sustain the government. Came home before 9, City very quiet. Bed at 11.

April 18th

Cool pleasant day, fire comfortable. Business in the office goes on as usual and is increasing this month. Business there does not seem to be much affected by the excitement in the City. The rumor today that Virginia had "seceded" and seized Govt property at Norfolk & Harpers Ferry caused intense excitement. There seemed to be a great anxiety to fight manifested all round. Soldiers are arriving from the North tonight and an attack is expected upon the City from Virginia. The City is apparently pretty well prepared. Wole to the invaders.

April 19th

Another cool pleasant day but one of great excitement. Reports from various quarters indicate that danger is imminent of an attack upon the City. Harpers Ferry Armory and arsenal was destroyed this morning by Govt troops. The Steam Boats on the River have also been seized by Govt order. I went to the Depot to see the arrival of the Mass. Regiment. They came at last, after fighting their way through Baltimore loosing two men killed and firing upon the rioters, killing a number. A splendid looking set of men. They were marched directly to the Capitol and quartered there. I was at all the Hotels, home at 10 o'ck.

April 20th

A fine pleasant day. No troops today, all stoped beyond Balt. Bridges destroyed, track torn up and the Steam Ferry Boat over the Susquehannah scuttled and sunk. Balt in the hands of the mob. A critical time for Washington. A large body of Rebels at Alexandria and an attack upon the City may be expected any hour. I went to the Depot and to the Capitol again tonight. The Mass. Regnt marched out and through Pa Ave to 15 st making a fine appearance and being cheered frequently by the people. The Hotels are full and all seem agreed that Balt is a doomed City. 12 o'c.

April 21st

This has been a pleasant but anxious day. We seem to be surrounded by enimies, and enimies in our midst. No troop have yet arrived since the Mass. Regt. How anxiously have we looked for the 7th Regt of NY today. I left the National tonight at

11 o'clock but could get no reliable information. We may be in the midst of bloodshed any hour, and I am looking for an outbreak or attack all the time. Famine stares us in the face unless the routes are kept open. Where are the expected troops?

April 22nd

Another delightful day, but no troops yet. We are in a beleaguered City with enemies on every side and and [sic] at our doors. The rattling of musquetry and the booming of cannon may startle us any moment. Many have left the City, but all communication with the North is now cut off. No NY mail since Friday last. Myself and family are [sic] have concluded to stay and see it out for the present at least. The Govt is now taking very decided measures to protect the City and thwart the designs of the enemy. Was at the office all day, took the "strong oath" required at the department.

April 23rd

This has been a warm day. M. 83 in shade. Some 800 Marines were landed about noon at the Navy Yard. Nothing can be learned of the northern troops yet. Some say they are coming by water and some that they are fighting their way from Anapolis. Went with Julia to the Capitol to see the Mass. Regt. Was in the Senate Chamber. That seemed to be the Officers quarters. Have been in office all day alone. Doct King has leave of absence. The excitement has been less today. I have now but little apprehension of an attack upon the City at present.

April 24th

Another warm day with some rain in the afternoon. The day has passed off much as yesterday. No troops from the North. No mails since Friday, and in fact no news at all from the North. It is thought that there are troops enough here now for the safety of the City, as matters now look. But large bodies of Virginians have gathered near Alexandria and also north of us, and a decent may be made upon us anytime, but we are getting used to strange things now. I am alone in the room at the office now and have to do all the writing. Charley dined with us today.

April 25th

The 7th Regt is at last here, came at 12 o'clock and created much enthusiasm. We breathe a

little free now. Self and wife attended the funeral of Mr Danl Douglass at 4 o'clock and then went to the Ave and took an Onibus and went to the Capitol. The Mass Regt were drilling in the East grounds. There were many spectators on foot and in carriages. The Prests Carriage with Mrs Lincoln and Mr Seward with himself, wife & son. On our return we saw the whole 7th Regt drawn up on the Ave near the National. We stoped at Gautiers and took tea. Got home at 9 c.

April 26th

This has been a fine day and one of much excitement in the City. I was at the Pat office as usual when I heard Martial Music and immediately the Rhode Island Regiment with Gov Sprague at their head marched in at the East Wing and up into the large Hall as their quarters. About 2000 have arrived today, and a large number are expected tomorrow. Was at "Willards" tonight, a great crowd. Saw the first trophy of the war -- a Secession flag taken over at Arlington in Va. without any opposition. It is now near 11 o'clock.

April 27th

Another fine day, rather warm. Troops from the North are pouring fast now. There is now here about eighteen thousand men under arms. All the Public Buildings are swarming like Beehives with soldiers, in fact the City is like a great camp, and not half are here yet. Got letter from Frank dated Fort Kearney. Went down to the Ave after dinner, saw two thousand troops pass, who got in today. Pres Lincolns two boys were here today to see mine. Juliet was at the Pres. Got fine Boquet from the garden.

April 29th

Rainy all the forepart of the day. Attended church with wife and the boys. Went and returned in the rain. Mr [Haws?] of Lyons [Iowa?] returned with us and dined with us. Chas also dined with us. Did not go out again till evening. Went down to Willards with Willie for a walk. The Band of the 7th Regt were performing at Willards Hall the National airs. More soldiers came today. We feel entirely safe from attack now from without. Famine may attack us within. Beef 20 cts. pr pound now and all provisions much advanced in price.

April 30th, 1861

Prest Lincoln was at the Pat office today to see the troops in their quarters. Gov Seward was with him. Julia presented a fine Boquet of flowers to Gov Sprague at his quarters in the Pat office. The office is a greater novelty now than ever before but the soldiers are very orderly and inteligent. There is not much work done now by the examrs. There is so much confusion. Troops continue to arrive in the City by the thousands every day. Regiments are constantly on parade. Wrote to Bro C R today.

May 1st

A cold windy day with some rain, as unpleasant a "May day" as could well be. Have been in the office all day as usual surrounded by a crowd of soldiers when out of my room. Have a new 2nd Assistant, have today been "breaking him in." His name is C H Upton of V.A. The 12th NY Regt are now building barracks on Franklin Square near house where they are to be stationed. The troops keep coming and will continue to come I suppose until we have forty or fifty thousand here. There was a mail from the North this morning, the first in 12 days. Did not go from Home after dinner, to bed early.

May 2nd

Cold today, fire comfortable. M. down to 40. A fine flag was raised on the Pat office today at noon. The RI Regt paraded with Gov Sprague at the head on 7th St. The 7 NY Regt went into camp up 14th St. near Collumbia College. Regiments are now drilling and parading in the streets every day. I was at Willards tonight when the NY Zuaves Col Ellsworth Regt marched up the "Ave" to the War department, eleven hundred strong, and every man with a Sharps Rifle on his shoulder. Signed a petition for Mr Wood of NY to be Comr of public Buildings. Conversed an hour with Prof Heidrick. Went "Maying" with wife & Julia after dinner.

May 3rd

Rainy day, cold and chilly. In the Pat office the troops have been drilling in all the Halls. The RI Marine Battery, 6 [Janus?] rifled cannon, 150 men, 90 Horses, &c have arrived. They marched through PA Ave to the Prests with their guns and attracted

much attention. There is not much doing in the office at present. I have plenty of time to read and write letters. But there is so much excitement that it is almost impossible to fix ones mind upon any one subject long at a time.

May 4th

Rain all the first part of the day. Soldiers still drilling in the Halls. Our ears are constantly saluted with the word of command and and [sic] the clangor of arms on the marble floors. Went on to the Ave after dinner with wife and Juliet. Soldiers and citizens crowded that prominade about equally divided in numbers. In the streets Regiments were paraded. We saw 2200 march into the Treasury. At the Pat office the RI Regt were paraded and reviewed by Gov Sprague. On Louisiana Ave another Regt were paraded. Went down to Willards in the evening. Not much of a crowd. Mostly soldiers.

May 5th

Went to ch this morning with whole family, some soldiers in the congregation in uniform. Cool day, wore my cloak. Chas was up to dine with us. Doct Eddy called in the afternoon with Mr Cramer. He is on a visit to the City, staid an hour or two. Went down to Willards, saw A B Williams, Mr Pomeroy, the new M.C. from our district, and other gentlemen at his room. On my return home, got challenged by the Sentinel at Franklin Square. I did not understand that he was talking to me as it was dark, until he cried Stand, and cocked his Musket. I was very near the point of his Bayonet then, but backed down and went another way home.

May 6th

Rain again most of the day. Many of the troops are in an exposed condition and suffering for shelter. The NJ troops came in early this morning, over 3000 in the rain and could find no shelter for sometime. Drilling of RI soldiers in the Halls of the Pat office all day. Everything outside looks wet and gloomy. Did not go to the Ave this evening, but got a plate of glass and put in the Aquarium, one was broken. Caught in a shower while after it, to bed early.

May 7th

It has been a pleasant fine day and much enjoyed by all after the long cold rain. 4000 soldiers from NJ are here now. Saw them all on parade on the Ave tonight. Went with wife to the Capitol, into both chambers. Had to pass eight sentries. Went into the East Capitol grounds where the Zuave Regt (Col Ellsworths) was on parade. They are a hard looking set (NY Fire man). Called in the evening on Col Allen of Boston at the National. Saw the Col of the NY 5th Regt there and other officers. Got the papers, a map of the City & Georgetown & a [badge?] for myself.

May 8th

Another fine bright day. Have been bothered some with ladies at the Pat office calling upon me. I might perhaps better say interrupted. They all want to see Gov Sprague of R.I. I took in five and introduced them. Then into the quarters upstairs, then into the Surgeon Genls quarters, then into the Hospital. Juliet renewed the Govs Boquet of flowers. Went after dinner to the Presidents grounds with wife, Juliet & H N Jr. Went from there to the Pat office to see the RI Regt parade. Awee full of people, mostly soldiers. Troops marching and parading all over the City every night. Music heard all over.

May 9th

Fine day and much enjoyed by everybody. But little seems to be attended to except military matters. Soldiers marching, Drums beating and Bugles sounding all the time, and now and [sic] one hears the deep booming of a heavy Cannon from Fort Washington, or from the Navy Yard or perhaps from some vessel on the River. Saw the 12th NY Regt Parade, then went down to Willards. Saw A B Williams again. Saw Maj Anderson and many other officers. Found Chas & Sallie at the House.

May 10th

A bright morning, but rain all day after 12 o'clock. Troops continue to arrive, 30,000 here now. They are now mostly going into camp in the suburbs of the City. Reports of large bodies of troops in Virginia indicate work near here before long. I should not be much surprised to see them on Arlington heights any morning. I hope an army will

not attempt to march to Richmond. Should one do so, I believe it would be destroyed if less than fifty thousand. Went down to "Camp Anderson" Franklin Square after dinner. There was no parade on account of the wet. Filled the Aquarium again tonight.

May 11th

This has been a fine day and the Military have been all alive. Regiments marching, Bands playing and Drums beating, Bugles sounding, and now and then the deep booming of cannon. I was in the office all day, but was writing & reading the news, having not much official business to transact. Attended the parade of the 12th with wife on Franklin Square, then went down to Market with Willie, the black girl carrying the basket. That performance seems to be the height of her ambition. Sent her home with basket full. Went & got Willie a hat.

May 12th

Pleasant warm day. Went to church with wife & children. Doct Smith preached in the afternoon. The church was half full of soldiers of the R.I. Regt. Some 4000 troops have arrived during last night and today. The Regiments now in quarters paraded this evening as usual. We were at F[ranklin]. Square. I caught cold during the wet weather and am half sick, have not felt worse in a good while. Wrote a letter to Bro C R today. Did not go onto the Ave today, retired early.

May 13th

Rather hot today. M. 80. RI Regt preparing to leave the Pat off and go into camp near Glenwood Cemetery. Six or eight of the Regts are now in camp. Nothing new now occurring from day to day in the office. We attend as usual in our rooms, and do what there is to do, but business is very light this month. Felt quite ill this morning, ate no breakfast, but am as well as usual tonight. Wife & Julia & Boys were at the Presidents to see a Review of the District Military. All the Regiments have a Dress Parade every evening about 6 o'clock. I saw the 12th tonight on F[ranklin]. Square.

Diary of A Tar Heel Confederate Soldier

By L. LEON

April 25, 1861 - I belong to the Charlotte Grays, Company C, First North Carolina Regiment. We left home for Raleigh. Our company is commanded by Capt. Egbert Ross. We are all boys between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one. We offered our services to Governor Ellis, but were afraid he would not take us, as we are so young; but before we were called out our company was ordered to go to the United States Mint in our town and take same. We marched down to it, and it was surrendered to us. We guarded it several days, when we were ordered to Raleigh, and left on the above date.

Our trip was full of joy and pleasure, for at every station where our train stopped the ladies showered us with flowers and Godspeed. We marched to the Fair Grounds. The streets were lined with people, cheering us. When we got there our company was given quarters, and, lo and behold! horse stables with straw for bedding is what we got. I know we all thought it a disgrace for us to sleep in such places with our fine uniforms - not even a washstand, or any place to hang our clothes on. They didn't even give us a looking-glass.

Our company was put in the First North Carolina Regiment, commanded by Col. D. H. Hill, Lieut.-Col. C. C. Lee, and Maj. James H. Lane.

We enlisted for six months. Our State went out of the Union on **May 20th**, and we were sent to Richmond, Va., on the **21st**. Stayed there several days, when we were ordered to Yorktown, Va. Here they gave us tents to sleep in. This looked more like soldering, but we would have liked to have had some of that straw in Raleigh.

The day after we got here our company was sent out with spades and shovels to make breastworks - and to think of the indignity! We were expected to do the digging! Why, of course, I never thought that this was work for soldiers to do, but we had to do it. Gee! What hands I had after a few days' work. I know I never had a pick or a shovel in my hand to work with in my life.

A few days after that a squad of us were sent out to cut down trees, and, by George! they gave me an axe and told me to go to work. Well, I cut all over my tree until the lieutenant commanding, seeing how nice I was marking it, asked me what I had done before I became a soldier. I told him I was a clerk in a dry-goods store. He said he thought so from the way I was cutting timber. He relieved me - but what insults are put on us who came to fight the Yankees! Why, he gave me two buckets and told me to carry water to the men that could cut.

We changed camp several times, until about the **3d of June**, when we marched fifteen miles and halted at Bethel Church, and again commenced making breastworks. Our rations did not suit us. We wanted a change of diet, but there were strict orders from Col. D. H. Hill that we should not go out foraging. Well, Bill Stone, Alie Todd and myself put on our knapsacks and went to the creek to wash our clothes, but when we got there we forgot to wash. We took a good long walk away from the camp, and saw several shoats. We ran one down, held it so it could not squeal, then killed it, cut it in small pieces, put it in our knapsacks, returned to the creek, and from there to camp, where we shared it with the boys. It tasted good.

Our comrade Ernheart did not fare so well. He went to a place where he knew he could get some honey. He got it all right, but he got the bees, also. His face and hands were a sight when he got the beehive to camp.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

We've anticipated a few questions that might be asked about Skedaddle and will try to answer them here.

What is Skedaddle?

Skedaddle is a free e-zine primarily consisting of material written over 100 years ago about the American civil war, often by people who experienced the war or who were directly impacted by it. Material related to the conditions and circumstances that led to the war may also be included. Skedaddle may be printed and distributed in hard-copy, including unlimited copies, for non-profit, non-commercial purposes. Skedaddle may not be re-published electronically or on-line without permission.

What kind of material will be included in Skedaddle?

For the most part, the content of Skedaddle will be short pieces that fit well within the journal's format. The pieces will include incidents, anecdotes, poetry, as well as other material that may become available. In some instances, the material may be an excerpt from a larger work. Occasionally a piece will be edited for space considerations.

Where does the material for Skedaddle come from?

The public domain. During and after the civil war, there was a significant number of works published that included material related to the war, and, of course, in many instances the entire works were devoted to the topic. Nineteenth century material included in Skedaddle is from the public domain and thus free of copyright. However, once material is included and published in Skedaddle, it becomes a part of a compilation, which is protected under U. S. and international copyright laws. If material for an article is edited to fit in the available space, it becomes a new work protected under copyright laws.

Is Skedaddle pro-North or pro-South?

Neither. However, the material published in Skedaddle, in many instances, will be slanted one way or another as a result of the nineteenth century author's or subject's views and experiences. While the editor will try to maintain a balance between the two sides, there is simply a lot more material available from the side of the victors.

Will Skedaddle be "politically correct?"

Not intentionally. Articles, stories, and poems in our e-journal originated over 100 years ago. The views expressed and the language used will, in most instances, be included as published in the original text. When pieces are edited for space considerations, the text will not be intentionally altered to conform with twenty-first century sensitivities.

Does Skedaddle have an "agenda?"

The only agenda that Skedaddle has is to show the war from the perspectives of 19th century writers.

About Skedaddle

Skedaddle is an e-journal newsletter of nineteenth century anecdotes, poetry, and incidents of the American civil war. The pieces used in each issue are generally selected from material previously published on the Skedaddle web site (<http://www.pddoc.com/skedaddle>). Skedaddle is distributed by its publisher solely through the internet. Rights for subsequent printing and distribution of hardcopies are granted as described below under "Distribution Rights."

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