Reminiscences

of

Captain W. S. Ray of

United Confederate Veterans

"Backward, turn backward,
Oh time, in your flight,
And make me a child again,
Just for tonight."

But only in our imagination can we take old Father Time by the hand and go backward fifty years, and more, to the days and memories of our youth, when as a boy I could hear the sound of drums in two nearby country towns and know that they were calling for men to go forth to battle for what all true Southern men and women thought then, and still believe, was right: State Rights.

The war spirit had stirred the heart of every man and woman in the country into a virtual state of frenzy. It was then that I begged the consent of my father and mother to let me join a company that was then being raised at our county seat, to oppose a call of President Lincoln for two thousand men from our state, to help put down, as he called it, this Southern insurrection. Our Governor had replied: "Not a man can you get, but ten thousand if necessary to oppose Northern invasion."

I repaired to the county seat of our county to become one of the first ten thousand men to oppose President Lincoln in coercing the then seceeded states back into the Union. I remember I was about the thirteenth man or boy to enroll their name in this company. I was not yet seventeen years old. In two days our company was full and we were ordered to Ft. Wright, forty miles above Memphis, Tennessee on the Mississippi river, and there our company became Company I of the 154th Regiment, Tennessee State Militia.

Preston Smith of Memphis, Tennessee was elected Colonel of this regiment. Afterward he became Brigadier General and was killed at Chickamauga. Marcus J. Wright was elected Lieutenant Colonel and afterward became a Brigadier General. Our first Major, Martin, became a Brigadier General and was killed at Corinth, Mississippi.

N.B. Forrest enlisted as a private in this regiment and was soon elected a Lieutenant in a Company of Cavalry, and in a very short time was elected Captain of the Company, the original Captain having been disabled for duty by sickness. At the battle of Shiloh Forrest was Colonel, commanding a regiment of cavalry. From that time forward the world is acquainted with his military history, he being one of the four Generals furnished to the South by this regiment.

Bill Cross, afterward Secretary of State of the State of Oklahoma was a boy soldier in this regiment, his father being Captain of Company I. Bill was only a small boy at that time, and too young to be enlisted as a soldier, but was a drummer boy and a marker.

Chapter II

Battle of Belmont

Our Regiment camped at Ft. Wright until some time in July. Tennessee having seceeded, we were transferred to the Confederate Army and sent to New Madrid, Missouri. We landed there about the middle of the day on Sunday, I thought about the hottest day I ever felt. We had no water to drink that day except the warm, muddy water from the Mississippi river.
We were marched from the boat and were placed on a low vacant plot of ground covered with weeds and Dog Fennel and compelled to stand there in the sun for more than two hours without shade or water.

We were the first Confederate troops that had ever been there, and of course, attracted no little attention. While waiting there for all saloons and all other places where liquor was sold in the town, to be closed and guarded, the ladies of the town, especially those who sympathized with the Southern cause, had gathered around and near by to witness our landing. When it became known to them that we were both hungry and thirsty they began to bring us something to eat and water to drink, greatly to our relief, as we had had nothing to eat that day.

After camping at this place for two or more weeks we then went up the river by boat to Island number 10. After camping there for some time we were moved up the river to Columbus, Kentucky. In a short time we were moved by forced march to Mayfield, Kentucky.

After staying there for two or three weeks we were marched back to Columbus, where soon after the 7th of November, on the opposite of the river, the battle of Belmont was fought.

Belmont was only a little village on the Missouri side of the Mississippi river opposite Columbus, Kentucky and consisted more in name than anything else, until occupied by a small force of Confederates, perhaps six or eight thousand, composed of one Company of Cavalry and one Field Battery of light artillery from New Orleans. This force was under Command of Colonel Govan, Colonel of the 13th Arkansas Infantry, which in turn was under the command of General Polk, who was the Commander-in-Chief of all the forces at Columbus and Belmont.

To illustrate how little the best officers of both sides understood military matters at that time, I will give some of the details of that battle: The Confederate forces across the river were supplied with only three rounds of ammunition, and strange to say, there were no pickets posted up the river to keep a watch out for the enemy, who were camped only eighteen miles away at Cairo, Illinois.

Early on the morning of November 7th, from the high bluff on the Columbus side of the river, boats could be seen some six miles up the river. Some of the officers with strong field glasses said the enemy was landing troops from these boats onto the Missouri side. These boats could not be seen from Belmont owing to a slight bend in the river. I was one among the number of a work detail on the high bluff just above the town of Columbus and could plainly see the Federal boats up the river.

We were all ordered to our quarters and put in readiness for an attack on our side, but strange as it may appear today, the Confederates across the river were not notified of the enemy landing above them and they were not thinking of an attack until the enemy was in sight of their camp.

It was but a short time before the Confederate forces were driven back, their artillery captured and their

camp destroyed, besides several Confederates had been taken prisoner and sent to the Federal boats up the river.

While this was taking place the Confederates were landing reinforcements above where the battle was being fought, but it was a long time before the tide of battle had changed and the enemy was in full retreat, leaving many dead and wounded on the field. The Federals were followed to their boats and many of them killed on their boats as they were getting away.

Had General Grant moved his troops down in the night and not been seen by the Confederates it would have been an easy matter for him to have captured the entire force at Belmont, but as it turned out he only destroyed the Confederate camp with the resulting loss of a considerable number of men.

A circumstance happened on this battlefield that has been told and retold, and I will tell it again because I believe that it might interest some reader or lover of the curious: As the prisoners were being taken back from the battlefield and were passing over the ground where the first part of the battle had been fought, a young baby girl was found lying in an old road in the woods. One of the guards dropped his gun and picked up the baby and carried it to Cairo, Illinois. When the prisoners were exchanged and returned they told of this baby being found and the papers of Columbus published this news with the hope that the baby's mother might be found, but no claimant ever inquired or called for the baby, and the matter remained a mystery.

Some eight or nine years ago one of the men who was a prisoner at that time made inquiry in the Confederate Veteran if there was anyone living who knew anything of the circumstances. It appeared that the Federal soldier who had carried the baby from the battlefield read this notice and made this reply: that after reaching Cairo he got a lady there to care for it until he could advertise it in the Cairo, Illinois and the Columbus, Kentucky newspapers. Not hearing of its mother, and the lady who was keeping it having children of her own and not being able to keep it, it was given to a German farmer and wife living in Missouri who raised it until she was grown, when she married a well-to-do farmer, and at that time was the mother of four children, all nearly grown, but her identity still remained a mystery.

Perhaps you will ask how the baby came to be there on the battlefield. I have given you the facts. You can do your own guessing.

Chapter III

Federals Open Cumberland River

After the battle of Belmont the Confederates worked night and day by details to strengthen the fortifications around Columbus. After this work was finished, the army, with the exception of dress parade and an occasional drill, was spending its time in idleness.

On February 6, 1862 Fort Henry on the Tennessee river was captured by General Grant. Most of the Confederates, three thousand in number, escaped to Ft. Donnelson, twelve miles away on the Cumberland river. This fort was attacked by General Grant and Commodore Forte on February 13, and on February 16 it was surrendered by General Buckner, Generals Floyd and Pillow escaping with about 1200 officers and men of their respective commands. Colonel (afterward General) Forrest refused to surrender and escaped with his regiment to Nashville.

The loss of these two forts opened to the Federals the Cumberland river to Nashville, Tennessee and Florence, Alabama. This caused General Polk to have to give up Columbus and on March 1st the place was vacated, part of this force going down the Mississippi river to Island number 10, an island in the Mississippi river, forty miles below Columbus, Kentucky, where a portion of Beauregard's army, amounting in all to 7,000 men, after being bombarded for three weeks by Commodore Forte's fleet, forced the surrender of 6,000 Confederates on April 7.

Chapter IV

Shiloh

General Grant had already commenced to concentrate his forces at Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee river.

General Albert Sydney Johnston had now been placed in command of the Confederate Army and was concentrating all available troops at Corinth, Mississippi, eighteen miles from Pittsburg Landing, for the purpose of giving battle to General Grant.

On April 3rd Johnston began to move his army out of Corinth, and on the morning of April 6th Johnston attacked Grant at Shiloh church, a few miles west of Pittsburg.

Johnston had intended to attack Grant on the 4th before Buell could reinforce him from Nashville, but owing to heavy rains and bad roads he did not get his army there until the evening of the 5th.

It was common talk at that time that Beauregard, who was second in command, opposed the marching of the army out and attacking Grant, but advised waiting for Grant to attack Johnston at Corinth. It was told at that time that at a general meeting of the Staff officers at Corinth, that Beauregard strongly opposed the attack on Grant. General Polk chanced not to be present, and General Johnston went to see him and when he returned he said to the officers present: "The old Bishop says to attack Grant and to capture his army, then destroy Buell and march my army to the Ohio river, if not to the Great Lakes of the North."

There has been more diversity of opinion concerning this battle than any other battle of the Civil War. The question has been asked and answered in different ways: "Who lost Shiloh for the Confederacy?" Governor Isham G. Harris of Tennessee, who was serving on Johnston's staff, said he notified Beauregard of Johnston's death and that Beauregard had plenty of time to have captured Grant before night. Dr. Y. R. Lemonier, an acknowledged authority on war matters, says in defense of Beauregard, that the fighting lasted until dark and that Beauregard had no time to advance.

I was but a small boy at that time, not yet eighteen years old, but carrying a musket as a private in that battle, and living near there and being well acquainted with the surrounding country around there at that time, and I hope that I will be pardoned for giving the details of what I saw of one of the greatest battles of the Civil War.

The regiment to which I belonged, the 154th Tennessee had been camped for some time in the town of Purdy, fifteen miles northwest of Shiloh. On the evening of April 4th orders were read to us to get ready to march at daylight the next morning, with three days cooked rations in the possession of each man.

At sunrise on the morning of April 5th we left Purdy; each man knowing that a great battle was about to be fought, and because of its outcome a great victory was possible for us that would likely turn the tide of the war.

I believe that never before did a body of military men march into battle with a greater confidence of victory than the Confederates at Shiloh.

We were encamped less than two miles of Grant's army; everywhere could be seen men, horses, wagons, artillery and everything that goes with an army preparing for battle.

It will perhaps seem strange to the men of today that as efficient a General as Grant was, that he would allow an army of fifty thousand men to come, and as it were, camp at his door and he should know nothing of it. It is a fact that many Confederate regiments were camped within half a mile of Grant's pickets. Why Grant did not find out that they were there will perhaps always remain a mystery.

That night of April 5th Johnston's army lay down to sleep, muddy and tired from marching over the slippery roads, each man well knowing that on the morrow those two armies of well over one hundred thousand men would grasp each other in a death struggle for victory.

All historians, North as well as South, agree that Grant's army outnumbered Johnston's, some giving Grant's numbers as high as two to Johnston's one, but that, I think, is too high, and army statistics do not substantiate such an assizement.

The next morning, April 6th, just as the first grey streaks of day began to appear in the east, the Confederate skirmish lines commenced to drive in the Federal pickets on our right, and soon musket firing was heard in Grant's entire front. By daylight the firing had become general and from the pop and rattle of picket firing it resembled the steady roar of a terrific storm.

My regiment, the 154th Tennessee, was held in reserve and we were kept close up to our line of battle. Men were soon coming back wounded and bleeding, and all informing us that the enemy was giving way, although we already knew that to be a fact owing to the forward movement of the firing.

We soon began to pass over dead men just recently killed, and then the orders came for us to go forward double quick.

The enemy held a strong position on the old Purdy and Pittsburg road north of the Shiloh church.

We soon forced the enemy back, capturing a six gun battery of field artillery, said to be the finest battery of field artillery in the United States. I forgot the name of the Commander of this battery, but it had been made at Chicago and paid for and presented to this company by the ladies of Chicago, and it seemed that its defenders were determined not to give it up. Their horses had been killed and they could not get it moved away; they and their infantry supports stayed with their guns until we were within thirty yards of them when a murderous fire from muskets forced them to retreat, leaving many of their men lying dead among their guns.

This battery was captured and recaptured several times during the war, but at the battle of Nashville, Tennessee December 15 and 16th the federals recaptured and held it until the end of the war.

From this point forward in the battle of Shiloh each time the Federals made a stand they were driven from their position, and when the Confederates reached a position one half to three fourths of a mile from the river we were halted. The Federals had disappeared from our front, their small arms had ceased and only the large guns from their gunboats were firing shells, which were passing over our heads high in the air and falling harmless in our rear.

The men were clamboring for an advance. When word was brought to us that Johnston was killed and we were ordered back to where we had camped the night before, each soldier fully believed that Grant's army would be surrendered the next morning. The Federals had left the field in disorder and were huddled under the bluff at Pittsburg Landing, and in a large field just below the landing at the mouth of Snake

Creek and were offering no resistance whatever, except from their gunboats.

I have never talked with but one Federal soldier who was there who did not say that they expected to surrender. Nevertheless, General Grant in his history of the war says the idea of surrender never occurred to him, a strange assertion, to say the least.

As to the time of day that we fell back, I cannot say, but we fell back to our camps of the night before, some four miles, and reached there before dark.

A battle had been fought at Shiloh that day of April 6th and won by the Confederates.

The next day Johnston's body was sent to Corinth and lay in the home of Colonel I. M. Inge, waiting for a train to take it to New Orleans, where it was buried and remained until it was later removed to Austin, Texas where it now sleeps in his adopted state.

The next morning we were preparing our breakfast and discussing what would be done with the prisoners and other matters concerning the forthcoming surrender, as we supposed, when a courier came and ordered our Colonel to move his men forward, that the enemy was advancing. The battle was renewed and about 4:00 P.M. Beauregard, who had taken command, ordered a retreat.

Buell and Mitchell had reinforced Grant the night before from across the river with forty --- some historians say fifty --- thousand men.

The battle of Shiloh, one of the greatest battles of the war, had been fought for the second day April 7, and lost by the Confederates.

I believe that all Confederates and most Union soldiers agree that had General Johnston lived two hours longer Grant would have had to surrender his army, and had Johnston lived to hours longer Grant would have never been President of the United States and American History would have read quite differently. But back to the reality of what occurred at Shiloh.

The night of the 7th all roads leading south and west were crowded with men, horses, artillery and everything belonging to an army, and through mud and rain Beauregard was on his retreat to Corinth, which place his men reached the next day in a disordered condition. Had Grant pushed on at this point a large part of the Confederate army could have been captured.

A Terrier and a Mastiff had been engaged in combat and each time the Terrier showed his teeth he brought blood from the Mastiff, and when the Terrier withdrew the Mastiff was content to lie down and rest.

Chapter V

Retrospect of Bloody Pond

Beauregard's army reached Corinth and went into camp and to building breastworks around the place, and there I will leave him to recuperate his army, and reflect over "what might have been."

But I cannot leave this battlefield without mentioning Colonel Bates' Second Regiment of Tennesseans: Just before Shiloh the Confederate Government had commenced to give sixty days furlough to all soldiers who would reinlist for two more years service. The Second Tennessee had reenlisted, received their furloughs and were ready to start for home, but the battle of Shiloh coming on suddenly, each man volunteered to go and help in that battle, and no other regiment lost heavier than did the Second Tennessee. A large monument of granite now stands on the battlefield to commemorate this deed, erected by admiring friends.

It fell to my lot less than a year ago (written by Ray April 14, 1915) to again visit this old battlefield which has been cleared of all brush and rubbish; gravel driveways run all over the grounds so that it is easy to visit any part of it. Metallic markers are placed all over the field so that it is an easy matter to follow the route of any command, and by the aid of these markers I followed the route of my command on both days of this battle. Less than a mile from the river I came upon a tablet placed there by the Federal Battlefield Commissioners and bearing the inscription: "The 154th Tennessee Regiment held this line from 1 'till 4 P.M. on April 7, when it withdrew and retired from the field."

This is claimed to be one of the finest military parks in the world, and with few exceptions, all Northern States and most every regiment from the Northern States is represented by one or more monuments on this field.

The cost of this park must have reached into the millions of dollars; the state of Iowa having one monument of granite ninety feet high, which alone cost $100,000.

The spot where Johnston fell is still pointed out as one of the places of most interest; the tree under which he died is enclosed by a fence, and nearby is another noted place of interest: the bloody pond, given this name because of its waters becoming stained with blood on the days of this battle. The pond is situated on a high, level plateau about three fourths of a mile from the Tennessee river, and at the time of this battle the pond covered something near an acre of clear, pure water, and as the Federal army was falling back on the first day of battle their wounded gathered at this pond to bathe their wounds and slake their thirst, many of them dying as they lay around this pond.

When the Confederates, in their advance, passed this pond, the same thing occurred and wounded Confederates were brought to the pond that they might get water to drink and to bathe their wounds, and some to die. Here the Blue and the Gray were dying side by side. Men who a few hours before had been locked in mortal combat now sought the same cool resting place to yield up their spirits, together, to the God who gave them.

When the battle was over it was said that this pond was stained with blood, hence the name, bloody pond.

On a high bluff overlooking the Tennessee river is the Government cemetery, one of the most noted and beautiful cemeteries in the world, where thousands of Union soldiers are buried, many of them sleeping in unknown graves. This cemetery covers several acres of ground and is enclosed with a stone wall. Several

nice buildings are there and furnished homes for the warden and the force employed in keeping the cemetery repaired and beautiful. This cemetery is visited annually by many thousands of visitors from all sections of the nation.

At the time I last visited this place, a steamer, the Morning Star, was there, loaded with excursionists from Davenport, Iowa. The Captain of this vessel: E.W. Talmon, took a group of us in charge and showed us every courtesy possible, showing us over his boat, which was a beautiful, large, side wheeler. He introduced us to several passengers of whom there were about three hundred. Several of them were ex-Union soldiers who had been in this battle, and when it became known that I had been in this battle on the Confederate side I became the center of attraction and the hero of the hour. In all my life I have never met a more sociable gathering of people than was this party of Iowans, and to Captain Talmon and S.M. Fisher, an attorney from Davenport, I am still indebted for their favors.

A few years ago a terrible tornado passed through this battlefield, blowing down timber and doing a great deal of damage to the monumental work. The damage has now been repaired and is scarcely noticeable. On this field the absence of monuments to the Confederate dead was most conspicuous, only two such monuments having been erected, the one before mentioned which was in honor of Bathes' regiment, and one to the Alabamians who fell on that field, and which was erected by the Daughters of the Confederacy of that state.

The Daughters of the Confederacy throughout the South are now raising funds to build a suitable monument to the Confederate dead, whose bodies now lie scattered over the field, buried in unknown and unmarked graves. All traces of the Confederate dead have now become obliterated and nothing remains to show where the thousands of Confederates lie buried on that field.

Chapter VI

Shiloh to Corinth & Environs

Leaving Shiloh and driving west a few miles, my companion on this tour said to me: "Old Mount Zion is just up the hill, would you like to go up there?"

"Of course I would," I said, "for it was there, just before the war I had spent some of my happiest days while going to school at that place."

But the old school had long since passed away, and on its site stood a large church. The old burying ground is still there but has increased in size since the old school days of long ago, and I noticed on marble slabs and shafts, the names of many of my old schoolmates, who as boys and girls had attended school at this place in the long, long ago. Some of the names were of boys who, like myself, had joined the Confederate army in its earliest days, but had been brought home to sleep their last sleep among their friends and loved ones; others had grown to man and womanhood, and died to leave families to mourn their loss. I could recall but few of my old schoolmates who were now living, and I wondered why I should be left alone, so long.

While at this place I visited my old home of fifty years ago, the place where my mother lived during this great war. But the place had changed hands and strangers had entered there and there was little left to awaken the sleeping memories of the past. The county seat, once a thriving little country town with its court house and cottage buildings, has long since been moved away and a cotton field has taken its place. Purdy, once noted for its wealth, beauty and refinement, and for the production of some of the finest statesmen of the South, is now a place in name only.

On my visit to the present county seat I found only a few of the old citizens of the 1860's and only two who had gone through the war. On this trip I visited the town of Iuka, a small town on the Southern Railroad, 115 miles east of Memphis, where a hard battle was fought on the 19th of September 1862 between General Sterling Price of the Confederate Army with 14,000 men, and Generals Ord and Rosecrans of the Union forces with 16,000 men. After a hard fought battle General Price, finding himself nearly surrounded, retreated to Baldwyn, Mississippi, reaching there September 23rd.

After the battle of Shiloh General Halleck superseded General Grant as Commander of the Union forces at this town of Baldwyn, leaving Grant as the number two man in the Federal command.

Halleck had drawn reinforcements from every direction and by the last of April was ready to advance on Beauregard at Corinth with 110,000 men. Beauregard had also reinforced his army to fifty thousand. On the 9th of May a battle was fought between these two armies near Corinth. By the 28th of May Halleck's army had almost surrounded Corinth, and on the night of May 29th Beauregard evacuated Corinth and retreated to Baldwyn and Tupelo, which closed the Shiloh - Corinth campaign.

Chapter VII

"Sell Your Lives as Dear as Possible"

Although the Shiloh - Corinth campaign was closed, the bloodiest battle to be fought around Corinth was yet to be fought. General Earl Van Dorn commanding the Confederates in Mississippi combined his forces with those of General Sterling Price at Ripley, Mississippi, thirty miles southwest of Corinth. On the 29th of September he marched his army to attack Corinth, and on October 3rd he attacked Corinth with about 20,000 men and carried most of the outer works. Rosecrans was now in command of Corinth and that night was reinforced from Burnsville and Iuka.

October 4, 1862 dawned bright and still and intensely hot. Rosecrans had not been appraised of Van Dorn's intended attack and was not fully prepared to meet it.

The main works defending the town were close to it and consisted of a series of heavily armed redoubts connected by strong breastworks. All of the outer works had carried but the inside line, their strongest line, the Confederates failed to carry and by 3:00 P.M. the Confederates withdrew from one of the bloodiest battles of the war. That night General Van Dorn camped his army at Chewalla, six miles away.

The next day the battle of Hatchie Bridge was fought and Van Dorn moved from there to Ripley.

General Price's command was composed mostly of men from Texas, Arkansas and Missouri.

Fort Robinett, one of the strongest forts at, and overlooking Corinth from a hill on the west of the town, was thought by the Federals to be impregnable. Colonel William F. Rogers, Colonel and Commander of the 2nd Texas Infantry, was ordered to storm this fort, and after losing most of his men, gained entrance to the fort, after which the Federals were reinforced from nearby and Rogers fell in a hand-to-hand struggle.

When Rogers saw that all was lost he called out: "Men, save yourselves, or sell your lives as dear as possible." Few of Rogers' men, however, escaped from this fort, and General Rosecrans' order was to bury him where he fell with honors of war.

Less than a year ago when I visited the place that was once old Fort Robinett, I found a granite monument twenty feet high and five feet square at base standing over the spot where Rogers fell. The funds for erecting this monument were raised principally by ladies in Texas and collected by Mrs. Hal Greer of Beaumont, Texas, Mrs. Kate Bronson of Victoria, Texas and Mrs. Rogers Bolton of Wharton, Texas, the latter being the daughter of Colonel Rogers. This monument was unveiled August 15, 1912. The ladies present at the unveiling of this monument were: Mrs. Hal Greer, State President U.D.C. of Texas, Beaumont, Mrs. Rogers Bolton, daughter of Colonel Rogers, Wharton; Mrs. Sanders and Mrs. Butler, granddaughters of Colonel Rogers, both of Wharton and three great granddaughters of Colonel Rogers who unveiled the monument.

The south side of this monument bears this inscription: "Erected by the Texas Division United Daughters of the Confederacy, the surviving members of the family and admiring friends, August 15, A.D. 1912." Below this in raised letters: R O G E R S.

On the west side of the monument is this inscription: "Fell Leading Moor's Brigade, Fort Robinett, October 4, 1862. He was one of the bravest men that ever led a charge, bury him with military honors, Major General W.S. Rosecrans, Commanding Army of the Cumberland, U.S.A."

On the north side: "William P. Rogers, a native of Alabama, December 17, A.D. 1817; Captain of Mississippi Rifles, 1845 - 1847; First man to mount walls at Monterey; U.S. Consul to Mexico, 1849; Signed ordinance of secession of Texas, Feb. 1, 1861; Colonel 2nd. Texas Infantry; Brevet Brigade Commander."

On the east side: "The gallantry which attracted the enemy at Corinth was in keeping with the character he acquired in the former service - Jefferson Davis." "Men save yourselves or sell your lives as dearly as possible."

By the side of this monument lies a slab of granite 30 inches wide, 12 inches thick and 72 inches long, bearing the inscription: "A Tribute from Corinth Chapter U.D.C. 333 to the memory and valor of Colonel W.P. Rogers."

On the opposite side of the monument stands a heavy mounted field gun as though guarding the hallowedness of the sacred spot, while nearby the monument to the unknown, bearing this inscription: "Unknown, we care not whence they come, dear in their lifeless clay; whether unknown or known to fame, their cause and country still the same, they died and wore the gray." Underneath - "Confederate Dead."

On the north side: "Remember the unknown heroes, they that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other."

The walls of this old fort are leveled down, but the ladies of Corinth have enclosed the ground where the old fort once stood. This place is just outside the town on a hill overlooking the town.

It has been just fifty two years of storm and sunshine since this bloody battle was fought (written May 15, 1915) and those brave men and boys were buried in graves of the unknown. Some sister wept when they went away; some mother's heart broke in bidding her boy good-bye. But gentle mother, no matter where you be, your darling boy is still remembered by those noble ladies of Corinth, for on the public square in the city of Corinth is a tall square granite monument, surrounded by a life size bronze statue of a Confederate soldier standing with his gun at parade rest and facing his far away home in the west, and beneath him on the south side is this inscription:

"Erected as a tribute to the memory of the Confederate
patriots who fell at the battle of Corinth October 1862.
On fame's eternal camping ground,
Their Silent tents are spread,
And glory guards each solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead."

On the west side: "Confederate dead, Colonel W.P. Rogers 2nd Texas regiment, killed at Ft. Robinett October 4, 1862. As long as courage, manliness and patriotism exists, the name of Rogers will be honored among men. He fell in front of battle in the center of the enemies' stronghold, he sleeps, and glory is his sentinel."

--- Citizens of Corinth

On the east side of this monument the following inscription is engraved: "They were the knightliest of the race, who since the days of old have kept the lamps of chivalry alight in hearts of gold."

Should any of the old Confederate soldiers who camped at Corinth during the years of '61 and '62 chance to visit Corinth at this late day, they would scarce believe it was the same Corinth of fifty-one and fifty-two years ago. It will be remembered in the spring of 1862 as a small country town, with the muddiest streets, the worst water and more fatal sickness than any place this army ever camped. Now it has beautiful streets shaded with Magnolia and other trees, with more beautiful flowers than any other little city that this writer has ever had the pleasure to visit, and might well be called the city of roses. But the most noticeable feature of this beautiful little city is that most of the inhabitants are of the old Southern families that know so well how to dispense the famous Southern Hospitality.

Chapter VIII

Tennessee to Georgia

Returning to the reminiscences of the war's action, we shall rejoin at Corinth, where this army fell back to Tupelo, Mississippi from via Chattanooga into Kentucky, and on October 7th and 8th the battle of Perryville, Kentucky, was fought, and General Bragg retreated into Tennessee and late in November had gathered his army at and near Murfreesboro on Stone river, 33 miles southeast of Nashville, where on December 31st the battle of Murfreesboro or Stone River, was fought between W.S. Rosecrans of the Union army and General Braxton Bragg of the Confederate army; Rosecrans with 56,000 men and Bragg with 51,000.
In this battle, according to official reports, Rosecrans lost in killed, wounded and missing 13,249 men, while Bragg's loss was 11,439. After this battle Bragg withdrew and removed his army to Tullahoma, Tennessee.

In 1863 Rosecrans had flanked Bragg from his position in Tennessee, and on September 19th and 20th the battle of Chickamauga was fought and Rosecrans' army was forced from the field.

At the battle of Shiloh when Bragg received orders from Beauregard to retire from the field on the evening of April 16th, he replied: "If I were not personally acquainted with the bearer of this order I would not obey it;" but he himself did the same thing at Chickamauga that Beauregard did at Shiloh. Rosecrans and Thomas were in full retreat at Chickamauga and for some reason Bragg failed to follow up his victory with pursuit and all the advantages that might have derived from success in this battle were lost.

The Union forces were at last forced back and occupied and fortified Chattanooga, while Bragg occupied Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. On November 24th Bragg was forced to abandon Lookout Mountain and he then concentrated his entire force on the crest of Missionary Ridge. On the 25th of November the enemy carried Missionary Ridge, capturing some artillery and prisoners.

Bragg was pursued to Dalton, Georgia where he remained until the opening of the Georgia campaign in the spring of 1864.

In the meantime General Joseph E. Johnson had been given command of the Confederate army and W. Sherman that of the Union army. About the first of May 1864 Sherman with his army of near 100,000 well-equipped and disciplined soldiers marched out from Chattanooga and camped near by to crush Johnson with his 54,000 men. This army, while under Bragg, had become somewhat discouraged, but when Johnson took command all this was changed and every soldier in that army had the utmost confidence in Johnson's ability to successfully cope with Sherman.

On the 8th to the 12th of May there were some hard battles fought by different parties of both armies: Dug Gap, Buzzard Roost, Rocky Face and Resacca, and from thence forward to the 7th of September at Lovejoy Station thirty miles below Atlanta and 150 miles south of Dalton, was enacted what is known as the Georgia campaign, and some of the greatest feats of military strategy ever witnessed by man took place in this campaign.

But I digress, and I must reiterate that I am not trying to write a history of the war, for historians from both sides of the Mason-Dixon line have worn history threadbare. I am only trying to write some sketches of the war as viewed by a boy who was carrying a musket on this campaign.

One of the actions in which I was involved included a large block house that we came upon one day said to be strongly defended by Federals. General B.F. Cheatham, in command of Hardee's old corps, demanded the unconditional surrender of the place. This was promptly refused by the Federal commander, at which Cheatham commenced to deploy his men around their works, myself and others of the barefoots had found a high elevation which overlooked the enemy's works. We could plainly see our lines making ready to assault their works, and when this line was about ready to start moving forward and we were watching to see this dark line wiped out of existence, the Stars and Stripes floating over the main fort, came down and a white flag was seen to float in its stead, which no doubt saved many a negro soldier from an untimely death. This force of negro soldiers and a large detail of our own men were put to work tearing up the railroad and by twelve o'clock the next day the road from Dalton to Tunnel Hill was destroyed, and the bulk of the army was marching towards Decatur, Alabama.

There is a small river running near Dalton but I cannot recall the name of it just now. I believe the river's name is Covsa. The railroad crosses this stream, and I was but a short distance from this bridge when we came upon a block house occupied by Union soldiers who were guarding the bridge.

While Cheatham was getting ready to attack the main force a cavalryman was sent on horseback to demand the surrender of the block house. When the horseman came within range he was fired on by the occupants of the block house, breaking one of his arms, and causing him to drop his mission of peace and to return in regular 'John Gilpin' style. In a few moments a field battery was pelting this block house with percussion shells from Parrot guns, most of the shells exploding inside. (The old soldiers will understand this job.) Soon smoke from the shells was coming from port holes of the house and white flags were strictly in evidence, and the defenders marched out and surrendered. Their excuse for firing on the white flag of truce was that they thought that it was a small guerrilla band.

On this march any soldier apprehended molesting private property was required to carry a fence rail or other weight as punishment for the balance of the day on which the offense was committed, and the provost guard was kept in the rear to arrest foragers and stragglers and enforce this order.

The barefoots were allowed more privileges than soldiers with shoes but he was expected to get into camp at, or in the night.

Late one evening tired, hungry, footsore and angry could be seen more than a hundred barefoots, provost guards, stragglers and foragers, the last two named under guard, and each one, besides his usual baggage, carrying a fence rail. It had been a long time since the people of Tuscumbia, Alabama had seen a Confederate army, and Hood's entry into this little city called forth its entire population. When this last installment of the army appeared on the streets it caused many questions to be asked by the ladies who were not posted on Hood's army regulations. Some of the questions were: "What are those soldiers carrying those rails for?", "What are you soldiers going to do with those rails?", and "Do you carry those rails with you to make fires with at night?". The answers were usually more forcible than polite, and Confederate chivalry for a while was at the freezing point in Tuscumbia, Alabama.

Chapter IX

Siege of Atlanta

Returning to the Georgia campaign, we came upon a small force near Atlanta. After capturing their works and forcing them back for some distance, night closed this battle, the enemy losing one of their best Generals, General McPherson. That night we spent fortifying our new position, which was less than a mile from where we had left the night before.

That night I enjoyed a feast of Yankee coffee, crackers and ham taken from a dead Federal's haversack; and do not become horrified at my appropriating and eating a dead man's rations, for that was a common practice at that time in the army.

The siege of Atlanta was now on in earnest. In a short time our lines had been drawn in, our fortifications strengthened, our rations reduced to three fourths of a pound of unsifted meal and one fourth of a pound of bacon per day, while at the same time Hood was having all the supplies that he could procure stored in Atlanta with the idea of holding the place at all hazards.

On July 28, another hard battle was fought on the west side of the city, which gained us nothing. We were kept in our works and under fire from July 22nd to the last days of August with more or less fighting every day. During the last days of August, Sherman moved a part of his army from around Atlanta intending to strike the railroad at or near Jonesboro, sixteen miles below Atlanta. Hood, in order to meet this emergency, moved his old corps, now under Cheatham, and Hardee's corps, to meet Sherman's forces at Jonesboro, leaving Stewart with his corps at Atlanta, to hold that place, while Hood, with Hardee and Cheatham were to attack Sherman on August 31st.

August 31st dawned clear and bright, a hot sunny day. Hood attacked Sherman's forces, and after night had closed the day's conflict, nothing had been gained. The next day, September 1st, the battle was renewed, but to most of the men there seemed but little hope, for it could easily be seen that we were outnumbered, but still these men went forward in every charge in that do or die determination that had immortalized them on so many hard fought fields. The night before this last day's battle some of the commands had built light breastworks and late in the day the Confederates made their last stand behind these works when it seemed the Union forces had concentrated all their strength to crush Hood's remaining forces, and when Hood saw that defeat was inevitable, his army hard pressed, Gordon and his Arkansans captured, it was than that he cried: "Ten thousand more men or God send night." Hood had made a good fight but superior numbers had won and dark found Hood's forces tired, hungry and worn out, slowly making their way to Lovejoy Station, seven miles below, where that night a new line was formed and the men spent the remainder of the night in fortifying this line.

By ten o'clock the next morning the enemy was within three hundred yards of our line fortifying and until the night of September 6th there was an incessant skirmish kept up, with some hard fighting on the night of the 6th. My command was taken from the ditches and moved to our right, placed in reserve in rear of our main line of works, but in easy range of the enemy's fire and bullets from their small arms were continually passing over us.

My only bedding was an oil cloth taken from a dead Union soldier at the battle of Atlanta. You will remember that it was on going into this battle that we left our baggage, never to see it again.

On one night in this battle when it came time for my immediate group to rest I spread down my oilcloth

and a comrade and myself lay down on it, covering with a blanket that he had secured in some way. The night was cool and we were soon asleep, regardless of the shells passing over us with their screams. After sunrise the next morning I was aroused to go and help load some supply wagons. On my return I found that my comrade had been killed the night before as he lay sleeping under the same blanket with me. He had never moved after being struck, for his neck was broken by the bullet.

I mention things that were of little interest to us at that time to show the young people of today what the old Confederate soldiers had become accustomed to.

On the night of September 1st Stewart's corps, which was about one third of Hood's army, had been left to hold Atlanta, but was forced to evacuate the place. While Johnson was in command of the army he kept only three days' rations stored in Atlanta, but when Hood was given command he commenced to collect all the supplies possible and store them in the city, but when Stewart was forced to leave the place all these supplies were destroyed. I was on picket that night, on an outpost and alone all that night. I listened to the bursting of shells and the noise of other ammunition as it was exploding, as the magazines were being destroyed by fire, and watched the lights from the burning buildings where our supplies were being burned that our army so desperately needed.

By a detour Stewart made his way from Atlanta in safety. On the morning of September 7th the enemy evacuated their trenches in our front and commenced to move back to Jonesboro over the route traveled in his advance. As it was only seven miles, by 12 M. the enemy had passed Jonesboro and was moving back to Atlanta, while we, for a second time was occupying Jonesboro. It was then that we could witness the destruction caused by a two days' hard fought battle. Everywhere over the field could be seen fresh, unmarked graves. Just in the edge of town at a large church where our general hospital had been established and left in the hands of the enemy, I was where many Confederates had been buried in trenches, but, as a boy, one thing attracted my attention, there were two unmarked graves, both privates, the headboards giving company, regiment etc., and on each was carved square and compass, showing to my boyish mind, that among men there were stronger ties than hempen cords. The headboards at these graves showed that this act of Christianity had been performed by members of the 50th Illinois regiment.

That evening I was made one of a detail to bury about three hundred of our men who had died at one of our hospitals, but had ceased to be used by the enemy. The days were very warm, and some of these men had been dead for three days, having been laid out on the ground in rows and their faces covered with old blankets, pieces of tents and anything to hide their faces from the rays of the sun. Imagination alone is not sufficient to picture this scene.

Long trenches were dug sufficiently wide to permit a man to be rolled in crosswise. I was one of them that was detailed to carry these men to the trenches. Decomposition had so far advanced, and the attendant result of the flies, which infested the place, made it impossible to handle them with our hands. We procured some litters and would lay a litter by the side of a body, and with the aid of wooden hooks, made from forked bushes, pull the body onto the litter. It was then carried to the side of the trenches and rolled in. As the bodies fell they covered over each other. Today, all trace of these ditches with their unknown dead are gone.

I mention these facts in detail that it may give some younger person a better understanding of the life, death and burial of many of the Confederate soldiers.

The next day found Hood's army at and near Jonesboro, where, since the beginning of May, we could sit or lie down and enjoy a quiet, undisturbed rest.

Chapter X

Incidents and Emotions of a Boy Soldier

Perhaps a few incidents of this campaign picked up at random, may not come amiss: While occupying the trenches around Atlanta, to get out of them only made you a target for some vigilant sharpshooter across the way, consequently our rations were cooked and brought to us in the night; sometimes our water would give out, and as we had to sit in trenches in the hot sun from morning until night, water was an absolute necessity. Often a game of freeze-out poker would be played, the hindmost player having to go after water.

I was making a run for water one day, aiming to get to a stone house between myself and the enemy, when a far-spent bullet struck me on the side of the head, and it seemed to weigh a ton, and made a noise, seemingly, that could be heard for miles. When I collected my wits I had passed the house, and was running, I suppose, about forty miles an hour, and every Yank in sight was shooting at me. By the time I got back to the trenches I had a big knot on the side of my head where I had been struck.

That night after the first day's picketing on this line when we were relieved there was a man to pilot us back to our command, as it had changed positions that day. We passed back through a big old field covered with blackberry briars with hog trails all through it. I was barefooted and got behind and lost from my squad. It seemed that I wandered over that old field half the night. I would get on a trail and follow it to the end, and then have to turn back and try to find another; stray bullets passing over my head in the meantime. Some of the bullets struck the ground quite near me and these were all that was necessary to cause me to hurry. I finally got out and found my command and the next day the boys picked the briars out of my feet.

The Georgia Militia, known as Joe Brown's Pets, were sent to Atlanta to help hold the works. They were placed in trenches and their cooking detail of Negroes placed in a deep hollow half a mile from us, but entirely out of danger of bullets but not from a practical old soldier experienced in the art of foraging. They had not been there a day until every old soldier knew where this camp was, and every old soldier that could slip out of the trenches was going there to forage. Their cooks were all knowledgeable on all army matters, and so were the whites who were left at the camp, and all they had to eat fell an easy prey to the more experienced; but that only lasted for one day, as that night there was a guard and all of the humor was dispensed with. Many of the pets lost pillows, bed quilts and boxes of good grub from home. Such good things could not last and Joe's Pets had learned a lesson.

I have mentioned in the past of our lying down during the time of our advance to attack at the battle of Atlanta. A new song had just come out a short time before this, called "Just Before the Battle, Mother", and this song belonged to neither army but was popular and was sung by both armies. Perhaps you have heard it. It contains these lines:

"Comrades brave around are lying,
Thinking of their home and God,
For well they know that on the morrow,
Some will sleep beneath the sod."

The thoughts of my mother in her far away home so forcibly impressed me at that moment, lying there on the ground and looking at my comrades as they lay near, and I remembered that just two days before we had only thirteen left of a company of thirty six lying on that fatal field of Peach Tree Creek, and

wondered who would be killed today. Will I be one of that number?

Another line runs:

"Hark! I hear the bugle sounding,
'Tis the signal for the fight."

I have told you of the courier giving our Colonel orders to move on the enemy's works at the sound of the bugle, while these thoughts were passing through my mind, off to our right on our line a bugle sounded sharp, clear and shrill, answered by another on our left. You already know the result.

Today, when I think of it, the sharp notes of that bugle sounding the charge is as plain to me as it was on that hot and sultry 22nd day of July 1864, when seven of our remaining thirteen went down before that storm of shot and shell. I am asking no favors or no consideration or sympathy for myself, but there are but a few more years left for some of the old Confederates that are poor and needy, some of them even lacking the bare necessities of life; now I will ask a question, young man; do you have the feeling and consideration for these old fellows that you should have? I leave the subject with you and return to our camp at Jonesboro.

We lay for some time at Jonesboro, in complete idleness part of the time, discussing the final outcome of the war, and as it was rumored that Hood would soon march his army into Tennessee, that was uppermost for discussion among the Tennesseans, Missourians and Kentuckians.

Chapter XI

Sherman's Campaign

Although we had been pondering the prospects of a return to Tennessee, General Sherman soon gave us another matter for thought and discussion. A great many citizens of Atlanta had already left the city and moved south. Sherman's troops were occupying all the vacant houses of the city. He next ordered all citizens to leave the city. Each family was allowed to take a certain amount of baggage, limited to the size of the family, but the amount was small. Those preparing to go north beyond the Ohio river were allowed to do so and were allowed passage on the trains, but were forced to go in freight and stock cars. Those going south were placed in Government freight wagons and hauled to Rough and Ready, a railroad, where by agreement Hood was allowed to send wagons and haul them and their baggage to Jonesboro.

I have heard it said that the hardest part of all wars fell on the non-combatants, women and children and aged men. Nothing was ever more substantially verified than was this saying which was proven at Rough and Ready; families there often consisting only of women and children, were hauled to that place, thrown out in an old field, without rations and with only scant bedding; while the nights were becoming cold, and only God and those poor unfortunates knew the sufferings they endured. General Hood furnished relief to them as fast as he could. Old men, women and children, sick and ailing, were all unloaded together as though they were brutish animals. One lady I will mention, with an infant only two days old, was hauled that eight miles and left to be cared for by strangers. These scenes of brutality were being enacted by people calling themselves civilized and having a holy horror of a people who were holding a class of others in bondage, yet little above brutes themselves; yet the principal actor in having these cruelties perpetrated has been eulogized from ocean to ocean, and his picture now hangs in the hall of fame at Washington, D.C. This man, William T. Sherman once said, and near this time: "War is hell, and I'll make Georgia howl."

These refugees were eventually placed on trains and given army rations by General Hood, and those having friends further south were given transportation to them, while others were sent to West Point, Georgia where they occupied tents during the coming cold winter, subject to all the exposure of camp life; women who had never known want before were forced to subsist on the coarsest food and were exposed to intolerable conditions, and many of them and the innocent babies of this camp falling a prey to disease.

Hood moved his army from Jonesboro to Palmetto, Georgia where he commenced to prepare for his march into Tennessee, while Sherman was preparing for his famous march to the sea.

The Spanish war in Cuba called forth the sympathy of the world on account of the barbarous treatment of the Cubans by the Spaniards, and this cruel treatment was one of the prime factors of Cuba's freedom and independence.

Since the war between the states, and within the memory of many people living today, the atrocities of many tribes of the western Indians caused a poor mother's heart to sink as she read of these Indians murdering defenseless women and children, but was that worse than Sherman did when he burned their houses, destroyed all their means of subsistance, left them to wander on foot through a country where everything that would sustain life had been destroyed and where they were forced to lie upon the bare ground on wintry nights, exposed to rain and storm, at times some of these poor women and children going as long as two days and three nights with nothing to eat and clothing wet and lying on frozen ground at night. Is it any wonder that many of them died from disease and exposure.

I have often wondered if the departed spirits of these unfortunate women and children would not rise up at the final judgment to condemn William T. Sherman.

On this march through Georgia Sherman divided his army into three columns, the low element of soldiery, the camp followers and bums were given to understand at the beginning of the march that no one would be held responsible for any excesses committed. Crime against innocent womanhood was openly boasted of, that if committed today in any civilized country, would be punished with death.

Many years after the war a Northern writer, boasting of this march, said that the tall pillars of black smoke by day and the lurid glare of burning buildings against the sky at night was proof that General Howard knew his duty and performed it well.

I will here quote a short passage from a book written by Brevet Major George Ward Nichols, Aide De Camp to General Sherman: "I know that thousands of the best blood of the South are in the rebel army, and they will feel the effects of this, our last visit of our army for years to come. Those who still have no homes, and in the glorious future they will have no name; the ancient homesteads where were gathered sacred association, the heritage of many generations are swept away."

It is far beyond the power of one of my intellectual ability to describe the scenes of crime and suffering caused by Sherman's raid, but would tax M. Quad or John Eston Cook to do it justice.

Chapter XII

The Barefoot Squad

General Hood remained at Palmetto, Georgia for a short time after which he started on his fatal march to Tennessee when he met with opposition at several points, one of them being Ringold Gap, which gave rise to the hymn so often sung in our churches: "Hold the Fort."

At Dalton on May 8th this campaign opened and there were a few white soldiers and a considerable force of Negroes left to hold this place for the Federals.

On Hood's march a part of his force was sent to destroy this body at Dalton, this writer being with what was then known as the barefoot squad, which was in the rear.

Ringold and New Hope were two of the most important battles after leaving Dalton. Another battle that history gives no account of, and some will perhaps say that it was fought only in the imagination of this writer. This was the Battle of the Dead Angel between Cheatham's Division of the Confederate army, which was well fortified, and General Dan McCook's corps of the Union forces. This battle was fought some three or four miles west of Kennesaw Mountain on the 27th of June.

After moving on to Tuscumbia and Florence, Alabama we lay there for six weeks awaiting supplies. Winter had set in and while at Tuscumbia we had our first snow fall. While laying over at these places the boys resorted to many things for pleasure, pastime and profit. This consisted mostly in chuck-a-luck and poker by day, and foraging by night, but few soldiers would take another's regular rations, and the soldier who would do it was considered a low down thief, but anything bought out of, or from a peddler's wagon was considered legitimate prey for any soldier. I will give one instance of a foraging escapade at night: I had drawn and eaten a full day's rations one morning but by night I was ready to eat again, but had nothing to eat, so I set out as soon as dark set in, to seek something to devour. At last I came to General Gist's Headquarters. He had acquired a pumpkin and his two Headquarters Negroes, cook and hostler, were cooking it.

I watched the proceedings until I decided that it would be some time before the pumpkin would be mine, and as the night was very cold I returned to my own quarters to keep warm by the log fire. I made about three visits to General Gist's headquarters before those Negroes were ready to divide, as they took some of it out in a pan and cooled and ate it, then like good, honest Negroes rolled themselves in their blankets, and I thought would, as an Irishman once made the expression: "Soon be in the arms of Murphy." I roused up a pal and told him what I had treed. We got in sight of the fire and I had prepared two wooden hooks from some bushes. I gave my pal Charley one of the hooks and told him to walk on to one side of the fire, I would go on the other and we would lift the lid off the big, old time oven, then each of us would get a hook in the ears of the oven and walk away with it. Everything was going nicely until, as we were lifting off the lid it made a noise and the Negroes roused up and started shouting for the General. Charley dropped his side, and although I got hold of the oven, I could not run with it, and not wanting the General to get hold of me, I had to run and leave it. The General was from South Carolina. He was a good man, and incidentally one of the six Confederate Generals killed a short time after this occurrence at Franklin, Tennessee.

It was but a few days after this that this army took its leave from Florence and started for Nashville, Tennessee.

Chapter XIII

Deserted by the Army

I had been somewhat afflicted with rheumatism before leaving Florence and on the first day's march my right lower limb became painfully swollen and gave out; in the night I reached camp and the next morning started out with my company again. It was not long before we entered a long lane.

Before leaving Florence all those having no blankets had been supplied with one single blanket, one coarse shirt and one pair of light khaki cotton pants which had been reinforced by a pair of gray woolen of English manufacture. In receiving our pants we were formed in line and as we marched by a Quartermaster's tent a pair was handed to us regardless of size or length. I suppose the pair that I received had been made for a fat Englishman, large in waist and short in height, and I could effect no exchange. As I said, mine were too short; I being small in waist and six feet and four inches in height, my pants made a ludicrous fit. The jacket I drew, like my pants, was large around, but short.

Standing in that lane and waiting for the artillery and wagons to pass across a boggy creek, the ground hard-frozen, and the wind blowing hard and cold from the north, my pants lacking six inches of reaching my shoes, so for lack of suspenders I had to cut holes in the top of my pants so as to lap them over and keep them up. My jacket and pants failed to meet in the middle of my body by a good four inches.

Imagine me, if you can, in that garb, standing there without fire and that cold north wind striking that thin waist line, and my naked ankles. That evening I told our regimental surgeon that I could walk no further. He said that they did not have any conveyance for the sick and disabled and that I would have to look after myself.

One of my company went to a farm house not far from the road and stayed with me that night, our command having passed on ahead of us. The next morning I was unable to walk and my friend was forced to leave me and follow up the command. After staying one day at this place I made it to another house and stayed all night, having traveled eight miles that day. The people I stayed with at the second house were Union people but as I was on my way home, they talked free to me and told me that my old friend's son where I had been staying was the Captain of a company of Bushwhackers. I stayed at this house a few days longer and again started for home but when I reached the Tennessee river it had risen considerably and was very rough. I tried to hire a man living on the bank to set me over, but he refused. I went up the river to a house and tried another man, but he also refused. I offered him a ten dollar Confederate bill and my four dollars in greenback that I had received for my blanket, but he still refused, giving as a reason that the river was too rough. I started back down to the lower house and seeing the dugout tied under the bank among the bushes, I went down and loosed this boat and pushed out. All went well for a short time, then my strength failed and for a time I let the craft drift. It drifted toward the west bank and when I felt rested enough I commenced to paddle to shore, landed and tied up the dugout, climbed up the bank and found myself in the burying ground of an Indiana regiment. I knew by the headboards that I was near the Shiloh battlefield.

It was now raining a cold, steady rain and I knew of no shelter near. Taking a course as best I could for where the old church had once stood I set out to find the place. I neared the place where I expected to find evidence of where the old church had been, but everything had a strange appearance. After walking for some time I came upon a camp with a lone woman present and she told me that her husband was out on a hunt for provisions. She pointed out to me the hill where the old church had once stood. When I reached the spot and looked around for a moment everything became more familiar and I found that I had been

traveling in a circle and had passed near the place a time or two before. I fell into an old road that I had once been familiar with. It was still raining and dark had come on and I was still seven miles from home. Though somewhat obscured by clouds, the moon gave some light and between midnight and day, the boy that my mother heard was dead, rapped on her door.

Chapter XIV

The Last Mile

After recovering my health sufficiently I procured a horse and joined a part of the 15th Tennessee Cavalry that was on detail to gather up supplies in west Tennessee for the army and to transport them to Corinth. I stayed with this command until time to return to Tupelo with my own company.

Another member of my company joined me and when we reached Tupelo there was no one for us to report to, for some few went on to find their command in North Carolina, while others despondent, returned to their homes to await the closing scenes of this great drama of war. My partner and myself returned home. I rejoined my old cavalry command and at Corinth May 15th we were paroled as prisoners of war, and as such we still remain, never having been restored to citizenship.

One of America's greatest generals once said while watching a battle rage in all its fury: "Tis well that war is so terrible or men would grow too fond of it."

Johnson was now in North Carolina. Lee had surrendered and the news of his surrender was fast spreading and smaller commands were surrendering and on April 20th near Durham, North Carolina Johnson surrendered to General William T. Sherman all that was left of that once defiant army.

The army of Tennessee numbering now only 14,000 men including the old men and boys, the junior reserves of North Carolina was all that was left.

If the reader will go with me we will visit an old relic of the war: The old Bennett house, or as it is locally known, the old surrender house. This house stands three miles west of Durham, North Carolina on the road from Raleigh to Greensboro. The house was an old house when the war closed, built of hewn logs and weatherboarded on the outside, with a plank side room on the north side, which has long since been removed. It has a stone chimney at the east end and once had a stairway leading to an upper room. The stairway and weatherboarding has, piece by piece been carried away by relic hunters, at least up high as they could reach. Many of the shingles which are of heart pine, and hand shaved, have been carried away for the same purpose. One of these shingles can be seen in the McCurtain County Clerk's office at Idabel, Oklahoma today.

Some years ago one of the Dukes of Durham to fame had this old house enclosed within another house to protect it from the ravages of time and human vandals. In what was once the front yard stands an old sycamore tree which is pointed out today as being the tree to which General Sherman's horse was tied while he and General Johnson were arranging the terms of General Johnson's surrender. It was at this house where Johnson surrendered the remnant of the army which he commanded with so much skill and Generalship while opposing Sherman on the Georgia campaign. This remnant of one of the bravest armies that ever faced death on a battlefield, tired and footsore, worn out from hard marching and exposure, opposed by Sherman's 100,000 well armed and equipped soldiers, were forced to surrender and return to their homes to take up the peaceful pursuits of life and the rebuilding of destroyed homes, some of them in the far west.

After a sojourn of fifty years in different states of the west, it was my pleasure to visit this old state, and my old home near this old surrender house. I visited another house of much importance to me near this old surrender house. It was the old house where seventy one years ago I first saw the light of day, and where on this visit I spent several days and nights. While in this area I also visited the old home of my

grandfather and great grandfather, whose house was built before the war for American Independence. It is still standing but unoccupied for want of a roof. This old house would be a curiosity to most people in the west as much so as a sod shanty or dugout to the eastern man. This old house of two rooms, one 28 by 32 feet and the other 24 by 28 feet and both are two stories high, built of logs, facing two feet. But this old house, like its former owners, will soon pass away.

I am now leaving the scenes of war, which for four years, perhaps, some old soldier has followed me, noting my mistakes, touching elbows with me in some hard fought battle, sharing each other's joys and sorrows for four long years of storm and hardship. To all such, you are my friend and brother, and though our old flag went down in defeat, it fell without dishonor.

To the wives, sisters and mothers of the Confederate soldier, we bow our heads, for they bore their part well, suffered the most and complained the least.

To those of fewer years who have followed me through these four years of strife and hardship, I raise my hat and bid you an affectionate farewell.

And now with my compliments I will give each old soldier a poem for his scrapbook, hoping to have the opportunity some day before the last roll call, to see you again.

A Farewell Poem

You served your country faithfully,
And fought its battles well,
Nor feared the thrust of bayonet,
Nor flinched from noise of shell.

You stood where shot fell thickest,
Where smoke obscured the field,
Where men fell sorely wounded,
And died, but would not yield.

You marched behind a tettered flag,
While hope was drooping low;
Clad in a Southern homespun rag,
You faced the Northern foe.

And some in shallow trenches lie,
And some have empty sleeves,
And some have since gone to the skies,
While the loyal Southland grieves.

Then here's a long farewell,
To those who fought for Southern rights,
We bid adieu to warriors true,
In all their country's fights.

It matters not if tears be shed,
By those who still remain,
Though the soldier's cause is set aside,
His record is not in vain.

W.S. Ray

Early Days in Sevier County

by

"Captain" W. S. Ray

Chapter I

Southern Inhospitality

Some years ago Caleb Johnson McKean agreed to write some reminiscences of the early days of Sevier county Arkansas. No man was better qualified for this task than he, having been born at Ultima Thule, Arkansas and having spent all his days at, or near that place, except the four years of the war between the states, which time he served in the Confederate army; but owing to ill health and disabilities of age, this task was never finished, and with his death passed away the possibilities of some interesting history of the early days of Sevier County, especially the western part of it.

(Note by compiler: When we speak of Sevier County Arkansas in the early days, as referred to by Captain Ray, we are actually speaking of a large section of southwest Arkansas, comprising what is now six or eight of the present counties of southwest Arkansas - David W. Ogden, Researcher - Compiler)

I have been importuned by some of my old friends as well as the editor of the DeQueen Bee Newspaper to give the public my recollections of this part of the country, dating from the close of the war until a more recent date. After this agreement with the editor, and reflecting over the matter, I have concluded that I have agreed to do something overreaching my abilities. Nevertheless, I have made this agreement and I will proceed to do the best that I can, hoping that I may not be criticized too severely, for I propose to give out nothing but the facts as they came under my observation, or have been related to me by some reliable old timer many of whom have long since gone to their rewards.

As to how I came to be in Arkansas at that early date, does not figure in, or belong to, this sketch, but as some of my most vivid recollections of Arkansas carry me back east of Sevier County, I will commence this sketch on Markham street in Little Rock, Arkansas.

One very hot July afternoon in 1865 I could have been seen walking up Markham street carrying all my earthly possessions, consisting of an old oil cloth satchel containing a very limited wardrobe, an old pocket book in my pocket, containing considerably less than five dollars in cash and a parole from a Federal Officer stating that I had been a soldier in the Confederate army and in rebellion against the United States Government, and promising not to violate this parole until lawfully exchanged, which up to this time has never been done, and if I was ever out of the Union (as we were all accused of being) I am still out, for up to this time if I have ever done anything to get back, or if anyone did anything to put me back, I am not aware of it.

At any rate, walking up Markham street, reflecting upon the sins of rebellion and the vastness of the Yankee army, I met another one of the vanquished Army of Tennessee trying to make his way back to his home and mother in Texas, which he had left when a boy four years before, and had not seen since, and which he swore, if he ever reached, he would never leave again.

While we were talking, and he was insisting that I go with him to Texas, we were joined by two young men from Louisiana who were likewise trying to make their way home. We were soon joined by two more of the vanquished from Arkansas. After consulting an old citizen and getting the desired information as to the route we should travel we soon left the city of Little Rock in our rear, I having concluded to go home with the Texas boy, because at that time I had no place in view to go, and one place seemed about as inviting to me as another.

The afternoon sun shone very warm and we walked very fast for a while. I wore a pair of new boots and soon my feet were blistered. We could get nothing to eat and spent the night on a soft bed of leaves until morning's soft sun rays touched our weary brows and reminded us that another day's travel awaited us. About twelve o'clock that day a good old Southern lady gave us a good dinner of boiled cabbage, bacon and corn bread.

That evening the Texas boy and the two Louisianans left us, as on account of my blistered feet, I had backed out of going to Texas with the boy, and concluded to go home with one of the Arkansas boys named Sanders. The next morning the other Arkansas boy left for his home, leaving Sanders and myself alone.

We were now getting to where Sanders was somewhat acquainted and stopped for dinner with one of his acquaintances. While there this man told us of the wolves catching all of his pigs and calves and that it was getting really dangerous for a person to be out at night afoot. This man also told us that the cotton factory on the Little Missouri River was being rebuilt and enlarged, and that they were wanting to hire men to help do the work.

After a hearty dinner of bread and milk (the only things they had in the way of provisions) I bade Sanders and our host goodbye and set out on my way to the factory to try to get a job of work. There were very few people living on the road at that time. In fact there were very few people living anywhere in that part of the country. My feet were still sore from the blisters made on our first days walk from Little Rock, and after leaving Sanders and starting off alone in this strange land of tangled wildwood and mountains I was seized with a feeling of loneliness that I had never felt before, not even on some lonely picket post at night, so I concluded I would try and get lodging at the first house I came to.

I passed one or two houses that evening but they had been abandoned and wore a look of loneliness that did anything but cheer my weary soul. It was at last getting dark and a slow drizzly rain had set in when I met a man who told me that he lived at the next house a half mile further on, but that none of his family would be at home that night as they would be with a

neighbor off the road whom they were expecting to die that night. I asked him the privilege of going to the house and sleeping that night, but I being a stranger he refused me this favor, as I expected he would do, but he gave me the cheering information that there was a house four or five miles further on where I might be able to stay.

In this strange rough country there were but few people living and most of them were Union people who had been, some in the Union army and some staying at Little Rock for protection from the Rebel Guerrillas, where they found it easier to draw provisions from Uncle Sam's Commissary than to hustle for a living at home.

My spirits had ceased to droop, but had taken a sudden fall to somewhere about the lowest degree. I paid no more attention to my sore feet but started at a lively gait to measure off that four or five miles, but when I reached this place and hallooed, a woman's voice answered me from across the road at what seemed to be a cow lot, so I went over and asked her if I could get to stay all night, telling her that I was a stranger, tired footsore and weary. She said that it was a bad chance, as she was not prepared to take in strangers; that her husband was not at home and that she was alone with only her little children. I told her that that would make no difference, as I considered myself a gentleman, and she need not fear anything from my presence, and from her talk I began to feel sure that I was going to get to stay all night. She asked me where I came from and I told her from east of the Mississippi River, and she asked me if I had been in the army and I told her that I had. She then asked me what army and I told her Johnson's, to which she replied, "He was a Rebel was he not?", and I told her that he was. Then with an oath, she told me that if I had been in the Rebel army she had no use for me, that on her way to Little Rock to see her husband who was in the Union army, the Rebel Guerrillas had taken the best horse she had and left an old broken down one in its stead and refused to pay her any difference, and had taken a good beef steer from her and wouldn't pay her a cent for it, and she finished by wishing all Rebels speedy conveyance to a hot country where I hope that I am never consigned to.

I reminded her that I had never harmed or wronged her and that she should not blame me for what others had done; to which she replied in no modern Sunday School language, that if I had not wronged her I belonged to the set that did, and that I could not sleep under her roof. I then asked her what was in the old house in the cow lot and she said nothing but some straw and I asked her if I could go in there and sleep. She said no, that I could not stay on her place at all. I persisted in talking kindly to her until I found that I could not get to stay all night under any circumstances, and that it was four miles to the next house, and no fork in the road that would put me out.

During my four years service in the army I had heard some very rough language used, and that woman had a sample of it all, and I will say that I got some new lessons from her that night. After this dialogue had continued for some time I began to think that her husband might be lying around, and hearing our racket, might slip up and put a bullet in me, so I very unceremoniously left her to finish the debate. I had gone less than a hundred yards when I came to some water. In the inky darkness I could not tell l how much, how wide or how deep it was, so I pulled off my

boots and a part of my clothes and waded in, but found it shallow and waded across all right, sat down on some rocks and dressed myself and started on again. I had not gone twenty yards until I came to more water, so I put into it with all my clothes on and found that I was in a rather deep stream and had gotten above the ford and into deep water, then I began to step on some slick rocks on the bottom and fell down and got my old greasy satchel full of water. After some delay and floundering around I found the way to get out and left the Caddo River behind me.

Some time in the night I came to the house I had been told of, and finished the night.

How long it took the sulphur fumes to clear away from the house across the river, I never knew.

The next night I reached the cotton factory but found no job and two days later I was stopping on Rolling Fork River with a man I had once met in the army. I had my few coarse clothes and fifty cents in cash, which I soon invested in that popular old army game called "poker."

Imagine my condition if you can; many hundreds of miles from acquaintances of boyhood days and friends of long ago, among strangers, stranded, without a job, literally hopeless.

Chapter II

Pioneer Country

There were but few people in the western part of Sevier County and at the time about which I am writing and there were but four families living on the road just north of where Grannis now is, south to Ultima Thule, and only ten families living on Rolling Fork River from head to mouth.

Game of all kinds was plentiful and a man could take his gun and go out to a deer lick any morning and kill a deer. Bear was not so plentiful, but bear meat in the fall of the year, was common, after they had become fat on the mast, which at that time was never known to be a complete failure, as it has been since so much timberland has been cleared. I have been ploughing in the field when the deer would be feeding in the same field, and I have sat in my house and seen deer feeding in a twenty acre field that surrounded my home.

In those days the range was fine for all kinds of stock. Fattening a hog on corn in those days was an unheard of thing. Cattle went the year around without feed and would get very fat in the summer and fall. Beef cattle were bought up by cattlemen and driven to Little Rock and Shreveport and shipped by boat to New Orleans, Memphis and other river markets. A good five year old beef steer was considered currency at twenty dollars. Cows with calves usually sold at eight and ten dollars. Beeves were killed the year round; when a beef was killed in the summer, when the weather was hot, the few people in the neighborhood divided it, then the next time some other one of the neighbors would kill, and so on all around. No one ever entertained the thought of weighing out beef to a neighbor, and if a stranger happened to be sojourning in the country he shared the same as the others but if he should forget himself and show the cloven foot he had better move on.

At that time there was more charity, good feelings and accommodations among the people than I have ever seen since. It was nothing uncommon for people to go visiting twenty miles away, usually oxen and the old "tar hub" wagon for conveyance. If a family wanted to leave home for a week or more's visit they could always find someone to go and keep house for them until their return, or if they had nothing that would need attention during their absence they went away not fearing that anything would be molested during their absence, and if any person was from home he was always welcome to stay with any family he came upon when night overtook him, and if he found a house and no one at home, he went in and cooked a meal of anything he found and made himself at home with no fear of giving offense.

Dances and quiltings were the common entertainment during the winter season and I have known young women to ride horseback twenty miles to a quilting and dance.

In the summer after the crops were laid by the barbecue season came in for its share of patronage and consideration. I have known the dance attending the Rolling Fork barbecue to last a good part of the next day. People knew or cared little for style in those days, and but little distinction

was made between people if they were honest and respectable. A girl that had a new print dress to wear to any kind of entertainment was supposed to be well enough fixed, but with a new calico dress and a pair of store shoes she was the center of attraction.

It may not be too much of a breach of etiquette to mention here some of the old time ex-slaves that figured prominently in some of the past times I have heretofore mentioned. First I will mention Bill White, formerly owned by William White, one of the first settlers of Rolling Fork. Bill was known far and near for his expert culinary abilities at a barbecue and bore about the same relationship to a barbecue that Napolean Bonaparte bore to a battle. His two trusted lieutenants as helpers were: Lit. McKean and Jake Nelson, both ex-slaves. Lit. was an ex-slave of the McKean family, while Jake had been the trusted slave of the Nelson family, which had first settled the old Dr. Hammond place on Rolling Fork. Lit. and Jake were both fiddlers and no barbecue with the attendant dance, was complete without Jake and Lit. to furnish the music. I once heard a person say that he would not dance to music made by a negro. Had this person lived in southwest Arkansas at that time they would have been left out when it came to dancing, for the most aristocratic people of southwest Arkansas have tripped the light fantastic toe to the lively strains of music furnished by a negro fiddler.

Another faithful slave that deserves mention was Sam Dillahunty. Sam went through the Civil War with his master, as cook in the Confederate army, but in action Sam always stayed with his master's company to take care of anyone that might get wounded, and in performing these voluntary acts he was twice wounded himself.

The Confederate Pension Board of Sevier County once put Sam's name on the pension roll in consequence of his having been wounded in the Confederate army. The pension law did not sustain this act and the State Board of Pensions turned it down. The county board then applied to the state legislature and by recommendation of Hal. L. Norwood who was at that time Attorney General of the state, a special act was passed putting Sam on the Confederate Pension Roll, an act cheered by all ex-Confederates who knew of the circumstances surrounding this event.

All these faithful ex-slaves have passed away with the full knowledge that the had the confidence and friendship of all the white people who knew them.

Prior to the Civil War there arrived in this region a man by the name of Ben Norwood. He came from Tennessee with a large wagon train and company of forty or fifty relatives and friends, together with about fifty negro slaves.

Mr. Norwood was enroute to Texas, having been informed that there was ample fertile soil there suitable for cotton production. The wagon train chanced to camp at a large free-flowing spring of fine soft water just north of Horatio, Arkansas. Uncle Ben, as he was later to be called, was deeply impressed by the quantity and quality of this fine spring of water. After spending the night in the environs of the spring the wagon train pulled stakes and journeyed on to Texas according to plan, but remaining in "Uncle Ben's" memory was the thought of the overnight

camp at the pleasant spring. Arriving in Texas, but finding conditions unpleasing to him, he retraced his steps to Arkansas and the pleasant spring north of Horatio where he settled and established Norwoodville. From this fine family emerged Hal. L. Norwood, first Attorney General of the State of Arkansas,* and at this writing, Dr. Norwood of the DeQueen General Hospital at DeQueen, Arkansas.

At the time of which I am writing there were but two stores in our side of the county, one at Norwoodville, the origin of which I have just explained, and the other at Ultima Thule, and I still remember some of the prices, which I will give you: Calico 25 cents per yd.; low quarter brogan shoes $4.00 per pr.; No. 8 Avery cast plow $10.00. I once paid $2.00 each for four 8 inch shovel plow blades and $10.00 for a sack of salt; $2.50 for an ordinary poll axe; $1.25 for an ordinary old fashioned eye hoe. The young woman or girl who could afford to pay fifty cents for a yard of ribbon to wear around her neck and hair was looked on as putting on the style, and the man who nailed the boards on the roof of his house was lucky if he paid no more than 12 1/2 cents per pound for the old fashioned cut nails.

Those were the palmy days of southwestern Arkansas. We sold our cotton at from 5 to 5 1/2 cents per pound in the seed. For a while there were but two cotton gins in the whole southwest area of the state. One owned by the McKeans and the other by Ben Norwood Sr., of Norwoodville. But later when the country became more advanced the McKeans put up another one at Ultima Thule, the first one being on their farm on the Rolling Fork River.

In the spring of the year our merchants, the McKeans and the Norwoods, and those at Paraclifta, Mineral Springs, Center Point and other inland towns would take what cotton they had already to ship and go to Hood's Landing, and when the river would get high enough (which it sometimes failed to do) for a steam boat to come up, they would take their cotton and go to New Orleans to buy goods for the coming year's sales. Sometimes on account of low water these goods would have to be hauled overland to Shreveport. This afforded a rich harvest for the professional bull-puncher, who made his living hauling for the public. His teams usually consisted of three or four yoke of cattle. His feed for his team cost him nothing, as he fed them on the range, for at that time the grass was good everywhere. The merchant who failed to get his cotton off, and his goods up in the early spring while the rivers were up, had to depend on getting his goods by "long horn" conveyance from Little Rock, the teamsters usually going in gangs of two or three drivers to as high as five or six. They would usually have a pony along to be used in herding their cattle and getting them together when getting ready to break camp. Each puncher knew where the best grazing places were, sometimes going a mile off the main road, and the length of the drive depended on the grass. From our part of the country one of these drives usually took from thirty five to forty days. He would usually take, when the roads were good, about 8 bales of cotton and bring back about four thousand pounds of freight, receiving three dollars per hundred each way. Hunting and fishing was indulged in at the different camping places. Venison and turkey furnished the punchers a good part of their provisions. The man who has never been on one of these trips has missed a chance to enjoy life which will return no more forever.

(Note by the Editor of the DeQueen Bee newspaper - "The next installment of Early Days in Sevier County will give an interesting account of the fishing and shooting matches enjoyed by the pioneers. It tells the history of a spring not far from DeQueen famed for the healing quality of its waters. It contains references to numerous incidents of much interest and gives credit for some splendid deeds of pioneer men and women. If you are interested in the early history in Sevier County you will enjoy the next installment of Early Days in Sevier County. Editor DeQueen Bee.")

(Note by Compiler and Researcher - "I have included some of the footnotes and other relative material to 'Early Days', 'Reminiscences of the Late War', and 'Wandering Willie', the literary products of "Captain" Ray, as I consider every one of them a precious legacy." David W. Ogden, Compiler & Researcher.)

Chapter III

Entertainment and Behavior

In speaking of the amusements of the early days in Sevier county, I neglected to mention horse racing and shooting matches. At any gathering of men the horse race was always the first to come up. A dollar was generally the amount bet on a quarter mile race, but the amount would sometimes reach as high as ten dollars, or even more.

There is something fascinating about a horse race that has a tendency to pull a man into it. I never witnessed a horse race that I did not have a preference and I hardly think anyone else ever did.

The shooting matches were most always for a beef. The distance was usually about forty yards offhand or sixty with a rest, lying down and shooting off a log or chunk, the old flintlock rifle always being the most popular gun in use. What has ever become of the old flintlock? Has it passed away like its former owner? There was always five quarters to a beef. The hide and tallow was considered a quarter, and the sixth best shot got the lead that had been used by the marksmen. Sometimes a match would be shot for money, each one putting in an equal amount and the best shot getting the total purse.

We had a post office in Ultima Thule at that time and one on the Lower Bear Creek at the home of R.D. Wright called Netta Boc (an Indian name meaning Bear Creek). Our mail usually came in once a week from Paraclifta provided there was no high water and it suited the pleasure of the carrier. Part of the time it was carried by an Indian on a pony and like most of the Government help, he did just about as he pleased about it.

After many years a petition was circulated at Ultima Thule to have the route made a semi-weekly delivery. One old citizen refused to sign stating as his reason for not signing it that once a week was often enough for people to get their mail and that it would not be right to put the Government to such a useless expense.

Our part of the country was short on doctors immediately after the war. Dr. Norwood of Norwoodville was drowned in Old River and our next nearest doctor was doctor Bizzell of Paraclifta. He was kept so busy waiting on patients that it was almost useless for anyone in our part of the country to send for him. In bad cases of pneumonia, fever or broken bones Mrs. Lucy McKean (or Grandma McKean as she was called) was most always called in, and as she had considerable experience in nursing slaves, of which the family had owned a goodly number, she was very successful and no one was more ready or willing to care for the distressed than was Grandma McKean.

The worst source of annoyance in these early days was the professional horse thief. Just after the war horse stealing became so common in this area that the citizens commenced to take the matter

in their own hands with the implacable Judge Lynch at their head, and dealt out quick justice to several, which had quite a salutary effect for a while at least, no less than six of them having seen daylight for the last time near where DeQueen, Arkansas now stands.

I will give one instance of quick justice which occurred near where DeQueen is now located.

A man with his family had moved into the neighborhood, and he seemed to be the head of a very fine, intelligent family, and everyone accorded him and his family a warm welcome, and he could soon have become one of the leading men of this section had not fate interfered and warped his future.

He had followed farming and merchandising before coming to this area and had enjoyed the confidence of all his neighbors and came to Sevier county bringing with him good recommendations from all his old neighbors. With him came a son in law and two sons.

After they had been here a while horse stealing took a decided spurt, and several of the best horses of the area were missed. For a time all efforts to follow the trail of these stolen horses failed. Some horses had been stolen from near the present site of DeQueen. After several days search a camp was found in Red River bottom where these horses had been kept for several days, waiting for Red River to go down so they could cross over. After crossing Red River it was an easier matter to follow them, and they were found where they had been sold in Texas by our new neighbors. Other horses which had been missing for a longer period of time, were also found and identified. They had been bought from this same man by unsuspecting Texans. Horses had also been stolen in Texas and brought to Sevier county and sold, as apparently this newcomer was averse to dead-heading in his operation. Some of the Texas parties who had lost horses returned with our Sevier county men and identified their own horses which had been brought here and sold. The long and the short of it being that our newcomer, his two sons and son-in-law were arrested. Just about all the Texas horses were found. Nearly all the people living between Norwoodville and Ultima Thule were notified, and met about two miles below where DeQueen now is. These suspected parties were put on trial, Judge Lynch presiding. They were allowed to introduce any and all evidence that they wished in their own behalf.

After all the evidence from both sides was given, a vote was taken on each defendant separately. The old man and his two sons received the death sentence; his son-in-law having proved an alibi, was acquitted. The boys had but little to say, but admitted their guilt. An old Confederate soldier who was present asked leave to have a private talk with the old man before he was executed. This request was granted, a guard being posted to preclude any possibility of escape. This talk lasted about twenty or thirty minutes.

After the proceedings were terminated the three men who had been declared guilty were left hanging by their necks to a low limb of a large Whiteoak tree in the Bear Creek bottom. Parties buried the three dead men the next day and the remaining members of this family moved to parts unknown.

About thirty years after this event had taken place I met this same old Confederate soldier at McAlister, Indian Territory (Now Oklahoma) and he stated that he told this old man in his private talk that he could do nothing to save him, and that he was going to hang. After the old man saw that there was no hope he made a statement to this old Confederate and told him that he had been following this business for more than forty years and that this was the first time his character had ever been questioned, and that his only regret was that he had been the cause of his two sons coming to their untimely death.

Now let me tell you something, and if you have lived in this part of Arkansas where a sizable number of people have been hung to the limbs of trees, you will not laugh, but will substantiate what I am about to tell you: The limb to which these three men were hanged never leafed out again.

I have, in my lifetime seen several limbs and trees from which men have been hanged, and I never saw one that lived afterward. The limb would die, if not the whole tree. You may ask what the cause of this is. I cannot tell. I have only given you the facts; You can do your own guessing.

In 1881 a simple-minded man named Hall was passing through the country. The Rolling Fork River was full to swimming and there was no way to cross it. Three negroes met this imbecile on the banks of the river, and after torturing him to their satisfaction they threw him in the river where he was drowned. All three of these murderers hung; one from a limb of a large tree; the second from a smaller tree, and the third hung from a Dogwood tree, and all by sentence of Judge Lynch. Within a year all three of the trees from which the negroes were hung, had died. Later another negro was hung near Chapel Hill for the murder of an old harmless colored man by the name of Charlie Hankins. This murderer was hung one night to a Dogwood tree and within a year of that time the tree was completely dead.

The reader may ask: How many more died by violence in this area? Just wait a minute until I can count them. Well I have finished the count. From Ultima Thule to Bear Creek twenty seven men died either by assault or from mob violence, enough to fill quite a large lot in a cemetery.

Chapter IV

Rolling Fork Salt Works

I will now drop back to an earlier point and start at the beginning or my starting point in Sevier county, where I had just invested my all, a fifty cent green back shin plaster, in a game of poker. I think I hear some modern society lady say: "I will read no more of this stuff for his is nothing but an old gambler." I will admit that along in the 1860's and 1870's I was right handy with the spotted pasteboards, but the custom was common in those days, so I will drop the subject and go back to work at Rolling Fork Salt Works on a hire of a peck of salt per day and my board, which consisted of fresh beef and corn bread for each of the three meals per day.

There were three furnaces at the old works; one of them having twenty five cast iron kettles, cast at, and hauled by wagon from Jefferson, Texas. Some of them can be seen scattered over the country now. The other two furnaces were supplied with twenty seven kettles each.

The modus operandi for making salt at these wells was about this way: Wood was first cut in about four foot lengths and allowed to season for a while, and I will say here that these furnaces were kept rented and running all the time; never allowed to cool off if it could be avoided; consequently there were always two sets of hands, a day shift and a night shift. A big, wide furnace was built of rock and dirt, perhaps twelve feet wide. In the center of this furnace were two rows of kettles, the top of them a little above the level of the furnace. These kettles held from 50 to 150 gallons each. The largest was placed at the front of the furnace, the smaller ones at the rear, diminishing in size from front to rear. The water was drawn from wells with buckets and sweep. Why someone never made a pump and put it in these wells is a mystery, as the water would stand several feet deep in these wells, the surface water coming in all the time, and the salt water being the heavier always stayed on the bottom, the bucket only brought up a weak solution of salt water from the surface, while pumping the pure salt water from the bottom would have taken less boiling. As before mentioned, the water was drawn from the wells and poured into the first kettle near the mouth of the furnace and was dipped back from kettle to kettle with a wooden bucket with a long handle attached to it similar to a hoe handle. In the last and smallest kettles it commenced to grain and as it thickened it very much resembled thick mush. It was then dipped up, put in troughs with one end raised higher than the other, that all water might drip out. When it became drained dry we had the genuine Arkansas production of salt, which was steadily sold at four dollars per bushel. One peck of this salt I was to get for a days work, but as I was then taking the initiatory degree of Arkansas customs and ways, and citizenship I had a first class case of chills served out to me like a brother 'till Christmas. Chill tonics were not known at the time and quinine was out of the question, so for four months I shook and drank teas of every conceivable kind. Among them I remember holly; mouse ear; sassafras, dogwood, wild cherry and ash bark. The chills gradually became lighter and weaker, and so did I. The last one, a day or two before Christmas, was barely perceptible, and if tramping (hoboing) had been half as common then as now, and I had known half as much about it then, as I do now, I would have sought my mother's home east of the Mississippi river, and she could have exacted any kind of

promise or oath from me never to leave it again. But dear old Arkansas, what a tale I would have told on you, and I would have gladly taken oath to never set foot on your soil again - No more forever.

Chapter V

Agriculture - The Hard Way

I made a deal with an old farmer to make a crop with his son. He said that he would board me and do what was right about my part of the prospective crop, and on Christmas day 1865, with an old, worn-out pole axe I mounted an old pine log to chop it up to get it out of the way for the coming crop. It seemed to me that I had never seen so many logs on a ten acre field. I would stand on a log and strike a few licks with my old axe and I would be out of breath, then I would look around at, and count the logs and figure in my mind how long it would take to get them ready to pile and burn, and wonder what sins I had committed to merit such terrible punishment.

Time is a great healer of all ills and I was soon able to cut an ordinary log half off without stopping, and I soon found that my log job was not half as bad as expected.

Our stock of tools for the two of us consisted of one worn-out, home-made, diamond wing plow, the old axe I have described, and a grubbing hoe, made by cutting an old blade from an old eye hoe and riveting it to the blade of another.

Our team consisted of a team of large oxen, used for breaking our land, and one old bay horse that, like both of us had been through the Civil War in the service of the Confederate army. With this outfit and ten or twelve bushels of corn and plenty of grass to graze on, we made about five hundred bushels of corn and fifteen thousand pounds of cotton. The cotton sold for five and a half cents a pound in the seed, and what corn was sold brought a dollar and a half per bushel. By the time this crop was made and gathered I had become reconciled to Arkansas, and within her borders I have spent most of my life.

After this first year of farming it was not such an up-hill business, for I bought two Hall and Spear cast plows for ten dollars each and two brand new eye hoes for another dollar and fifty cents each. Our crops were cultivated entirely with our turning plows. Our cotton was planted on a ridge or bed made with a turning plow and opened with a wooden opener, made for the purpose, and covered with a wooden, home-made harrow. Our cotton, owing to the lack of proper plows, required a great deal of hoeing, which for a peck of corn a day we could hire Indians to do; they boarding themselves. They usually did good, honest work, but were slow and were not being paid to hurry.

When the time came to gather the crops the Indians usually did all of our cotton picking, some of them being experts at the business. I well remember the first time one of them tried to play a trick on me. He came to my house late one evening claiming to be very hungry and looked as if he had been in the company of bad luck and hard times. My wife gave him a good square meal of meat and bread and sweet potatoes, and after his meal he wanted a job of work making rails, and as some of them were good rail makers I decided to hire him to make me some rails at one dollar per hundred. I gave him an axe, an iron wedge and a skillet; let him have a piece of meat

and a peck of meal to be paid for out of his wages. I went with him and showed him the timber that I wanted worked up, and as it was about night he said he would camp and go to work the next morning. For some days I heard nothing from my Indian, so one evening I went to see what had become of him. The axe, wedge and skillet were on a stump, but the meat, meal and the Indian were gone.

The next summer some Indians came to see me for a job of cotton hoeing. I told the spokesman that I would hire them and the trade was made, however one of them kept conspicuously in the background. I called him up and asked if he wanted to work also, and he said that he did. I then recognized him as being the one who had failed to make the rails for me. I asked him why he took my meal and meat and made no rails upon which he replied in broken English: "That way white man do." I saw that he was right about that and said no more to him about the trick.

Chapter VI

Indians and Their Entertainment

The Indian of the past, like the Negro, liked company and it was seldom that one would come over in the state and work by himself. They would go in gangs. When they were hunting, cotton hoeing or picking, and usually after camping out and working for a week or more, one or two would carry off the price of all their labors.

They had a game peculiar to themselves, similar to our old game at school called thimble. In our language their game would be called bullet. A bullet, when it could be had, was used in the game, the players sitting in a circle around a blanket spread on the ground. Each of them had a hat, a handkerchief or something of the kind to hide the bullet under. When hidden, all would guess where it was hidden, the guessor pointing a finger at where he thought the bullet was hidden. After all had guessed the one hiding the bullet would point out where it was hidden. Each one would hold in his hand a bunch of small sticks or straws. With these they kept account of their game. After each guess there would be a general exchange of sticks. I have watched this game for hours and never could understand it, and never saw a white man that did, but an Indian would stake his all on this game of chance. While it was being played not a word was spoken but each player would be giving out a peculiar droning, humming sound, heard nowhere but at a bullet game. A stranger hearing this noise for the first time at a little distance would think he was entering the realm of lost souls.

Another interesting Indian game was their old time ball game which is not played any more on account of creating too many fights, and even bloodshed and death.

In the long ago it was not uncommon for a crowd of white men to ride fifty miles to see a ball game. A well-matched, well played game of baseball is a very tame affair when compared to an Indian game of ye olden times with fifty or more players on each side. The games were always played on a prairie; the players wearing nothing but a breech-cloth and a look of determination for his side to win. Each player was well decorated with paint applied in the most hideous fashion imaginable, but always with some peculiarity about it to show which side he belonged to. Usually one county played another.

The ball was always handled with the ball sticks; butting, kicking and striking each other with their fists was admissible in the game, but to strike another with a stick lost his side one point in the game, which was ten.

When a game was over the winning side carried off most of the wealth of the losers. Their money was always bet first, then came in beads, handkerchieves, ribbons and such with the women, for they always bet the same as men. The men would bet ponies, guns and anything that they had, for it was considered a case of disloyalty not to bet on your own side. I have seen the men going home after a ball game wearing nothing but a breech-cloth, having lost all their

clothing on the game, yet jolly and full of life, regarding their misfortune as a huge joke. I never heard or knew of anyone trying to avoid paying anything he had lost on the game, but I have seen them hunting for one that had won in order to give him his honest winnings.

The Indian that I knew was the greatest optimist of any race that I know of, and this is where hope plays a strong hand. I have never seen an Indian, if he expressed himself at all, but what expected to get even and ahead at the next game.

Whether civilizing the Indian up, or down, as the case may be, up to the present standard of civilization is for his betterment, is an oft discussed but a non-decided question. In his half-civilized condition or less, as first I knew him his word was considered binding however scant his food, his wants were few and his life was content and happy. His ball games and different kinds of dances at different seasons of the year furnished him his amusements. The game and his little patch of corn furnished him most of his subsistence. If he needed more he would get a small crowd together, cross into Arkansas or Texas and work it out.

In the making of cane baskets most of the women were experts. If an Indian were tried and found guilty of a crime in one of their courts and the death penalty was affixed against him, the day was fixed for his execution and he was turned loose to go and do as he pleased until the day of his execution, when he was always on hand to receive the execution of his sentence. Whether this was a matter of honor or bravado I do not know, but I do know that it was not an article of faith on the white man's calendar.

Chapter VII

Early Day Milling, Building & Manufacture

Our early day mills for grinding corn were of very rude construction and were run by water mostly. Aunt Betsy McClendon was once the owner of one which stood near where the depot at DeQueen now stands, on Little Bear Creek, but as there was seldom water enough to run it, it was changed into what was called a horse mill; that is, it was run by horse power, provided the customer furnished the horse. This mill soon proved to be more of a nuisance than a benefit to the community and was soon out of use.

Another one built lower down on Bear Creek proved a failure and followed Aunt Betsy's ill-fated venture in the milling business. The failure of these two enterprises threw us back on the old time steel mill and we had to grind our corn by hand. These old steel mills were made, as the name implies, of steel after the fashion of a large coffee mill, with a handle on each side by which it was turned. It was bolted to a post which had been securely placed in the ground. The hopper of this mill was like a funnel and would hold something like a gallon. In selecting corn to grind in these mills we would select the softest ears, grind a bucketful of it coarse, sift out the finer meal, screw up the mill a little tighter, grind and sift again until the corn was converted into meal. This was a rather slow process but cost us nothing but hard labor and perspiration.

Most of our floors were called puncheon floors. These were flat slabs split from pine trees and hewn and joined together, and I have seen some very good floors made from these puncheons, but no comparison to the floors of today. Our next best were made from lumber sawed with the old two-man whipsaw. The log was rolled up on a low scaffold. After having it squared it was lined off with a blackening line to the desired thickness. One of the operators stood on the log and the other in the ditch underneath the scaffold, the lower end of the saw having a cross handle; the man on the top of the scaffold guiding the saw to follow his lines and pulling it down. In this way two good sawyers could turn out two hundred feet of passable one inch boards per day.

During these early days of high prices this writer paid ten dollars for an ounce of quinine and considered himself lucky to get it, at that. After removal of the enormously high tariff quinine dropped to three dollars an ounce and people almost considered it a newly acquired privilege to have chills.

I remember when it was first proposed in Congress to remove the tariff from quinine. The few newspapers we would get gave accounts of the fight that Powers & Weightman, Manufacturing Chemists of Philadelphia, were putting up against it. They claimed that it would put them out of business, and their plant would become useless. It was not long after this tariff bill was passed however until the papers gave it out that Powers & Weightman were increasing their capacity, and the old firm is still doing business at the same old stand at the present time.

Newspapers were higher then than now by fifty percent, and the subscriber had to pay the postage

on top of the subscription price, which on a small paper was twenty six cents per year in advance. Letter postage was three cents for each half ounce or fraction, prepaid with stamps after the present style.

I remember one of our enterprising postmasters with an eye to business, for a while after the war, charged five cents for a three cent stamped envelope, giving as his reason that the Post Office was unrenumerative, and that he had to have pay from some source for serving the people. Later Uncle Sam let him off by his promising to be good in the future.

Chapter VIII

Counterfeiting and the Inventive Genius

Years ago I was shown a canebrake on the Rolling Fork river below the old salt works where it was said that a gang of counterfeiters made their headquarters and made counterfeit money as well. This gang had members, so told, that reached from Tennessee through Arkansas and into Texas, some of the so-called members belonging to some well-to-do and respected families of these three states.

The Bible teaches us that the sins of the fathers will be visited on their posterity, even to the fourth generation, and we have no right to dispute it, and here is evidence that causes us to believe that this is true in more than one way. A granddaughter of one of these old families accused of this counterfeiting business, married many years ago and was living on her grandfather's place. Her grandfather was supposed to have had some gold buried on the place when he died. It was never found. In later years the granddaughter's husband found quite a lot of gold on the place. Assuming that it was the grandfather's legal gold, to which they would have a perfect right, the man used some of it in making purchases for his family.

After a few days that tall, chin-whiskered old man with the starry hat and striped breeches claimed that he had never made any such money, and that it was counterfeit, and that the man spending the money owed, and should pay him two years hard labor at one of his workhouses, maintained for the benefit of the unwary, notwithstanding he claimed and proved that he found it. A part of this money was wrapped in a newspaper announcing that James K. Polk was a candidate for President of the United States. It had been kept very dry and was spurious coin supposed to have been made and hidden away by the woman's grandfather.

Arkansas has produced some wonderful things, but one of the most unique productions was a man by the name of Jackman. He was here before the war and remained several years after. I never knew where he was from and never saw a man that did. In evading an answer to a question he was a scientist, pure and simple; Also in many other things. You could hardly name a place or an area of the country but what Jackman had been there. He was a man of sense and education, and could give information about most anything he was asked about. His going as well as his coming was somewhat of a mystery. One of his hobbies was mining. He was a good mechanic and blacksmith and could fix a clock or put a watch in order, mend jewelry or do most anything else he might be called upon to do.

He would come into the settlement and work a while, getting a small store of provisions, then away to the hills of north Sevier and prospect for mineral, believing that he would find something rich in the near future. When his store of provisions would become exhausted he would return, go to work again, then back to the hills when he again had accumulated a stake. He was very confident that he would some day strike a rich vein of mineral that would make him immensely rich. Then he was going to perfect an electric motor that he had in mind, next to his mining

business. I never cared to listen to his talk, for like most all others, I thought he was somewhat off balance and cranky, considerably flighty, and talked of things that I thought unreasonable and could never be accomplished.

I came upon him one day at his work. It was very hot and he asked me to sit down and rest and I did so. He was soon telling me what could be done with electricity and what he could accomplish if he had five hundred dollars in cash. After giving me some ideas of how his motor could be constructed, he then proceeded to tell me what it would accomplish in the future. As I was very tired I thought that I would hear him out for once.

He told me, among other things that if I lived fifty years I would see boats running and railroad cars running by electric power, and that the time was not far off when vehicles would be running the roads without horses. I told him that I did not think that would ever be done. He then went on and told me of Morse and his telegraph, how people doubted him at first; then told of his success that put him on the wires, and finally he told me that if I lived my allotted time I would hear people talking over the wires. He seemed to become vexed and indignant when I told him it could not, and never would be done, and that he was wearing out his brain studying of impossible things.

At last I asked him how much it would cost to bring out these things. He said that with five hundred dollars he could bring out his electric motor; and that would get him all the money that he would need to bring out his other things.

Some time after this I asked a man of some means why he would not put up five hundred dollars that Jackman could experiment with his electric motor. He replied that Jackman was an unusually intelligent and well educated man, and a man of much scientific knowledge, but when he got on his electric railroad car and his talking over his telegraph wires, he became excited and flighty and his mind ran into the infinite.

I was a young man at that time in 1868, and not competent to criticize Jackman, but I have lived to see all that he predicted, verified, and if he had had the backing what might have been accomplished will never be known.

Chapter IX

Notable Families of Sevier County, Arkansas

There are a few descendants of some of the old families of Sevier county still living around DeQueen, Arkansas who can trace their relationships to some of the most noted families of the United States. Among them is James Todd, a pioneer settler of Sevier county, who was a brother of the father of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln. His son, William Todd (Uncle Bill) an own cousin of Mrs. Lincoln, once lived at DeQueen and will be remembered by many of DeQueen's earliest settlers.

Another person that should not be forgotten is a granddaughter of one of America's Generals, and she now fills a pauper's grave in Sevier county. I met her in the last years of the 1870's at the County Home at Lockesburg, Arkansas and she recited to me the history of her adventurous life. She told me she was the granddaughter of General Nathaniel Green of Revolutionary fame, and that she had a brother somewhere in the United States; she did not know where, but that his name was George - named for George Washington. She told me where she was born, where she had lived and how she came to be in Arkansas, and that she was about ninety years old and had never been married. She had lost all traces of her family connections. I have since regretted that I did not make a note of the story of her life, but I did not, and her history is lost. At the time I met her, perhaps in 1879 she was in possession of all her mental faculties and was a woman of immense reading knowledge; and was one of the brightest historians I have ever met.

She defended the cause of the Southern States in real oratorical language - in fact I considered her virtually a living encyclopedia of general knowledge. How she came to be in the County Home I do not remember. Mr. J.A. Wofford who was Superintendent of the County Home at that time informs me that he remembers her as a very old lady, and that she died in 1880 or 1881, and that is all that he can remember about her.

I have often thought of her, as I have of the man without a country, and thought that his last request would fitly apply to her, and ask will someone not erect a stone to her memory, and engrave upon it: "She loved her country more but received less from its hands than any other woman."

I have wondered if someone, some society or church; the DAR or UDC would not some day take the matter up and rescue her grave from the potter's field and oblivion.

I chanced to be at Guilford courthouse on Saturday July 3, 1915. It was at that place that General Green, the grandfather of this woman, commanded the American forces and fought Lord Cornwallis at the battle of his name in the war for American Independence.

There was a large gathering of people there from all parts of the state. Several noted speakers from other states were there, and many able and patriotic speeches were made, and a fine

monument to the memory of General Green was unveiled, and I thought of the difference that was shown between him and his granddaughter, who was then sleeping in a pauper's grave in a distant state, without a friend or relative to drop a tear or a flower on her lonely and forsaken grave.

> For now she sleeps in a lonely grave,
> Where the wildflower nods its head,
> Where the wild birds come
> And the wild bees hum,
> Above her lonely bed.

After the Civil War and the slaves were freed there lived a Negro in this area named Peter Norwood, and he was an aspirant to greatness. We dubbed him "Peter the Great." Peter had, under the edicts of the war, made himself a gubernatorial possibility under reconstruction rules.

As a slave he had been the property of Ben Norwood Sr., the founder of Norwoodville, but Norwood never spoke of Peter as being one of those good old reliable antebellum Negroes noted for faithfulness to "Ole Marster" and their kindness to old missus and the chilluns.

Peter was not built that way and refused to be an humble ex-slave and to follow a plow and mule as in the olden days. When he was receiving so much encouragement from men who said they had fought and risked their lives that he might be a free man and equal to the white race, to become a man among men, and all they asked in return from Peter, was his vote whenever they might demand it.

Peter, in turn, became very insulting to his old time white neighbors, and was holding secret meetings at night among the other Negroes, and it could easily be seen that these meetings boded no good for the whites.

About this time two young men - strangers - dropped into the area from somewhere. They were soon very intimate with Peter, attending the secret meetings with him, an honor accorded no other white man. They dined with Peter, wined him with white mule likker, and they three became the most prominent men in the Rolling Fork River community. And why not? For Peter had been appointed Justice of the Peace by the great Carpet-Bagger Governor of Arkansas, and his plans for the future governorship of Monroe township at least were laid before, and approved by Peter's two chums and allies.

Among Peter's declarations of future rules of government to his chums were, that no white man need sue or enter into suit with a Negro in his court, and a white man refusing to marry a negro, when proposed, would receive the condemnation of Peter's iron-handed law. Peter delivered other similar threats against the local populace but I only mention these to show how the people were ruled in the days of the carpet-bag government.

I will leave Peter for a short while, with his two allies, to hold the reins of government on Rolling Fork, while the reader accompanies me to Paraclifta, the county seat of Sevier county at that time.

A man named Ballard, also a carpet-bagger, had been appointed head of the Negro Bureau of Sevier county, and stationed at Paraclifta, and he had a company of Irish soldiers given to him for a bodyguard and for use in enforcing the law, as he was in full control of everything pertaining to the negro, and like the laws of the Medes and Persians, from his edicts there were no appeals.

His Irish soldiers however, like most Irishmen, were clever and generous-hearted men, and wholly unsuited for Ballard's use, so Ballard had them removed and a company of Negro soldiers were sent to Paraclifta in their stead.

Any contract whatever made with a Negro, had to be endorsed by Ballard. If a Negro had any complaint to make against his white employer, he went to Ballard, and as the Negro's statement was always taken in preference to the white man's, the white man always came out worsted, and Ballard never failed to charge the white man for settling a dispute or acknowledging a contract.

So Ballard and the Negroes had everything going their way, until an old enterprising farmer, said to be one of the best in the county, and noted for his long-headedness, knowing that without relief from this unjust rule, the farmers of the county were doomed, made a warm friend of Mr. Ballard and bargained with him to give Ballard every fiftieth bale of cotton grown by Negro labor, for Ballard's agreement to withhold his interference in their Negro labor arrangements.

Other farmers were soon put "next" and the Negro soon learned that it was useless to carry his woes to Ballard, and Ballard was soon receiving a snug income from Negro labor.

But there was a transient, loafing class of Negroes that could not be controlled, and would not work, and like the proverbial stray dog, had neither home nor master, and something had to be done to make them law-abiding and self-supporting. When the Confederate Government went under, General Shelley of Missouri, with his men, went to Mexico. In a year or two they had become tired of their long stay away from home and were passing through the country on their way to their homes in Arkansas and Missouri.

Along about this time unknown white people commenced to handle the last named class of Negroes as they thought justified, telling them that they were Shelley's men. Ballard became indignant at this; what he called outrages, and offered rewards and threatened dire vengeance on the Shelley men, and promised to make an example of the first one he could lay hands on. He did not have long to wait.

One morning a young man of perhaps twenty years of age rode into the town and inquired for Mr. Ballard. He was pointed out to the boy as he walked across the street.

The boy rode up to Mr. Ballard and told him he was one of Shelley's men and proceeded to read Mr. Ballard the riot act at the point of a Colt 44 and Mr. Ballard never advertised any more for Shelley's men.

As of this writing, this boy is now old and gray, but a respected citizen of one of your Arkansas towns, and if called on in the same way would again be ready to respond and play the part of a Shelley man.

We will now leave Mr. Ballard and his Negro guard and go back to Rolling Fork River community and see about Peter the Great and his two white friends.

During our absence the two young white men have been holding secret conferences with an old Confederate friend of theirs, who had known them all during the war; had also known of Negro soldiers killing the father of one of them.

The two white men were now ready to leave the country, and as they passed the home of Peter, not far from Ultima Thule, they took Peter down the road a little way. Some shots were heard and Peter the Great had passed to his reward.

I have given a lengthy description of these things that the unsophisticated may know what the days of Reconstruction meant to those who lived in southwest Arkansas.

As I have before stated everything in this county at that time was in what might be called a crude state, and our schools as well as our churches, were no exception to the rule.

An old log cabin with a board roof, with split pine puncheon seats had been built before the war at what is now known as Chapel Hill grave yard, and was used as a school house and church whenever a teacher could be procured or a preacher dropped around.

Another house with the same conditions existed at Bear Creek, near our post office Netta Boc, of which I have told you. Don't raise your eyebrows and look up in horror and amazement when I tell you I have seen children ten years old that had never slept in a bed and had never heard a sermon preached or even been inside a church or schoolhouse. Yet when it came to riding a wild range pony or horse, driving cattle, bulldogging stock on the range or throwing a lariat, riding yearlings, these boys had learned their lessons well, and the smart alec from back east had better not try to teach them any of Hoyle's games or the art of swapping horses if he didn't expect to experience a financial crash on a small scale.

I might say that I am only speaking of what was then Monroe township, and not all of southwest Arkansas. Monroe township extended from Polk county on the north to Little River on the south and from the Indian Territory on the west to somewhere east of where DeQueen now stands. At that time all of Little River county, Center Point and Mineral Springs were in Sevier county.

I must get back to the schools or the boys I have been telling about that wore leather breeches and slept on bear skins, will think that their education is being sadly neglected.

A short time after the war an old gentleman came into the county and made up a small subscription school, as he was too old to do any hard labor. He was a very quiet, moral old man, and tried to teach morality and Christianity, as well as literature. After a time his precepts and moral persistency had a very salutary effect. Among his ventures was to get a Sunday School started. It was not of the present day style or I wouldn't mention it; but it suited the country and the times, and that was sufficient.

The meetings were held each Sunday alternately at the two houses mentioned. After select Bible readings, anyone was at liberty to ask Scriptural questions he chose, while the smaller members of the gathering were given verbal instructions from those supposed to be competent. Fortunately for this school, a good singer had dropped into the county from somewhere and after the Bible lessons singing followed until the noon hour, when dinner was served on the ground.

After the dinner recess, some two would choose up for a spelling. Our old teacher and R.D. Wright, another ex-teacher would superintend the matches and the old blue-back speller was never more in evidence. These Sunday Schools became very popular and there were but few men of families but what were always in attendance. I don't think that I ever knew of a Sunday School that wielded the influence for the general good that this school did. I have known people to have come ten miles to
attend these schools.

Preachers were soon finding their way into the county and with them came new ideas, and our schools were voted a back number and gave way to a new order of things, but whether for the better, I am in doubt. I know, I myself have been voted a back number, and like our old primitive Sunday Schools, will soon pass away.

For the sake of recollections of the past and old time friendship, such as existed nowhere else, and I fear never will again, if anyone may chance to read these sketches that attended these schools, it would afford me great pleasure to hear from them, or to meet them again. I know of but three or four of the old class now living, and but one of them is living in Arkansas at this time and this person was a little girl at that time and her father was general superintendent of this school, but she is now the grandmother of a grown young man, and some of her sons are successful business men.

I think that the person must be of a cold nature and slow pulsating blood that can peruse this old book of memories and not wish for one short peep behind the curtains of time.

With this I will close these memories of the past. Other things I could have told that I still remember, but as they belong more to the past than to the present, I will desist.

If I have written anything in these sketches that has wounded anyone's feelings, I humbly ask their pardon, and if I have amused, instructed or entertained anyone I am fully repaid for the writing; so with a wave of the hand and a smile and good wishes for all, I bow and make my exit.

--- W.S. Ray

Wandering Willie

(Note by compiler) The following account of the occurrences participated in by "Captain" Ray are mainly self-explanatory and include the organization of the Confederate Veterans Camp and DeQueen, Arkansas in 1898, and later at Idabel, Okla., his election as Delegate to the National Confederate Veterans Reunions.

As a reporter for the McCurtain Gazette at Idabel, Oklahoma, and writing under the name of Wandering Willie, Mr. Ray reported the principal events of Confederate interest as well as other matters of general interest at and near the scene of his birth and young boyhood in North Carolina before the family moved to Tennessee.

These accounts were published in the DeQueen Bee at DeQueen, Arkansas and in the McCurtain Gazette at Idabel, Oklahoma, and cover the area of time roughly from 1898 to 1916.

Organizing the Confederate Camp

The John H. Morgan Camp And How

Came to be Organized

First Reunion Of

Confederates

(Published in the DeQueen Bee at DeQueen, Arkansas)

In April, 1898 W.S. Ray, who then resided in DeQueen, had a notice published in the DeQueen Bee calling for a meeting of all Confederate soldiers in the county to be held in the office of Collins & Lake in DeQueen, Arkansas on the first Saturday in May.

The meeting was small but enthusiastic when the object of the meeting became known, which was to consider the advisability of holding a Confederate Reunion at some suitable place in the county.

The following are the names of those who took part in the meeting: John G. McKean, E.M. Brown, W.K. Dollarhide, J.H. Hammond, W.S. Ray, M.V. Teal and E.L. Nelson.

Another meeting was called to meet at Norwoodville, where delegates were received from Horatio, Lockesburg and Norwoodville, and Norwoodville was selected as the place to hold the first Confederate Reunion, which was to be held July 21 and 22, 1898.

This was the first meeting of the Sevier County Confederate Reunion which for several years has held its annual meeting on the Cossatot river, four miles west of Lockesburg.

At this first reunion the following committees were appointed to organize Confederate Camps to be located as named below: T.W. Beck at Ben Lomond, T.W. McCown and John W. White at Lockesburg, Ben Norwood at Horatio, John G. McKean and W.S. Ray at DeQueen.

Only two of these camps were organized, one, Hankins Camp at Lockesburg with T.W. McCown as Commander; the other the John H. Morgan Camp at DeQueen, with Dr. E.M. Brown as Commander, whose death occurred a few weeks after, when W.S. Ray was elected to fill his place, which place he held for ten years following, when he moved from the state, and Captain John G. McKean was elected to fill the vacancy.The following are the names of the members of the John H. Morgan Camp, most of whom have since passed "over the river to rest in the shade of the trees.": Apling, T.C., Allison, A.K., Ayers, J.J., Brame, J.P. Bennett, J.A., Benton, J.T.,

Bowman, J.H., Clark, H.D., Cram, G.K., Conatser, D.A., Capps, Emerson, Davis, Manning, Davis, Barney, Dollarhide, W.K., Drake, B.A., DeHart, T.A., Fairburn, G.W., Hammond, J.W., Harris, Eli, Hannah, W.C., Hallman, J.P., Hardin, J.G., Hunt, J.F., Ivey, T.H., Isbell, J.B., Johnson, D.F., Johnson, E.C., Jeffcoat, G.M., Kolb, J.J., Lang, B.F., Lawrence, Z.C., Miller, J.F., Morris, S.M., Miner, John, McCown, T.W., Mitchell, B.E., Mitchell, A.J., McKean, John G., Nelson, S.H., Norwood, Ben, Patterson, J.W., Petty, S.S., Ray, W.S., Rogers, C.B., Sossamon, P.A., Stout, John, Stanford, Thaddeas, Smith, J.T., Smith, E.S., Stone, W.H., Sain, G.D., Teal, M.V., Teal, Nathan, Thomas, J.M., Vanderbilt, A.D., Wolverton, E.H., Williamson, H.C., Walker Wm., Waters, W.C., Waters, W.T., Walker, G.W.

Some others joined this camp some years after it was organized whose names are not given. Of this three score, not over a dozen are now living, and they, like their comrades which have gone before, will soon pass away and be forgotten, and here is a little four line poem written by one of these survivors:

Four years we tramped through wind and weather,
And slept outdoors when nights were cold,
We ate and drank and starved together,
Forsaken no when we are old.

(McCurtain Gazette Editor's note: Wandering Willie goes sightseeing in the great city of Washington, D.C. and incidentally bumps up against the elephant.")

Washington, D.C.

Editor McCurtain Gazette, Idabel, Oklahoma.

Dear sir:

My last letter to the Gazette was written while sitting on the side of a cot, near, and in sight of the Nation's Capitol, and I think I told you of my visit there, but I did not tell you what it cost me to write that letter, but I may later on.

Before leaving Oklahoma I had received many circulars from Washington, setting forth the extensive preparations that were being made to entertain old Confederate soldiers. I was made to believe that the old Rebels were to be entertained as never before, "and so they were."

Among other things they were to receive three days entertainment from the Washington ladies, which would include a free trip to Mt. Vernon, Alexandria, Arlington, Manassas and Gettysburg and perhaps some other points and places of interest.

In attempting to board an electric car at Twelfth street and Pennsylvania avenue for Mt. Vernon, I was told that I must purchase a ticket. Said ticket set me back just one dollar. The free lunch at

the grounds which I had heard of two months before, cost only fifty cents, "But I did not bite."

Twenty five cents admitted you to the tomb, the grounds and the old home of the father of our country. The body of Washington and Mrs. Washington does not now rest in the old vault where they were first placed, but are in a vault built later, but the date I failed to ascertain. Several of General and Mrs. Washington's relatives are in the rear part of this tomb enclosed in separate chambers and sealed. General and Mrs. Washington are in the front part of the vault enclosed in marble, and the caskets enclosing their bodies are easily to be seen through a grated door, but no one is admitted.

We next inspected Washington's old family carriage but was not allowed to enter the carriage house, being kept on the outside by an iron grating waist high. This old carriage was a two horse affair and a very heavy one at that, and reminded me of the pictures of some of the old vehicles used by Pharaoh when in pursuit of the Israelites.

We next entered the old kitchen where the family meals were prepared, saw all the dishes and tableware and cooking utensils used in preparing the meals, but was not allowed to touch anything. Among the other curiosities in the old kitchen was several bunches of dried herbs such as were used by Mrs. Washington for medicinal purposes when she was mistress of Mt. Vernon.

We next entered the old mansion but could go no further than the doors of the different rooms, being restricted by iron gratings some three feet high.

The bed on which Washington died is still to be seen just as it was left more than one hundred years ago, covered only with a homemade white counterpane. We were shown Nelly Curtis' room; the room which General Lafayette occupied while visiting Mt. Vernon, also the Green Room, the Music Room with its old guitar and harpsichord, the old grandfather clock standing full six feet high, the old holsters carried through the Revolutionary war by Washington.

This old mansion is on a hill with grassy lawns and large shade trees all around it and it overlooks the broad Potomac which is more than a mile wide at this place, across which can be seen large, and well cared for farms and farm houses.

Our next visit was to the old weave room where the old time slaves spun the thread and wove the cloth to make clothing for the family, specimens of which can still be seen, as well as other pieces of the old family clothing. The old flag wheel in the weave room still has its bunch of flax and spool of thread attached just as left more than one hundred years ago. A loom in this room still has a piece of its harness. Some years since the war, the owner of this estate became to be in straightened circumstances after which it was bought and taken in charge of by the women of the South, mostly the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and presented to the United States, which has it in keeping today, and keeps a force there to keep it in repair. A colored policeman there, Captain C.T. Simms, who was a Captain in the 2nd. Colored Infantry in the Spanish-American War, looks after the care of the place and sees that nothing is molested. He

has the history of the whole place at his tongue's end and takes great delight in informing visitors to the place, of all the details of its history.

On this trip to Mt. Vernon we visited Alexandria, Virginia, made famous by the fate of war, and found many things of interest to us there.

Our next visit outside the city was to Arlington, the old home of General Robert E. Lee, which was taken away from him by the United States Government and the four hundred acres of his real estate, or a large portion of it transferred into a cemetery for the benefit of the United States in burying its dead, and more than twenty five thousand known and unknown dead now occupy this beautiful cemetery, among them the victims of the ill-fated Maine, which was blown up at Havana, Cuba by the Spaniards, which as we know, resulted in the freeing of Cuba from under the Spanish yoke.

Arlington, like Mt. Vernon, overlooks the Potomac, as it also does the city of Washington.

This letter is growing too long so I will try to bring it to a close as soon as possible.

Among the places of note that I visited was the Washington Monument, the Congressional Library and the White House, the Treasury Building, and the Bureau of Printing and Engraving where our greenbacks are made, and this reminded some of the old Confederates that the advertised free excursion to Gettysburg was very enjoyable considering that it cost each of them the sum of three dollars.

After the parade of Thursday which was said to have been the grandest parade to have ever been staged in that city, the Confederates were marched to a nearby park and served lemonade and sandwiches by the loyal southland ladies. It was here that your humble scribe presented a card to a very charming young lady who seemed to be a lady official of some kind. She left me and soon returned and pinned an invitation on my coat to a reception to be given at the Willard Hotel that evening, and she insisted that I be sure to attend, and that she would take care of me that evening.

I was writing my last letter to the Gazette and let the time pass by and I was more than a mile away when I realized that the time for the reception had arrived.

Some friend may mentally ask the question: How did you enjoy yourself? To which I will answer, fine. How was the Reunion? As a failure, it was immense. The old Union Veterans were conspicuous for their absence and unsociability. My visit to our Nation's Capitol was well worth the price as I packed in quite a lot of information and experience.

Signed - Wandering Willie.

Haw River, North Carolina,

June 22, 1917.

Editor Gazette, Idabel, Oklahoma.

Dear Sir:

I am now sojourning near Haw River and near the place on that river made famous for having been the place where the first blood was shed for American Independence in an engagement between the Carolina Regulators and Governor Tryon's Loyalists. This is one act that the Old North State proudly boasts of; that her sons shed the first blood for American Liberty, and she was the first colony to declare herself from under the yoke of Great Britain, which declaration was made at the Mecklenburg Convention in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, before the Declaration of Independence at Philadelphia where the old Liberty Bell rang out the joyful notes of liberty that went ringing down the corridors of time. Of the other Liberty bell I will have something to say later, and also of the old colonial capitol of North Carolina which is still standing in the old town of Hillsboro and serving the M.E. Church as a place of worship.

I believe I told you in my last letter of my having visited some of the famous old battlefields while in Virginia, among them were Manassas, Culpepper, C.H., Charlottsville, and others of minor note. Many of the old breastworks are still in a good state of preservation. I also visited Danville, the last Capitol of the Confederacy, where at the last Confederate cabinet meeting, lasting only a few hours, the Confederate Government breathed her last breath of life, and her flag went down in defeat and the Confederate Government had passed into history as one of the bravest nations the world has ever known.

Riedsville, North Carolina is one of the busiest towns in the Piedmont tobacco belt and holds fourth place as a tobacco manufacturing town; Winston-Salem having claimed the honor as greatest tobacco market and manufacturing more tobacco than any other place or town in the world, and left Durham to play second fiddle in the manufacturing of tobacco.

Part of the state of Virginia that used to produce large crops of tobacco is now given over to the dairying business and where once could be seen large fields of tobacco is now the home of the Holstein dairy cow. Virginia long ago gave up the banner as the first tobacco state to North Carolina and now Carolina is struggling to keep that honor from going to Kentucky, which has forged ahead in the number of pounds, but not in quality or price, North Carolina's crop bringing in more money than Kentucky's, and still keeps up her record as distilling more turpentine than any other state in the Union, however Kentucky holds the record for distilling another spirit of potent quality.

The prospect for a large tobacco crop was never better here than it is this year. The wheat crop is also good and the harvesting is now in full swing. The farmers here all raise their food and feed at home and the high price of living does not bother them; neither does the war talk for the sentiment usually expressed is, if they are called on they are willing to go to France or anywhere

the Government may see fit to send them.

North Carolina was the last southern state to secede, the last to lay down her arms, and carried her flag further north than did any other southern state. She lost a larger percent of her soldiers in battle than any other state North or south, and is now furnishing more than her quota of soldiers for the present war; (WWI) is feeding herself and manufacturing more textile fabrics than any other state in the Union. She also furnishes more than half of the naval stores of the world.

Call me a "tar heel" if you like, ask me for a chew of rosin if you will, but I can't deny being born a tar heel.

The man, Wilkerson, killed a short time ago at Bennington, Oklahoma by his own children, was a native of this county, I am sorry to say, and his father and I grew up, as boys, together.

Yours truly,
Wandering Willie

Haw River, North Carolina,
June 29, 1917.

Editor McCurtain Gazette, Idabel, Oklahoma.

Dear Sir:

I am still holding out in the Haw River district, and why shouldn't I, as I am among good people, a healthful country, good, pure water, with three good meals per day. Think of home cured ham and red gravy every day for two months, with yellow legged chickens feeding in the near by wheat fields, but I will not try to complete the picture for fear some enthusiastic Divine at Idabel deserts his charge and comes east and tries to rescue Wandering Willie.

In taking leave of Virginia I forgot to mention one of Virginia's mammoth enterprises located at Danville near the line between Virginia and North Carolina, but as it is not in my native state and has usurped the distinction of being the largest cotton mill in the world, having wrested this claim from Durham, North Carolina, I will give only a brief sketch of it: The entire mill, storage rooms, dye houses and all other appurtenant buildings cover fourteen acres of floor space, and pays the enormous amount of one hundred and fifty seven thousand dollars every two weeks for labor.

Farmers in this county are inclined to put the blame on the cotton mills and other factories for the

high price of labor, for before this state became a manufacturing community the farmers could procure all the labor they needed for twenty five cents per day, but now the same class of hands get one dollar and a half per day, and the factories have created a home market for the farmer's produce.

Sometime in the 1870's an amendment to the state constitution was voted on in this state to allow all manufacturing concerns of one thousand dollars capital or over, to be exempt from taxation for a period of twenty years. This amendment was fought to a finish, as it was claimed by the opposition to be a measure to benefit the rich manufacturer and to oppress the poor taxpayer, but the amendment carried and the state was soon filled with factories of all kinds, the cotton mills taking the idea. One of the cotton mills of exemption has long since past and the factories are and have been for years, more than paying the running expenses of the state, and North Carolina today manufactures more textile fabrics than any other state in the Union.

With these facts in view, cannot Oklahoma get an idea. One of the cotton mills of this county recently received an order from Sears Roebuck & Company for a million yards of their goods, mostly to be shipped to Dallas, Texas.
North Carolina once considered the harvest state in the Union, is now one of the richest and has long since ceased to peddle hoop poles and pumpkins for her living. The wheat crop here has turned out to be better than was expected at one time, the warm weather has put the corn to growing and the tobacco crop never looked better, but the acreage is not so large as usual and in the future the man who smokes the golden leaf from the Piedmont district may expect to pay for it.

Yours truly,
Wandering Willie.

Hillsboro, North Carolina,
July 7, 1917.

Editor Gazette, Idabel, Oklahoma,

Dear Sir:

I see in a recent copy of the Gazette you make me say Harn river instead of Haw River. I left Haw river a few days ago, but failed to visit the old battlefield where the battle was fought between Governor Tryon's men and the American Regulators. The Regulators were about two thousand strong but were poorly armed, while Tryon's men were well armed and had six pieces of field artillery. Tryon's loss was nine killed and 61 wounded. Regulator's loss, twenty killed and two hundred wounded. This battle was fought May 16, 1771 and was the first battle fought

for American Independence. Though the Loyalists under Tryon were victorious it only stimulated the colonists to a more determined spirit to be free.

This battlefield is enclosed by a wire fence and a marble monument marks the spot where the fallen Americans were buried, After this battle twelve of the Americans were arrested and carried to Hillsboro and tried and sentenced to be hung but Tryon being called away, only six of the twelve were executed. Their graves are yet to be seen in the old Episcopal church yard at Hillsboro. But the old Colonial capitol of North Carolina, as I told you in a former letter, is still standing, but was moved from its original site to make room for the present county court house of Orange county and the old capitol is doing duty as a place of worship for the M.E. Church.

Before the Revolutionary War King George had given for the use of this building, a clock and a bell. The bell was cast in England at the same time and by the same man and from the same model, and bore the same inscription that the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia bears.

The clock and bell were both doing service on the old Capitol when the battle Guilford Court House was fought. Lord Cornwallis commanding the British forces and General Nathaniel Green the American forces. After this battle Lord Cornwallis moved his forces to Hillsboro, the Americans hearing of Cornwallis's approach removed the clock and bell from the capitol and threw them into the Eno river, which stream runs by this town. After the war was over a search was made for the clock and the bell, and the clock was found minus the weights, but the bell was never found. The old clock was put into running order and placed on the new court house and today is ticking off the hours as lively as it did in the days of the two Georges, George II and George III.

Only a few days ago I was shown two grape shot that were recently dug up in front of Cornwallis' old Headquarters while laborers were laying sewer pipe.

I will ask again, dear Editor, how many of your readers know, or even care, if they should know, that a granddaughter of the General Green mentioned above, is now sleeping in a pauper's grave in the potter's field at Lockesburg, Arkansas, where she died in the County Home for the poor in 1881 or 1882, and I will ask as did Phillip Nolan, "The man without a country", will not someone erect a stone to her memory and say on it that she died without home or friends, forsaken and forgotten.

Yours truly,
Wandering Willie

Hillsboro, North Carolina,
July 16, 1917.

Editor Gazette, Idabel, Oklahoma.

Dear Sir:

John Bovie Dodd, one of America's greatest thinkers, scientists and lecturers once said that God himself could not make something out of nothing.

It seems preposterous for a man of my mental caliber and ability to try to refute what such a man as John B. Dodd has said, but I will try to write a letter this morning with nothing to write from.

For some days I have been cooped up here on route 2, "The Old Cornwallis Road", on account of excessive rains. Nearby stands the old log house in which this writer was born, more than seventy years ago, and nearby stands the old log house where in 1809, my father was born, and just one fourth of a mile away stands the house my great grandfather built, when he took unto himself a wife and set up housekeeping, many years prior to the war for American Independence, and from this home Cornwallis took everything useful for the maintaining of his army while camped nearby, after his evacuation of the town of Hillsboro.

Perhaps a short description of this old colonial mansion may interest some of the older readers of the Gazette. It is of two rooms, two stories high with basement. The rooms are built of logs, one of them 28 X 32 feet, the other 28 X 24 feet. Some of the logs measure 24 inches on the face at the widest place, and all are 7 inches thick. It is a scrap of family history that when this old house was built it was necessary to get help from twenty miles away to help put these logs in place. The old original chimney to this house would take a nine foot stick of wood in its fireplace. All the lumber used in its construction was sawed by the old whipsaw method (described earlier), and all the nails used were handmade. Its second coat of weatherboarding is fast falling off, and while it has had several roofs, the present one is about decayed. With a new roof and a new coat of weatherboarding this old house would last for another generation yet to come.

The thresher men are trying to get the wheat crop threshed, but are hindered by excessive rains. Corn and tobacco crops are good in this area, though the tobacco acreage is not up to normal.

The farmers in this part of the country raise their own living and sell their surplus. All have money in the bank for the proverbial "rainy day" and they are not kept awake nights by the thoughts of the high prices of food.

Most all young men of military age express their readiness to go into the army and many are already volunteering.

Yours truly,
Wandering Willie

Hillsboro, North Carolina,
July 30, 1917.

Editor McCurtain Gazette, Idabel, Oklahoma.

Dear Sir:

Lest your typographical associates and readers as well, become deluded into the false idea that I have ceased to exist and that I will annoy them no more, I will write you today, as I have missed writing you for a week or more.

No matter where you be, or what the conditions are, the weather can always be relied upon to furnish a topic for discussion, and so I will have something to say about the excessive rains that have been falling in this part of the state for the last month, and for the last fifteen days in particular. Of the last fifteen days, twelve of them have been wet and rainy and not mere showers but great, big rains, and I am talking about the kind that wash big gullies across the corn fields and cause washouts on the railroads, and make you believe that another St. Swinston has been exhumed at Winchester.

The corn crop in this country is said to be the beset in many years. The wheat crop was fine, but owing to the excessive rains in July much of it damaged in the fields after being harvested. A great deal of the crop is yet to be threshed and the damaged crops can be used for feeding purposes. The tobacco, the money crop of the past, has been greatly damaged by too much rain, some growers complaining of what is known as leaf rot.

All the farmers in the county raise their own living at home, and most of them have substantial bank accounts, and when they receive a dollar for supplies sold it does not have to be spent building fences to keep his neighbor's scrub cow or razorback hog from eating up his growing crops, as the stock law is in full force here and will continue to be henceforward, as I have yet to hear the first man oppose it. I am not a paid advocate to preach stock law doctrine to the people of McCurtain county Oklahoma, but were it possible for all the farmers of the county to visit here for a single month and note the advantages to be had by a stock law I am sure that each one would go home advocating the stock law, such as in this state, besides he would carry back with him new ideas as to the present Oklahoma road law and how it might be improved.

But as I am expecting to return to the state of my adoption some time hence, I had better be silent on the road and fence laws lest some old mossback of ye olden ideas meet me at the gate and say: "Depart ye cursed, you know not what you say."

At the close of our late war North Carolina was claimed to be the poorest state in the South, which was equal to saying the poorest state in the Union. Now she is one of the richest, if not the richest state in the Union. Only a few years ago her tobacco crop brought more money into the

state than the cotton crop brought into Texas. She now manufactures more textile fabrics than any other state, has more cotton and other factories than any other state; her taxes are lower and her good roads are the envy of all the other southern states. All this has been brought about by Southern money and by Southern brains, and by progressive Southern ideas.

Yours truly,
Wandering Willie.

Durham, North Carolina,
August 17, 1917.

Editor
McCurtain Gazette, Idabel, Oklahoma.

Dear Sir:

This letter will leave me at a place called Durham's Old Field in the long ago, and on which could have been seen the old scrub cow and the razorback hog, each one trying his and her best to keep their poor, long carcasses from the crows by trying to pick a living from the short sage grass that grew on each side of a newly built railroad, which most of the good farmers of the area looked on with suspicion at that time, for it was believed that this new railroad would be a hindrance to the farmers and the working men of the country; especially that class of people whose capital consisted of a wagon and team and who earned their living by hauling the farmer's produce to market one hundred and fifty miles away. This produce consisted mainly of wheat and tobacco and returning the wagons would bring back loads of merchandise for the merchants of the various towns of the state. The old wagon and team industry soon died from natural causes and the old teamsters that had so long followed the roads were forced to find other modes of making a living and resigned their seats on the saddle horse of a six horse team, showing their hatred for a railroad in language not to be understood.

This railroad passes within a mile of Hillsboro and there built a depot at which place it was a common sight to see the farmers with their wives and daughters gathered to see the daily trains as they came in on the pioneer railroad. Hillsboro was elated over having a depot within a short mile of her coming metropolitan city, when word went broadcast over the land that Durham's old field was going to have a switch put in at that place, twelve miles from the coming city of the Old North State.

Just about this time old man Blackwell conceived the idea of putting up a small factory for the purpose of manufacturing smoking tobacco. This was an entirely new idea of Blackwell's and when he tried to procure land on which to build this little factory at Hillsboro it was refused him

as it was thought that a little smoking tobacco factory would be an impediment to town building at Hillsboro. So Mr. Blackwell went to Durham and procured land on which to start his newly conceived venture and since that time the world has become acquainted with Blackwell's Bull Durham smoking tobacco. Blackwell was a poor man and he met with competition in the beginning.

Who has not heard of Duke's Mixture? The man who first commenced to manufacture this tobacco was a Confederate soldier in our late war and the end of the war found three small children, all boys. He also began to manufacture smoking tobacco at Durham, and like Blackwell, called it Durham smoking tobacco. To this Blackwell objected. By this time both parties had accumulated enough wealth to embark in a lawsuit for the ownership of the name Bull Durham smoking tobacco. After several years had gone by and a great deal of litigation had occurred in the lower courts which had cost both litigants thousands of dollars, it was decided in the Supreme Court of the United States that Blackwell only, was entitled to put up tobacco branded as Bull Durham. It was then that Duke commenced to manufacture a tobacco called The Duke of Durham; and later a brand called Duke's Mixture.

These two factories beginning in a small way, was the beginning of the great tobacco industry now carried on at Durham and which at one time gave Durham the credit for being the largest tobacco market in the world, and is second now only to Winston-Salem.

Let us now take a look at my old home town Hillsboro, and compare it to Durham. Hillsboro, one of the oldest towns in the state, and at one time the Capitol of the state, now has two cotton mills and about five thousand inhabitants, while Durham has its cotton mills, hosiery mills and millions invested in tobacco factories and warehouses.

Most of the leading tobacco companies of the United States have factories here, and including her suburbs now has a population of forty thousand, which would now be at Hillsboro had old man Blackwell been allowed to sow the seed of this great industry at that place. Durham extends for four miles along the Southern Railroad and includes Hickstown, West Durham, Durham, Edgemont and East Durham, and in passing through this four miles of town you are never out of sight of a tobacco factory, hosiery or cotton mill, while the side streets are built up of warehouses, filled with tobacco waiting to go through the manufacturing process and be shipped to different parts of the world.

Tobacco is never manufactured until it is stored in a warehouse for three years to "age." So you see Durham has enough of the leaf stored in her warehouses to keep her factories running for the next three years to come, with the present crop of the country to come in soon. It seems there will be no tobacco famine soon, though the present crop is far below normal both in quality and quantity.

To give you some idea of the immensity of the tobacco industry here, I will say that the Liggett-Myers Tobacco Company is now running twenty million cigarettes daily; one weaving

room of one of the cotton mills here covers an acre of floor space, has over one thousand looms weaving thirty five miles of double width sheeting per day and consuming one hundred bales of cotton per day. All of this is bleached, bolted and packed for shipment in one day. What of that which is not made into sheets, is made into pillow cases, handkerchieves and other such things as are manufactured here in this building covering more than four acres of floor space.

It is said that a pebble has changed the course of many a river and I have made this letter lengthy to show you Blackwell's little smoking tobacco factory made a growing town of forty thousand inhabitants when it would have been added to another town had he been allowed to build his little factory at the sleepy old town of Hillsboro.

Yours truly,
Wandering Willie.

Memories of a Confederate Soldier

by

"Captain" W. S. Ray

As life's evening shadows lengthen & our hearts are beating slow,
We grow weary of life's burdens and its strife,
And our memories turn backwards to the scenes of long ago,
And we live again the morning hours of life.

There are voices full of music that are soft and sweet and clear,
And they sing to us no matter where we roam,
And they play upon our heartstrings, with each sad recurring year,
They are memories of our childhood and of home.

There's a breath of wondrous fragrance in the balmy summer breeze,
Where the sunlight in the morning used to play,
When the blossoms were unfolding on the dark Magnolia trees,
In our memories of our boyhood far away.

There is music that will haunt us 'till the day of life is o'er,
And our spirits wander out across the strand,
Though often it was mingled with the cannon's sullen roar,
'Tis the music of our own far "Dixie Land."

There's a song we all remember of some dreadful battle day,
When our colors from the mountain tops were flung
How it quickened every footstep in that charging line of gray,
'Twas the anthem that the Yankee bullet sung.

There's a sound that comes in echoes from the shades of long ago,
In its thunder have our foremen heard their knell,
With it the hills resounded ere we struck the deathly blow,
'Twas the famous, dreaded Southern Rebel yell.

There are places dark with sorrow, yet to every soldier known,
Where a conflict in its rage and fury rolled,
There some loved and loving comrade gave forth his dying groan,
Where the number of his battle days were told.

There are wailing cries of anguish that linger with us yet,
Though the smoke and dust of battle are rolled away,

And a sister or a sweetheart (would to God we could forget)
Found her loved one lying dead among the gray.

The clouds are dark around us and our eyes are full of tears,
When the vision of those days pass in review,
And we see the lads we buried who had marched with us for years,
The bravest men a nation ever knew.

The soldier's face yet blanches and there's iron in his soul,
When memory takes him backward o'er life's sea,
To the final answer: here!, to the calling of the roll,
On that morning that we bade farewell to Lee.

Let me take your hand, my comrade, for our battle days are o'er,
And our hair is like the ocean's driven spray,
Let us proudly march together 'till the grand eternal dawn,
When once more we hope to mingle with the Gray.

We'll hail the starry banner of our boys who wear the blue,
And no one doubts our loyalty today,
But we'll step to Dixie music 'till the march of life is o'er,
Then we'll sleep within our tattered coats of gray.

NOTE: This document was typset and duplicated in 1992 by Richard Cochran, Jr. (Captain Ray's great-great-grandson), from a photocopy of a carbon copy of David W. Ogden's typewritten manuscript. Grammatical and spelling errors were normally left uncorrected, to preserve the color of the writing. Mr. Ogden's manuscript is on file in the Special Collections Department of the University Library at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.