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Lincoln  
and  
Episodes of the Civil War

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William E. Doster



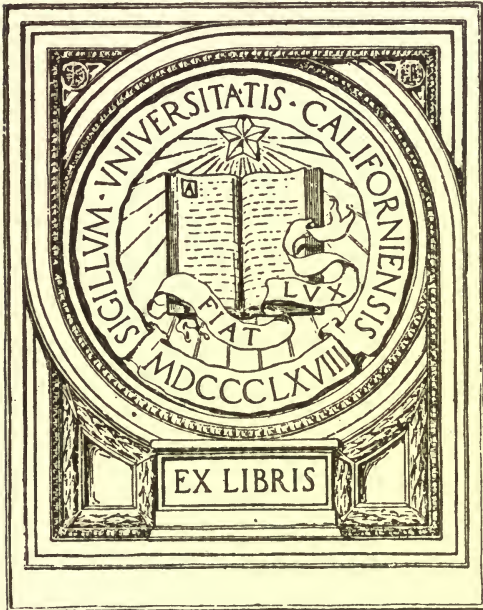
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# Lincoln

and

## Episodes of the Civil War

By

William E. Doster

Late Brevet Brigadier General U. S. V.  
Provost Marshal of Washington



G. P. Putnam's Sons  
New York and London  
The Knickerbocker Press

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## PREFACE

DURING the writer's service in the field and in garrison, he jotted down, on the reverse side of field maps and on loose sheets of paper, memoranda of his experiences, and at the end of the war (1865-66) wrote out these memoranda substantially in the form in which they now appear.

In the period between the close of the war and 1909, the writer was too much occupied in professional and other labors to give attention to the publication of these recollections and they remained untouched, in manuscript.

During 1909, however, many requests came to him from all parts of the country for copies of an address on Abraham Lincoln which the writer had delivered in that year before Lehigh University, South Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The suggestion was also repeatedly made that he write out and publish, for preservation in permanent form, not only that address, but any other recollections that he might have about the war, including particularly those associated with the Old Capitol Prison and the conspiracy trial, topics alluded to in that address.

It is in compliance with these suggestions and requests that it was determined, at the end of fifty

years from the declaration of peace, to publish the manuscripts in book form, in the modest hope that the record may prove of interest to the survivors of that struggle, to the descendants of those who have passed away, and that it may be of some value to the future historian.

W. E. D.

BETHLEHEM, PA.,  
*June, 1915.*

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# Lincoln and Episodes of the Civil War

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## CHAPTER I

### ABRAHAM LINCOLN \*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: We have met to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of our sixteenth President, Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois. We have celebrated his birthday anniversary heretofore, not at the invitation of the National Government, nor of all the States, but at the request of fourteen States, out of forty-six, which have made the day a legal holiday. Seven of the Southern States have made a legal holiday of June 3d, the birthday of Jefferson Davis, so that, in the legislatures, at least, there is no unanimity in the distribution of glory, and the majority is silent. We all know, however, that, in the North, during the forty-four years which have elapsed since the war ended, and since Lincoln died, at the age of fifty-six, his name has grown in

\* An address delivered at Lehigh University, South Bethlehem, Pa., February 12, 1909.

popular esteem—that he is conceded to have been the apostle of freedom, the conqueror over great odds in a civil war, the emancipator of slaves, and the blessed martyr, standing, according to the vote taken in 1900 in the Hall of Fame of New York University, next to Washington as second Father of his Country—two venerable names, surpassing in brightness all the twenty-six who have held the office of President. It is also known that his birth was humble, his race shiftless, his education limited and self-acquired, his reputation as a lawyer local, his career in Congress creditable, but without distinction, and that he rose, from a comparatively obscure Western attorney, to supreme eminence, at home and abroad, in about seven years, between 1858 and 1865. How did that come about? To leap from a Springfield law office to second place in the Hall of Fame is to jump faster and higher than any lawyer ever jumped before, and it is interesting to find out how he made it. To discover that, we must go back briefly, and remind ourselves of what happened before 1858, when Lincoln first came into public notice.<sup>1</sup>

Our good forefathers of the thirteen original States were, as States, with one exception, slaveholders. When they came to associate themselves, and to form a constitution, they neither forbade nor assented to slavery, but they did insert in their document the Bill of Rights, which asserted that all men were born free and equal, and that

every one was entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; charming doctrines which Jefferson had borrowed from the salons of Paris and which, previously, the salons of Paris had acquired from the Swiss philosopher Rousseau. When, however, it came to the matter of abolishing slavery, which act would cause a loss of property, they were hardly ready to give to the blacks the liberty they had taken for themselves from George III. of England; and so they went no further than the abolition of the slave trade, the source of the evil, the fair inference being that they were willing that slavery should die a natural death, and thus not affect injuriously the business interests of our illustrious founders. If that was the intention, it was not carried out, for, in time, cotton raising became very profitable, and, being profitable, it was desirable, from the planter's point of view, that every new State admitted into the Union should form an extension of slavery. In addition, the negro, as cook, nurse, and body-servant had become a very comfortable and seemingly indispensable addition to the planter's home and household. On the other hand, human bondage in a republic was such a mockery and contradiction, and its effect on the masters was so demoralizing, that, in the North, succeeding the Whig party, a powerful party arose to prevent its extension, with one wing demanding abolition—compensated or not, but in any case, abolition. This quarrel arose in 1830, was debated in the

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Senate between Webster and Calhoun, had been compromised, the compromise repealed, and the question raised on extension or no extension, when Kansas came to be admitted.

Stephen A. Douglas, the "Little Giant" of Illinois, was the leader of the Pro-Slavery party in the Senate, and much was heard of "Popular Sovereignty," "Bleeding Kansas," and "Border Ruffians." Buchanan,<sup>24</sup> a Democrat, was President. This issue, extension or no extension, was up when Lincoln was nominated for the Senate by the Republicans of Illinois against Douglas, and that was the issue upon which the two debated, stumping through Illinois. This drew the attention of the country to the debaters, and their arguments were eagerly read throughout the land. I was then a law student at Cambridge and had heard Wendell Phillips denounce the Constitution as a "Covenant with Hell," and recall the debate. Douglas planted himself squarely on the Constitution and on the Dred Scott Decision of the Supreme Court of the United States, which upheld the Fugitive Slave Law, recently delivered. Lincoln took his stand on the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence. I quote one paragraph from Lincoln's speech of August 17, 1858. Speaking of the framers of the Declaration, he said:

Wise statesmen as they were, they knew the tendency of posterity to breed tyrants and so they



established these great self-evident truths, that when in the distant future, some man, some faction, some interest, should set up the doctrine that none but rich men, or none but white men, or none but Anglo-Saxon white men, were entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, their posterity might look up again to the Declaration of Independence, and take courage to renew the battle, which their fathers began, so that truth and justice, and all the humane and Christian virtues might not be extinguished from the land; so that no man should hereafter dare to limit and circumscribe the great principles, on which the temple of liberty was being built.

Lincoln was defeated for the Senate, but he was hailed as the inspired prophet of liberty, who, although he was weak in his technical, legal position, avoided the ranting of Garrison and Phillips and, on principles far above all common and statute law, was invulnerable. In fact, slavery never was extended after that debate. Lincoln had given it a mortal wound. Thereafter, it was clear to the planters that the survival of human bondage in twenty-one Northern States was out of the question, and that, if it were to survive at all, it could survive only under a separate government, formed of the seven slave States, making slavery its foundation, and trusting in the supremacy of cotton to obtain the recognition of other powers as an independent sovereign state. They made their plans accordingly, preparing for the event while the army and navy

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were under their control, between 1856 and 1860, when the passive Buchanan retired to his home at Wheatland, Pa., surrendering to his successor nothing except what the planters considered not worth taking along. They left the building but took all the money in the treasury.

I next heard of Lincoln in 1860 (while I was a student in Germany), as the candidate of the Republicans for President and at the same time I learned of the threat of seven of the States to secede, if he was elected. On the fourth day of July of that year, the Americans, of whom about one-half were Southerners, celebrated the day with a dinner at the "Adler," Heidelberg, which proceeded with decorum, until a student from Charleston, South Carolina, offered the toast, "Here's to the United States, may they ever go on, but never Link-on." This was too much, and the war between the States broke out, then and there, and took the form of duels to be fought next day. These, however, were peaceably settled by a Philadelphia lawyer present, who suggested to all hands to put off their fighting until they got home, when, in all likelihood, they would get more of it than they wanted. All of which turned out to be true, for, of my own class at Yale, numbering 105, one-third were in the armies, and ten killed, five on each side. No doubt, a similar percentage is true among men of other colleges. The gentleman who offered that toast, I am informed, kept out of the war altogether.

In November, 1860, during the election, I was at sea on the steamer *Vanderbilt*, coming home with the late Robert H. Sayre, then Chief Engineer of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, and Robert Packer, eldest son of the President of the road, Judge Asa Packer. On landing, we heard that Lincoln had been elected,—that all business was at a standstill,—that seven Southern States were about to secede from the Union, and, what disturbed my friends most, that Lehigh Valley Railroad stock had dropped to \$30 per share, they little dreaming that the impending war would make that railroad a source of great profit, and that that profit would by 1866 (six years later), through the munificence of its President, be used to found a seat of learning called Lehigh University. None of the passengers on the ship dreamt that the vessel would be presented by Commodore Vanderbilt to the Government, as his contribution to the cause of the Union. I hear that it is still in existence as a transport. My companion, another Heidelberg student, was bearer of letters from Mr. Huntington, then the Paris correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, and I went with him to the *Tribune* Office, where we delivered them to Mr. Charles A. Dana,<sup>14</sup> then Mr. Greeley's assistant editor. Mr. Dana took a gloomy view of the future. He was sure there would be an insurrection, and doubted Lincoln's ability to put it down. He thought the new President a fine orator and an honest man, but no more; he, also, little dreaming that, during

the impending war, he would be appointed by Mr. Lincoln, Assistant Secretary of War and stand at his bedside when he died.

I first saw Lincoln on February 21, 1861 (while I was a student at Philadelphia), on his route from Springfield to Washington, to be inaugurated. I stood in the crowd at the corner of Ninth and Chestnut streets to see him drive from the Reading Station to the Continental. He came, seated in an open carriage, a person of very large, lean frame, dark complexion, jet black hair, full beard, no mustache, wearing a high silk hat and brown overcoat. His expression was mild, rather sad, but firm, as a benevolent person that had seen lots of trouble and saw lots more ahead. Soon afterward, he appeared on the balcony over the Chestnut Street entrance, and spoke very briefly.

Next morning, February 22, 1861, I got up early to hear him make a speech at a flag raising in front of Independence Hall. The substance of what he said was, that, if we cultivated the spirit which animated our forefathers, the flag would stay there, and that additional stars would be placed on the flag, until we numbered many millions of happy and prosperous people. Of what trouble he had before the election, I knew nothing; but we all know of the great troubles later borne by him. In December, 1860, a few months before, the defeated party had made good their threat,—not to stay in the Union

if he were elected,—seven out of the thirty-one States had set up a separate government called “The Confederate States of America,” had adopted a constitution, had elected Jefferson Davis, President, and were organizing under a flag called the “Stars and Bars,” with a uniform of gray, an army to defend their possession of the custom-houses, forts, arsenals, mints, and other property of the United States, which they had seized, by fraud and force, and without a shadow of title. General Scott,<sup>9</sup> commander-in-chief of this army, was a Virginian, infirm and of uncertain loyalty at that time; Colonel Lee,<sup>15</sup> General Scott’s Chief of Staff, Twiggs, Johnson, Hardie, and many other good West Point officers had joined the rebellion, and although Mr. Lincoln claimed the Union was incapable, in law, of being broken, it was, in fact, broken on a geographical line. He knew, moreover, that, to reach Washington, he would have to pass through Baltimore, a hostile city, and that, if he got there, he would land in the District of Columbia, a slave district, full of Southern sympathizers, who gave social tone to the Capital, and of officers whom he could not trust, and that he would be sandwiched between the slave States of Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware. To save the Union and yet crush a rebellion was his job, and it was a task of which Senator Lodge says: “No greater, no more difficult task, has ever been faced by any man in modern times.”

I next saw Lincoln in Washington in the fall of 1861. He had passed through more trouble since I had seen him at Philadelphia. In March, he had gone to Washington in disguise, and had made his inaugural address, in which he said: "We are all friends, and must not be enemies." Scorning these advances, however, the rebels, on April 14, 1861, had bombarded Fort Sumter; the National flag had been hauled down; the rebel flag had been hoisted in its place, and, in the North had sprung up an excitement unparalleled before or since. Party lines had been dissolved, and the outraged people arose in wrath to punish treason and to restore the Stars and Stripes to its rightful place. My own instructor, a Philadelphia lawyer, and a Democrat, became deranged and was sent to Kirkbride Asylum, where he occupied himself endeavoring to perfect a machine for manufacturing abolitionists. Simon Cameron,<sup>23</sup> the new Secretary of War, had urged Lincoln to use all of the resources at his command to stamp out the insurrection, while young; to call out five hundred thousand men, to free the negroes and arm them, and so place the Confederacy between two fires. Thaddeus Stevens,<sup>20</sup> of Lancaster, a famous lawyer, who later led Johnson's impeachment, had advised the President that, legally, he could call out a million men, and invite the slaves to join the Union Army. The arming of the slaves as a war measure was strongly advocated by Stevens. General John E. Wool wanted two hundred thousand men; so did

Sherman. The former was called a dotard, the latter, a lunatic. Lincoln refused the advice of these men, because he feared it would cause the Border States to join the Confederacy, and called out seventy thousand men. This action, as it turned out, was trying to put out a conflagration with a syringe, for General McDowell<sup>16</sup> was routed at Bull Run. Lincoln had now called out three hundred thousand men, and a second three hundred thousand, who came, singing, "We're coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more!" He then appointed McClellan<sup>17</sup> to command, and that general, during the fall and winter of 1861-62, organized the raw levies but refused to advance against the enemy at Manassas, although, it turned out later, only wooden cannon were mounted in front of the city at Munson's Hill. In March, 1862, the President persuaded McClellan to advance, and the general moved (reluctantly, for he claimed he never had troops enough) towards the James River. At this stage, twenty thousand troops, left behind to defend Washington City, were placed under command of General James S. Wadsworth,<sup>2</sup> Military Governor, who appointed me, as successor of General Andrew Porter, Provost Marshal of his military district, which extended from the Occoquan to Wicomico Bay, and who gave me command of a mixed brigade of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and a corps of detectives. A flotilla on the Potomac, under Commodore Harwood, also reported to me.

With this force, I was expected to keep order in the cities of Georgetown and Washington, to prevent blockade running, to receive and keep for exchange all prisoners of State and War, to take care of all contrabands, or fugitive negroes, to control passes to all persons or goods entering or leaving the city, to supervise all invoices, to regulate all sales of liquor and places of amusement, and to perform many other duties, two of which were to guard the person of the President and to report daily, in person, to Mr. Stanton, or his assistant, Peter Watson, at the War Department, where the President was often seen reading the telegrams as they came in from the front, or conferring with the officers about him. All of this routine continued until March, 1863, when I got leave to rejoin my regiment of cavalry in the field.

During the whole of this year, Lincoln, while thoroughly trusted as a man for his honesty and sincerity, was not satisfactory as a leader. When I first reached Washington, the radicals were dissatisfied with him because he refused to abolish slavery and was determined to make the salvation of the Union the prime object in the war; the conservatives were grumbling because he did not seem to measure up to the size of the job on his hands; and the country, generally, was uneasy because his efforts, so far, to suppress the rebellion, had been a costly and humiliating failure. In fact, up to that time, the main fruits of the war had been heaps of coffins sent home by express,



containing the bodies of lads who had died of camp fever, without having heard a shot fired, or having been near the enemy. This dissatisfaction rather increased between March, 1862, and March, 1863, for, although Grant had taken Forts Henry and Donelson, the *Monitor* had sunk the Confederate *Merrimac*, and Farragut had captured New Orleans, yet, McClellan made no headway toward capturing Richmond. Pope,<sup>18</sup> his successor, was badly beaten at the second Bull Run, because, it was claimed, McClellan's friends did not support him; McClellan, on being reinstated, fought at Antietam, a battle which was, at best, a draw; Burnside was repulsed at Fredericksburg, the army again went into winter quarters at Aquia Creek, no nearer to Richmond than two years before, and the appointment of a dictator was cautiously discussed at Washington and in the field. At Washington, the name of General Butler was hinted at in that connection. The most acrimonious critic of Lincoln's Administration at this time was Count Adam Gurowski, in his *Diary* printed at Boston, in 1862.

It was while this condition of affairs lasted, when the popular elections were going against Lincoln, and General Wadsworth was defeated for Governor of New York by Horatio Seymour, a Democrat, that I saw most of Lincoln, sometimes on horseback, riding down Pennsylvania Avenue, beside his son Tad, or walking to Dr. Gurley's Presbyterian Church on New York Avenue, or

strolling between the White House and War Department, where he would stop and talk with his bodyguard of Illinois Cavalry, or, yet again at receptions, in the company of senators, ladies, or any one who wanted to see him, for he wanted to see everybody, to keep in touch with the people, and to take what he called his "public-opinion baths." Most often I saw him, when he sent for me about some Provost business. The impression he made on me I give for what it may be worth.

As regards his appearance, Lincoln had the reputation, before he came East, of being a homely man, and, speaking generally, it may be said he deserved it. His features were not regular, his complexion was sallow, his hair was lank; a large wart disfigured his right cheek, his mouth was somewhat drawn on one side, and his big, bony hands and feet alone would have deprived him of the right to be called an Adonis. His gestures were awkward and clumsy, and he appeared to go through receptions or other fashionable functions like a martyr. This was especially noticeable when Miss Kate Chase, daughter of Secretary Chase, afterwards wife of General Sprague of Rhode Island, assisted, as she often did, in the absence of Mrs. Lincoln, and fascinated every one by her beauty and graceful manners. At the period of which I speak Lincoln usually looked haggard and tired, an expression that, however, was readily explained by the state of the Union cause, which was then at its lowest ebb. General after

general had been tried and found wanting, advance after advance had always ended in retreats within the defenses of Washington; the Confederate sympathizers were hurraing, under the shadow of the Capitol, at the discomfiture of him whom they were pleased to call the "Jester," the "Tyrant," and the "Buffoon," while the Union men at the other end of the city hung their heads and muttered about "incapables," "imbeciles," and "time for a dictator."

On horseback, also, Lincoln made a poor figure, riding without straps, his feet turned outward, and his arms flapping up and down with the bridle. In walking, his legs seemed to drag from the knees down, like those of a laborer going home after a hard day's work.

On the other hand, in the War Department, when he was standing up straight, dressed in black, showing his full six feet four inches in height, and was reading the despatches from the field as they were handed him by the operator, while making his comments to the Secretary or principal officers, his calm gigantic bulk looming up high above Stanton, Halleck, and McClellan (all short, pursy men) had an imposing effect, highly becoming in the active head of a vast army, and entitled him to be called a man of comely proportions.

So when he sat quietly on a big, gray horse in the field, beside General Hooker,<sup>19</sup> taking off his silk hat, and bowing to the squadrons as we marched past in review, at Aquia Creek, before

our advance to Chancellorsville in April, 1863, he was as proper a figure as one would care to see.

Or again, when, radiant with happiness, he appeared on the front balcony of the White House, in answer to the call of a crowd, as he did just after his return from Richmond and the surrender of Lee, and slowly rolled out his pithy sentences, tinged with Western humor, he seemed to me positively handsome. The band on that occasion had played *Dixie*, and he told us, among other things, that he "always liked that tune, and liked it better now than ever, for we had captured it, and it fairly belonged to us." I do not know whether, after Richmond fell, Lincoln felt that it was time to take off his old clothes and spruce up, but he certainly did look, during the speech I have mentioned, after Lee's surrender, better dressed and groomed than I had ever before seen him.

As regards his moods, it was said at the time that he was subject to long fits of depression, almost trance-like, but of these I saw nothing. In business he was bright, kind, careful not to wound the feelings of others, and surprisingly keen and sagacious.

As regards his oratory, I never heard him make a professional or political speech, and therefore, except from reading such, I cannot judge of his ability in that line. When I did hear him, he spoke as President in time of war, and as one having authority, and when people would listen

to no other kind of talk. Speaking with those advantages, his awkward gestures made an impression of sincerity, and this, coupled with clear ideas conveyed in terse phrases, seemed to me the highest form of eloquence.

In conversation, he was a patient, attentive listener, rather looking for the opinion of others, than hazarding his own, and trying to view a matter in all of its phases before coming to a conclusion. On ordinary affairs, his conversation was such as one would expect from a Western lawyer who had been a good deal in politics, full of stories drawn from his experiences as farmer, flatboatman on the Mississippi, storekeeper, and riding the circuits when practicing law in Illinois. The stories certainly were often racy, but they were always humorous and in point. Often, one succeeded the other, and story-telling became the rage at the Capitol. And many a story was credited to him, that he never told. My good friend, John Hay,<sup>3</sup> caught it from his Chief, and soon became, next to Lincoln, the best story-teller in Washington. It was at the same time that the President set the fashion of "feeling the public pulse," and accepting the "logic of events."

When conversation took a wider range, he disclosed a mind singularly free from the delusions of vanity which turn people's heads in high places, and a level head, incapable of fooling itself, or being fooled by others.

Measuring himself accurately, he knew perfectly

that he was no polished Southern gentleman, like Wade Hampton, for example, nor cultivated Boston scholar, like Charles Sumner, but a modest shoot of poor whites from Kentucky, who, through the reading of Shakespeare and the Bible, had become a writer of uncommonly good English, who had, by hard work, reached local but not national prominence at the bar, and who had, in politics, been lucky enough to establish in the debate with Stephen A. Douglas, on the slavery question, that reputation which led to his nomination by the Republican party, when the division of Democracy, split into three fragments, permitted his election as President. We know now that he was probably the one man in the country able to save it, but if this was so, he seemed unconscious of it.

As regards religion, I have said that Lincoln attended Dr. Gurley's Presbyterian Church. He was, however, not a church member, and I quote from Mr. Deming, as to what the President said to him on that subject:

I have never united myself to any church, because I have found difficulty in giving my assent, without mental reservation, to a long, complicated statement of Christian Doctrine, which characterizes the Articles of Belief, and Confessions of Faith. When any church shall inscribe on its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, the Saviour's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with

all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself," that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul.

Measuring the office of President, he realized that it was nothing that should turn the head of a sensible man—that it was a temporary elevation to be followed (even if it extended over eight years) by an old age of eclipse when he would either have to live on his savings from his salary or scramble for practice again among his younger competitors at Springfield. This humility formed a refreshing contrast with the haughty pretensions of the so-called "first families"—the pompous importance of contractors, and the supercilious airs put on by regulars, the naval officers, and marines, towards citizens and volunteers—a spirit that crystallized itself into contempt for everything not West Point or McClellan, and never ended until the court-martial of one of McClellan's generals, which, although set aside later, had a healthy effect at the time. Apropos of that, the lady with whom the general lodged at Washington (a red Lee—General Lee was a black Lee) told me the general never realized his sentence until a silk hat he had ordered, after his dismissal, came to the house with a card in the band on which was written, before his name, "Mister."

Measuring people around him, Lincoln seemed to know thoroughly what was valuable about them and what was not. Seward might be over-confi-

dent, but that was a good thing, when everybody else had the blues. Chase might be ambitious, but he knew how to raise funds. Stanton might be irritable and violent, but he had energy, and unquestioned loyalty. The judgment of Welles, if slow, was sound. McClellan lacked the fighting instinct and might be no match for Lee, but who was? And was not McClellan the idol of his army? Greeley might be erratic, but he was sincere.

It did seem, however, that he was sometimes imposed on, in the appointment of "political generals," as they were called; but really he was not. For example, a gay Irishman, a leading criminal lawyer from New York, came along one day, with a delegation from his State, to be appointed a brigadier. He had never seen a day's service in his life, and to the surprise of every one, got a commission. He then invited the President's secretaries, his son Bob, Colonel, later Sir John Puleston,<sup>5</sup> with myself, to a dinner at Willard's, at which the new general made a rollicking speech to the effect that he had been conscious all along that the country needed a military genius compared with whom Napoleon and Cæsar were blockheads; that he himself was that "genius"; that his friends in New York forbade his concealing himself any longer; and that now he was here to whip Lee and give the rebels a taste of what the Field Marshal of Tipperary could do, when he made up his "moind," etc. As I learned afterwards, the fact was, he had promised Lincoln to raise a



brigade of Irishmen, and to resign as soon as they were mustered in—all of which he did, as promised, and then retired. Another of Lincoln's appointments caused amusement. The colonel of a New York regiment, a man of wealth and related to the Astors, but of no military value, spent all the winter of 1861-62 in the city, while his regiment lay in the woods and was neglected. His indignant officers sent him a "Round Robin," protesting, and requesting him to come out, drill, and attend to them, as other colonels did. He made no reply. They then sent a petition to the Secretary of War, asking for his removal or resignation. The colonel got it and made no answer, but quietly went to work and had himself appointed brigadier-general by the President, put on his new uniform, drove to his camp, and had the regiment assembled. He then mounted a cracker-box, and made them the following address: "Called, by the President of the United States, to a higher and more important sphere of military duty, your colonel commanding, now humbly begs to take leave of you." With that he drew back his overcoat, showed his star and yellow sash, and drove back to town. Soon after, he resigned.

Measuring the temper of the North, Lincoln recognized that he represented the immense middle class of conservative men, who were neither abolitionists nor pro-slavery men, but who were firmly resolved that the Mississippi River must always flow through one Republic from its source

to the sea, that the Union was older than the Constitution, and must be preserved, at any cost of men or money, holding on to slavery or giving it up, if necessary, but never giving up the Union. He was sure as long as he stuck to that, the country would sustain him, and it did.

In minor matters, however, the people were often in advance. Lincoln, with his conciliatory temper, made himself believe that, if the politicians would come to an understanding, the war would stop. The people, North and South, knew it had to be fought out to a finish. Lincoln underestimated the strength of secession,—the people did not; Lincoln found it hard to make up his mind to replace McClellan,—the people made up their minds on that subject, long before the general was superseded. I notice that recent historians praise Lincoln's policy in deferring the Emancipation Proclamation two years, viz., to January 1, 1863, instead of April, 1861, when Fort Sumter was fired upon, as a piece of superior wisdom, so as to hold the Border States. The wisdom of that must always be an open question. I am sure that such was not the impression of Lincoln's surroundings at that time. The Border States were considered of little weight, whichever side they went. The real reason given out was, that Lincoln was a lawyer, bound by decisions and precedents, who had taken an oath to obey and execute the laws; thus to expect him, at once, in April, 1861, in presence of Judge Taney, who still sat as Chief

Justice at the other end of the Capitol, to declare the Dred Scott Decision<sup>25</sup> bad law, as well as to direct the United States Marshal to disobey as null and void the warrants for the return of fugitives issued him every day, at the instance of Wise and Allen, slave-catchers, by the commissioners who sat in the City Hall, was asking too much. The respecter of law and decisions had to wait until the abolition of slavery and disobedience to law were forced on him by dire necessity, after all other means had been tried and had failed.<sup>22</sup> Lincoln has himself given, in substance, this explanation in his letter to Mr. Hodges, dated April 4, 1864. As regards his reluctance to remove McClellan at popular newspaper demand, it should be remembered that the President had discovered by his experience with the "Onward to Richmond" cry, and the Bull Run disaster, that editors are not always the safest leaders to follow in war. None knew better than he, the hold McClellan had on the affection and confidence of the rank and file of the Army of the Potomac. This was proven later on, when Hooker having been removed, on the march to Gettysburg, a rumor circulated in the army that "Little Mac" was again at their head; the news was received with "hurrahs," but when it was found that Meade was the man, there was no enthusiasm at all. So Lincoln let McClellan go on, until he became openly insubordinate, and patience had ceased to be a virtue.

In my daily inspections of the guards at the hospitals at Washington, I often met the President, quietly going through the wards, giving a kind word to one, and a cheerful message to another, and it was impossible not to be convinced that the sufferings and tragedies of this great struggle touched a tender chord in his nature, and that he felt deeply the crippling and slaughter of so many fine young men, the diseases, bereavements, funerals, and mourning on both sides, very much as an affectionate father would feel that in his own family. For relief, he would turn to the comic side of affairs, and amuse himself reading the letters from the "Confederit X Roads," the squibs of Artemus Ward and Orpheus C. Kerr, the extravagant praise of himself in some of the Republican journals, and caricatures and denunciations of himself in the hostile press. Especially, do I remember his laughing at a parody of the Episcopal Church service, which appeared in *Vanity Fair*, in which his name was invoked as the Lord's, especially the line, "The noble army of contractors, praise Him!"

How little he cared for ostentation is shown by an incident relating to his bodyguard. For the protection of his life, it was thought necessary to detail a company of cavalry to escort him daily from the White House to the Soldiers' Home, where he lived. The orders from the War Department to the Captain were to keep up with Lincoln. But Lincoln was not going to be driven in state

like a European monarch, and no sooner was he inside his carriage than he ordered his driver to put the horses to the top of their speed and get away from the bodyguard, or "Janissaries," as the Confederate ladies of Washington were pleased to call them. In this way he managed to leave his escort way in the rear.

The point of view from which I saw the President most frequently was, when he was applied to as the last resort by people complaining of the rigors of military administration at the Capitol. At such times I would be summoned to appear, or appeared on my own hook. I will give you two instances, involving two of his biographers—Ward Lamon, U. S. Marshal, and Mr. Arnold, member of Congress from Illinois.

On one occasion, Major (later General) Buford of the Regulars, boarding at the "Kirkwood House," made written and sworn complaint of a certain Western doctor, who had been dismissed from our army for immoral practices, charging that he was staying at the same hotel, wearing a major's uniform, and still carrying on those practices to the disgrace of the service. The matter was investigated, found true, and the guard ordered to arrest him, cut off his army buttons, and discharge him, which was done.

Soon Mr. Arnold (the biographer and Congressman I have named) appeared at my office and demanded in a haughty tone to be shown the documents on which this outrage had been com-

mitted on his friend, the Doctor, who was also a friend of Lincoln's. Mr. Arnold was told that we had positive orders to show documents to no one except the Secretary of War or the President. This angered him, and he threatened to show me what it meant to offend the President, and went away. Soon there arrived an orderly with a letter from Mr. Arnold to Lincoln, stating the circumstances, and demanding redress for the outrage on himself as well as on Dr. X., their mutual friend. On the back of this was endorsed: "Will the Marshal kindly bring the documents to my office? A. Lincoln." Of course, I brought them. The President examined them and said: "So you ordered the Doctor's buttons cut off? I am sorry I cannot approve this sentence," whereupon he indicated that it should have been more severe, and, laughing, returned to me the papers.

On another occasion information was brought that a negro woman named Rachel Sutherland, who had come into our lines, at Fairfax Court House, with a "military protection" from the General at the front, a paper which entitled her to our protection at the "Contraband Camp" (usually 2500 in number) until she could be sent North, had, while a cook at Harewood hospital, been kidnapped by Washington slave-catchers, was being held under the Fugitive Slave Law, by United States Marshal Lamon, and under a warrant from the commissioners was in Washington jail awaiting return to her master. On inves-

tigation, this was found to be correct, and I requested Lamon to give her up to me. He refused and pointed to his warrant. I took a company of infantry to the jail, and threatened to break down the door. Lamon then called for a *posse comitatis*, but no one responded. Senator McDougal, of California, then appeared and made a speech on the Constitution, and cited the Dred Scott Decision of Judge Taney. I offered to refer the matter to the Military Governor, which did not suit Lamon. He offered to submit it to the Supreme Court, which did not suit me. Finally, we agreed that I should leave my company of infantry at the jail, and that we should go together to Lincoln, and let him decide. He heard both sides and declined to interfere, but "guessed that if I wanted to take the woman, Lamon could not prevent it." Lamon saw the force of that and gave her up. I returned her to Harewood.

Lincoln, it seemed to me, thought as a lawyer who had a strong leaning towards the equitable side of every case and who was ever ready to temper justice with mercy. In fact, that he would have made an excellent chancellor.

On one occasion, I was in the War Office when a judge of the courts of an interior county of Pennsylvania came in with his son, a colonel of volunteers, to ask for an extension of sick leave, which Dr. Clymer, the examining surgeon, had refused. The judge and the son earnestly assured Mr. Stanton that the son was unfit for the field, and the latter

offered to resign rather than go to the front. Mr. Stanton insisted the son was shamming, pushed him to the door, and said: "To your regiment, sir, or I shall dismiss you." The judge drew himself up and said: "Sir, he shall not go to the front, but he shall go with me to your superior, the President, who, I know, will treat him and me with decency." They went to the President, who heard them patiently, and then extended the leave, on expiration of which, the colonel went to the front.

On another occasion, an Irishman, who kept a whisky mill on Capitol Hill, which was torn out by the guard because of his repeated sales (then forbidden) of liquor to soldiers, came to me in a towering rage and demanded his liquor back. I refused it. He then went to the War Office, which called for my report, and was again refused. Shortly after, he came with an order from the President to me, to give him back the confiscated stock. I did so, but was curious to know how he had managed it. "Och," said he, "he axed me to set down and tell me sthory, and I showed him me papers. Then, says he, 'Mr. McCarthy, kin you vote?' 'Yis, yer Honor,' says I, 'and its meself as voted for you for President in New York, but de'll a bit will I vote for you agin, if you don't give me backh my whisky.' Then, Sur, he gave me the ordher."

I have said Lincoln made a poor figure on horseback. One day, Major Biddle, in charge of the mounted patrol, riding up Pennsylvania Avenue,



met two officers with a civilian between them, all mounted, and, as was his duty, asked for their passes. The party rode on, taking no notice of Biddle. "Show your passes," cried Biddle, "or I'll arrest you." The party halted and the civilian said: "It's all right, Lieutenant; these officers are going with me across the river." "And who the deuce may you be?" said Biddle. "Oh, I am Mr. Lincoln, the President of the United States." Biddle bowed in disgust, and explained to me he had taken Lincoln for a Maryland farmer.

During my time, there were no substantial proofs of plots against the person of Lincoln. One day, a person appeared before him to give him advice about the proper conduct of the war. He called himself "Major-General of the Anti-Renters," and stated that he had been imprisoned at Richmond in "Castle Thunder" and had on his person vast schemes of strategy. He was released on the ground of insanity.

On another occasion, I received a letter mailed in Ohio, stating that the intended assassin of Lincoln, on his first trip to Washington, was living in a certain town in Ohio, and offering, on certain conditions, to reveal him. Major Allen, head of my detective bureau, then told me that Pinkerton had discovered the plot at Baltimore and had warned the President of it, at the Continental Hotel, Philadelphia. I returned the letter and heard no more of it.

An Englishman was once arrested and confined

on strong charges of having swindled soldiers out of their pay. His case was taken up before the President, by Mr. Odell, Congressman from New York. Lincoln saw the documents, handed them back to me, and refused to interfere.

In this war, as in other civil wars, many things which were not according to law, in time of peace, were forced by necessity, in particular the arrest and imprisonment of citizens in the Old Capitol and Carrol prisons, without hearing or trial, and the summary dismissal of officers in our army, without court-martial. Lincoln, however, was too shrewd to direct these arrests and dismissals himself, and left the odium of them to be shouldered by Secretary Seward, Secretary Stanton, the Military Governor, and General Halleck,<sup>7</sup> and I cannot now recall, in my time, one instance in which he appeared as the author, although these arbitrary arrests were charged up against him when he ran for President a second time.<sup>6</sup> A most interesting chapter might be written about these prisoners, including high officers in the Union Army, spies, editors, Confederates, and many others, among them Mrs. Rose Greenhough and daughter, Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Bagsley, Belle Boyd, Miss Dietz, and others,—and possibly it will be, when the “Old Capitol” gives up its secrets. On that subject it is enough to say now, in passing, that the Southern ladies, bred under the slave *régime*, had a peculiarly fascinating and seductive power over men, which, when they came to exercise

it on wavering Union officers, was found by some of these impossible to resist. But that is another story.

Lincoln was seldom without one or the other of his two secretaries—Hay and Nicolay—two law students of his at Springfield, whom he had brought with him. Nicolay was chief and Hay assistant. Mr. Hay was a graduate of Brown University, genial, bright, and witty. Mr. Nicolay, a Bavarian, who had come to America at the age of four, grave, and valued for his fidelity. He had been successively printer, editor, schoolmaster, and finally, law student. Shortly before Lincoln's death, he had appointed Major Hay (so called because he got major's pay and was detailed as aide-de-camp) Secretary of Legation at Madrid, and Nicolay, Consul-General at Paris. They were both in great distress lest they should not be confirmed, but the Senate hastened to perform that graceful act. Lincoln's son Robert<sup>4</sup> was then a student at Harvard, and much in the secretaries' company during vacations. He affected the English style, but was esteemed a very clever fellow, and joined us at the Metropolitan Club, our headquarters. The rest of us met at Philp's, a stationer, of the firm of Philp & Solomon, who received his gentlemen friends every Sunday evening, and where affairs of State were discussed. The two secretaries were much courted for their supposed influence, but I do not remember any one who could boast of having

obtained any favor through them. Their Chief made up his own mind. At these reunions, Mr. Hay was generally called, in sport, the "Niagara Commissioner."

Of Mrs. Lincoln I saw very little. There were rumors at the time that she was, through family connections, a Secessionist, but I strongly doubt the truth of this. There was, in my time, a Todd, a relative of hers, a Confederate prisoner of the Old Capitol, but he did not try to avail himself of his relationship, and I am sure it would have done him no good if he had.

As regards the threat of a dictatorship I have mentioned, Lincoln knew perfectly well that if there was one thing the American people were afraid would happen, if the Union were broken up, it was, that the United States would have a succession of South American dictatorships, and that any one who tried it would fail. Hence he wrote as he did, to General Joe Hooker when he put him in command, after Burnside was relieved:

I have heard in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictatorship. Of course, it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I ask of you is military success and I will risk the dictatorship.

Hooker failed to supply the military successes asked of him, but on July 3 and 4, 1863, Meade<sup>8</sup>

at Gettysburg and Grant<sup>10</sup> at Vicksburg did furnish them to such a degree, that every one could see the back of the rebellion was broken, and that, with the sympathy our cause gained in Europe by freeing the slaves, the road to victory, while still long, was comparatively easy; and it was so found when traveled on land by Generals Thomas,<sup>11</sup> Logan, Sherman,<sup>12</sup> and Sheridan<sup>13</sup> and by Admirals Foote, Farragut, and Winslow, at sea. Of course, Lincoln not only regained his lost popularity, but was more popular than ever, as he had reckoned, so that when the Republican Convention met in June, 1864, he was renominated, was reelected by two hundred and twelve electoral votes against McClellan's twenty-one, and was re-inaugurated March 4, 1865.

He at that time said:

With malice towards none, charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.

This was said March 4, 1865. About a month later, April 9, 1865, Lee surrendered; the Stars and Bars came down; the gray uniform was discarded; the sham Confederacy was obliterated; the Government regained possession of all its territory, and the Union restored without a slave in it.

It would be a great error, however, from what is said in praise of Lincoln, to infer that all this was due to his wisdom, and I should not like to be understood as so believing. As he puts it himself his generals in the field, and, of course, his naval officers, had to succeed, before he could succeed, and hence, rightly considered, he owed his own success largely to them. But neither Lincoln nor his officers could have succeeded without the efforts of one man in Washington, who, without parade, speeches, or applause, raised, equipped, and supplied the army which, at last, included a million men, and pressed it forward with untiring energy towards the destruction of the Richmond government. He cared mighty little for the Declaration of Independence, or the negro, but he was bound to extinguish Jefferson Davis's arrogant pretensions to authority, and did so, effectually. That person was Edwin M. Stanton, of Ohio, the "inexorable Danton," as Mrs. Morris called him. And neither Lincoln nor his officers, nor Stanton, nor Gideon Welles, nor Salmon P. Chase, nor W. H. Seward, taken separately or together, could have succeeded, without twenty millions of patriotic people behind them, determined to cut up slavery and disunion by the roots, and to furnish all the men and money needed to do it.

Nevertheless, rich as the North was in men and money, as compared with the South, it is, in my opinion, unlikely the North could have overcome

that brave and determined people, had it not turned out that the person selected as Chief Magistrate in the North happened to disclose, as the war came on, that he was supplied with an extraordinary stock of common sense, good nature, and trust in the everlasting justice of God, and was thereby admirably fitted to lead a host of freemen in a furious, armed struggle for greater freedom, and was, also, able to see clearly, at a time when machine politicians and scientific generals were groping about, bewildered, in the dark. That he had these talents, however, is not due to the foresight of the people of the North when they selected him for the first time, for they did not know it, and he could not know it himself, for his experience had only been on the platform, or at the bar, and not in saving Unions or suppressing rebellions. That must be ascribed to Providence or good fortune, favoring the North.

Neither is it any demerit in Lincoln that he was forced, through the breaking out of the war, during his term, to show how great these talents were, by playing as captain in a game, at which the whole world was looking, and watching the skill of the players. That was his good fortune.

On April 14th, or five days later, a half-crazy actor, anxious to draw public attention to himself, shot Lincoln in his box at Ford's Theater, where he was sitting with his wife, Lieutenant Rathbone of the regular army, and Miss Harris, daughter of United States Senator Ira Harris from

New York, to whom Rathbone was engaged to be married, the murderer pretending that he was killing a tyrant. Every sane man in the country, North or South, knew that Lincoln, the most amiable and indulgent of men, was everything that a tyrant is not, and that if Booth was aiming at tyrants, he shot the wrong man. I do not say there were no officers then at Washington who did use their powers tyrannically. Who they were, and what their tyrannical acts were is, however, again, another story. Next morning, April 15th, Lincoln died, and about nine o'clock I saw his body conveyed from the house in which he died to the White House. I was standing at the corner of 15th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, near my law office, and saw the hearse pass with a white sheet and flag thrown over the body. And never before or since have I heard a crowd as that was, composed mostly of negroes, men and women, utter so loud and piercing a wail, as these mourners uttered, when the body passed close to them. It seemed as if the whole world had lost a dear, personal friend, whose loss was not to be repaired. And the succeeding years showed it never was repaired, for the Confederates or emancipated slaves.

The funeral cortège then proceeded to Oak Ridge Cemetery near Springfield, Illinois, where he lies buried.

Immediately after his death began to arise a vast mass of literature about him, in prose and



poetry, by close friends and by others who had never seen him, and that mass is still growing. Almost anything in Lincoln's name seemed to find a ready sale—and now our children recite the Gettysburg speech beginning—"Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," and Whitman's ode beginning, "O Captain, My Captain, our fearful trip is done," and Lincoln's favorite poem beginning, "Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?" In this literature, naturally, the work of his secretaries (a work of affection) holds first rank. During its progress, it was my privilege to be in correspondence with Mr. Hay and from him I got some facts not in the work. He says, while describing the murder of his Chief, that every one in the box came to a tragic end. I knew, of course, that Mrs. Lincoln died insane, but I had never heard that Lieutenant Rathbone, or his intended, ever came to a tragic end, and as I knew Rathbone, intimately, and often heard him tell what happened, in fact, took him driving while his arm was in bandages from the cut Booth gave him, I wrote to Mr. Hay for an explanation. He then wrote that Rathbone, after he had married Miss Harris and had children, went with them to Hanover, Germany, to educate them, that while there, he became insane and attempted to kill his whole family; that he did kill his wife, but not his chil-

dren, and that he was then living in a lunatic asylum in Germany.

To Lincoln the tragedy was—that he did not live to see how grateful the people were for what he had done, and that he missed the chance of enjoying the Union he had restored, and of watching the immense impulse the removal of slavery has given his country, especially the States that had been in rebellion. It is also to be regretted that Lincoln did not live to see ratified and adopted by the necessary number of States, the resolution proposed by Congress to the Senate, January 31, 1865, abolishing slavery or involuntary servitude in the United States or any place within their jurisdiction, the thirteenth amendment of the Constitution, as it was adopted about eight months after his death, on December 18, 1865.

I hardly think any friend of his need deplore his not being compelled (as he would have been, had he lived through his second term) to wrestle with the problem of reconstruction, which proved unfortunate for his successor, Andrew Johnson; for, had he done so, he might easily have left office in 1869, with a reputation somewhat blemished, which, at the age of sixty, would not have been easy to restore. It was not to be so. The shot fired at Ford's Theater struck him when the sun of his glory was at its full meridian height, and it has stayed there, never waning but growing in splendor, so that at the end of forty-four years, it

shines brighter than on the day he died, and promises to shine brighter still, as our Southern friends realize, more and more, that their "lost cause" was lost, not from lack of courage or skill, or because the gentle Abraham Lincoln was against them, but because God, nature, and the moral sense of the nineteenth century were against them, in their efforts to preserve slavery; that whoever contributed to deliver them from it was their benefactor, and the greatest of them—Abraham Lincoln.

Let us then be thankful that Lincoln had, at least, five days intervening between April 9 and 14, 1865, in which to rejoice that the prophetic words uttered by Webster in 1830, "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable," had come true, that it was hereafter out of the power of a minority, disappointed at the result of an election, to defeat it by resorting to force and fraud, that this whole country was now free to every one, regardless of color, "to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," and that "government of the people, for the people, and by the people," had not "perished from the earth." In brief—that his work was done and well done.

After Lincoln's death, there ensued a memorable trial of the men and the one woman charged with helping the murderer to accomplish his crime. In that trial, I had some part. When an account of that trial is written fairly, if it ever is, it will

furnish an instructive addition to our judicial history. For the purpose of this address, it is out of place.<sup>21</sup>

And now, the leap from an obscure attorney's office to second place in the Hall of Fame is no longer a mystery. The lawyer, whose progress I have faintly sketched, had extraordinary gifts for leading in a great social revolution. By his gifts in debate, he overcame the arguments of the most astute advocate of slavery. By his gifts in public speaking he surpassed in permanent value the speeches of the most polished orators of his day. By his gifts in the realm of politics and war, he guided the commanders in the field, and kept at bay a hostile party in his rear. By his gift for seeing intuitively what the people wanted, he kept them with him, and secured their affection by his humor, tenderness, patience, mercy, and trust in the justice of Almighty God. He used all these gifts so as to give his country "a new birth of freedom," and, just as freedom was born anew, died for its sake.

And so this big-hearted son of Kentucky passed into history as the most commanding and pathetic figure of a great national epoch, admired for a life that was blameless, esteemed for services that are invaluable, and pitied for a fate that was unjust and cruel, and what Stanton said at the bedside of his beloved master, as he ceased to breathe, has come true, "And now he belongs to the ages."

## NOTES TO CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Lincoln, of Norwich, England, settled in Hingham, Mass., and had a son, Mordecai, whose son, also named Mordecai, moved to Monmouth, N. J., later to Berks County, Pa., where he died in 1735. His son John settled in Virginia and had a son named Abraham, who settled in Kentucky in 1780. His son Thomas married Nancy Hanks; and for his second son had Abraham, born in Kentucky, February 12, 1809. Thomas the father, moved to Indiana in 1816, and in 1830 to Macon County, Illinois, later moved to Coles County, Illinois, where he died at the age of 73. Abraham, at the age of 19, took farm products to New Orleans, and helped his father making fences and splitting rails. He hired to a man named Offut, and for him ran a flat-boat on the Mississippi to New Orleans. He then learned to read, and studied surveying.

From April 21, 1832, to June 16th, same year, was private and captain in a company of volunteers in Black Hawk War. Ran for the Legislature and defeated. Began to keep store, but failed. Then studied law, was postmaster at New Salem from 1833 for three years, and served as Deputy County Surveyor. From 1834 to 1840, member of Legislature; 1837, opened law office at Springfield, Ill.; 1842, married Mary Todd; 1846, elected to Congress and applied to be Commissioner of Land Office but failed to get it. Was offered the governorship of Oregon but declined it; 1855, became leader of Republican party of Illinois; 1858, chosen to debate with Douglas and was defeated for U. S. Senate; 1860, nominated by Republican party at Chicago for Presidency over W. H. Seward; 1860, November 6th, received 180 electoral votes to 92 for Breckenridge, 39 for Bell and Everett, and 12 for Douglas; 1861, March 4th, inaugurated; 1864, June 8th, renominated and elected in November, by 212 votes to 21 for McClellan; 1864, March 4th, inaugurated for second term; 1865, April 14th, shot at Ford's Theater, and died next day; buried at Oak Ridge, near Springfield, Ill. Had four sons.

<sup>2</sup> General James S. Wadsworth, of Geneseo, N. Y., was a man of wealth, owner of a residence on Fifth Avenue, New York, and of a tract of land so long that it was said he could drive sixty miles to Rochester without getting off his own property. He was a graduate of Yale; married to a lady from Philadelphia and an

abolitionist, but no admirer of McClellan. When the rebels cut railroad communication between Baltimore and the capital, he chartered and loaded a boat with flour and sent it by way of Annapolis, at his own expense. He was over sixty when the war broke out, and wore a sword used by an ancestor in the Revolutionary War. At Gettysburg, his division defended Kulp's Hill, and Wadsworth was commended for his conduct there, by General Meade in his report. In 1862, while Military Governor, ran for Governor of New York, but was defeated by Horatio Seymour. He lived opposite his headquarters at 19th and I Streets, and gave handsome receptions. General E. D. Keyes, in his book called *Fifty Years' Observations of Men and Events*, says of him: "He was a man of great strength and patriotism, and said to me, 'If my father was alive now, and would not devote his mind, body, and estate in this cause, I could not respect him.'" His military record is as follows: Volunteer A. D. to General McDowell, July 8, 1861; Brigadier-General, August, 1861; Brevet Major-General, May 6, 1864, for gallantry at Gettysburg. Died May 8, 1864, of wounds received May 6, 1864, at the battle in the Wilderness.

<sup>3</sup> John Hay wrote *Pike County Ballads* and *Castilian Days*, afterwards associated with the *New York Tribune*; married the daughter of Amasa Stone of Cleveland, Ohio; appointed by President McKinley, Minister to England, and Secretary of State under McKinley and Roosevelt; died at his summer residence, "The Fells," New Hampshire, July 1, 1905. He left a son Clarence and two daughters; one married to Payne Whitney, of New York, and the other to James W. Wadsworth, Jr., of Geneseo, N. Y. James W. Wadsworth, Jr., is a son of James W. Wadsworth, Member of Congress, who is the son of General James S. Wadsworth, who was Military Governor of Washington. Mr. Hay's military record is as follows: January 12, 1864, Major and A. D. C.; March 31, 1865, Brevet Colonel; May 31, 1865, Colonel of Volunteers; April 8, 1867, mustered out.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Todd Lincoln's military record is as follows: Captain and A. A. General, February 6, 1865; resigned, June 10, 1865; Secretary of War, March 5, 1881.

<sup>5</sup> Sir John Henry Puleston was born at Stanfair, Wales, in 1830. His education was obtained at King's College, London. Member of Parliament from 1872 to 1892; when he retired from Deven-

port, he contested Carnavon Borough. He was Constable of Carnavon Castle, Chairman of the City of London; Conservative Asso. and Treasurer of the Royal Asylum of St. Anne's Society. He was knighted in 1887. Died, London, October 19, 1908.

While in America was editor of a Welsh newspaper at Scranton, Pa.; State Agent for Pennsylvania by appointment of Governor Curtin; associated with Jay Cooke, McCulloch & Co., bankers, London, where he made a large fortune. While at Washington, his home on 15th Street was a center of hospitality.

<sup>6</sup> May 18, 1864, Lincoln ordered General Dix at New York to arrest the editors, proprietors, and publishers of the *New York World* and *Journal of Commerce*, for publishing a false proclamation purporting to be signed by the President and Secretary of State.

<sup>7</sup> General Wager Halleck, Cadet, Military Academy; appointed Second Lieutenant Engineer Corps, July 5, 1835, and served as Captain until August 5, 1854, when he resigned. August 19, 1861, Major-General; July 23, 1862, to March 9, 1864, Commander-in-Chief of the Army; after that Chief of Staff. Died January 9, 1872.

<sup>8</sup> General George Gordon Meade, Military Academy, September, 1831; Brig-General, August 31, 1861; Major-General, November 29, 1862. Resolution of thanks by Congress for his conduct at Gettysburg, passed January 28, 1864. Died November 6, 1872.

<sup>9</sup> General Winfield Scott, Military Academy, May 8, 1808; Commander-in-Chief of Army, July 5, 1841, to November 5, 1861, when he retired. Received thanks of Congress for services in Mexico, March 9, 1848. Died May 29, 1866.

<sup>10</sup> General U. S. Grant, Commander-in-Chief from March 9, 1864, to March 4, 1869; Secretary of War, August, 1867, to January, 1868; President, March 4, 1869, to March 4, 1877; General on retired list. Received thanks of Congress, December 17, 1863. Died July 23, 1885.

<sup>11</sup> General H. Thomas, Cadet, July 1, 1836; Major-General, April 25, 1862, to March 3, 1865. Received thanks of Congress for defeating Hood in Tennessee.

<sup>12</sup> General W. T. Sherman, Major-General, May 11, 1862; Commander-in-Chief, March 8, 1869, to November 1, 1883. Retired, February 8, 1884. Received thanks of Congress,

February 19, 1864, for services at Atlanta, Chattanooga and march to Savannah. Died February 14, 1891.

<sup>13</sup> General P. H. Sheridan, Major-General, November 8, 1864; Lieutenant-General, March 4, 1869; General, June 1, 1888; Commander-in-Chief, November, 1883, to August, 1888. Received thanks of Congress, February 9, 1865, for services in Valley of the Shenandoah and Cedar Run.

<sup>14</sup> C. A. Dana, Assistant Secretary of War, January 28, 1864, to August 1, 1865.

<sup>15</sup> Robert E. Lee, Military Academy, July 1, 1825; August 29, 1847, Lieutenant-Colonel for services in Mexico; Colonel, September 17, 1847, for gallantry at Churubusco, Mexico. Resigned April 25, 1861; General-in-Chief, C. S. A., 1861 to 1865. Died October 12, 1870.

<sup>16</sup> General Irvin McDowell, Military Academy, July 1, 1834; Major-General, March 13, 1865. Died May 4, 1885.

<sup>17</sup> General Geo. B. McClellan, Military Academy, July 1, 1842; Major-General, May 14, 1861; Commander-in-Chief, from November 1, 1861, to March 11, 1862. Received thanks of Congress, July 16, 1861, for victories in West Virginia. Resigned, November 8, 1864. Died October 29, 1885.

<sup>18</sup> General John Pope, Military Academy, July 1, 1838; Major-General, March 13, 1865, for gallantry at Island No. 10, Miss.

<sup>19</sup> General Joseph Hooker, Military Academy, July 1, 1833; Major-General, May 5, 1862; January 28, 1864, received thanks of Congress for services during attack on Washington. Retired, October 15, 1868. Died October 31, 1879.

<sup>20</sup> Thaddeus Stevens, born Danville, Vermont, in 1792, graduated, Dartmouth, 1814. Settled at Lancaster, Pa., 1842; father of Pennsylvania School System. Chairman of Ways and Means Committee, House of Representatives, during the war. Died, Washington, in 1868.

<sup>21</sup> The criticism on "Conspiracy Trial" in *Constitution of U. S.* by John Lee Tucker, of Washington and Lee University, vol. ii., page 650, published, Chicago, 1899, and comments on refusal of Military to obey Writ of Habeas Corpus, issued by Judge Wiley, of Supreme Court, Washington, D. C.

<sup>22</sup> In his first inaugural, Lincoln quotes from one of his speeches—"I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States, where it exists. I believe I



have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so.”  
—March 1, 1861.

<sup>23</sup> Simon Cameron, born, Lancaster, Pa., 1799; 1845, U. S. Senator; 1857, U. S. Senator; 1861, Secretary of War to Lincoln; 1862, resigned on account of disagreement on question of freeing and arming slaves; 1862, Minister to Russia; 1867 to 1873, U. S. Senator.

<sup>24</sup> James Buchanan, born 1791; 1812, admitted to Lancaster Bar; 1820, Member of Congress; 1831, Minister to Russia; 1833, U. S. Senator; 1845, Secretary of State to Polk; 1856, Minister to England; and President until 1861. Died June 1, 1868.

<sup>25</sup> *Dred Scott vs. Sandford*. 19 Howard U. S. Reports, 393. Decided, March 6, 1857. Chief Justice Taney: Negro cannot become a citizen. The Declaration of Independence does not include slaves as part of the people; Constitution expressly affirms right of property in slaves. Missouri Compromise unconstitutional and void.

## CHAPTER II

### WASHINGTON CITY—1862

WHILE the Army of the Potomac under General McClellan was in winter quarters about Washington, waiting for spring weather before advancing upon Richmond, a portion of the 4th Pennsylvania Cavalry regiment, in which I then held the rank of major, was on duty, as mounted provost guard, in the city proper, with headquarters on Capitol Hill. The rest of the regiment camped in Hawes's Woods, a beautiful grove of oak on 7th Street, to the north of the city, envying the lucky soldiers who had been placed on some kind of active duty. By reason of the assignment, the field officers of my regiment, and among them myself, were often on duty as officers of the day, making the grand rounds of the posts of the north side of the river, between twelve o'clock at midnight and four o'clock in the morning.

On the afternoon of a bright day in March, 1862, after I had been on this sort of duty the night before, I received a short, peremptory order, without the usual transmission through my colonel, but directly, commanding me to report at once to General James S. Wadsworth, Military

Governor of the District of Washington, at his headquarters, corner of 19th and I streets.

I was somewhat alarmed at the message, not knowing what it boded, and, quickly riding in, reported myself at the designated place—with which I was well acquainted as the old headquarters of General Andrew Porter, who was General McClellan's provost marshal, and from whom the day before I had received my instructions as officer-of-the-day.

I was directed upstairs and, on making myself known, was received with great cordiality by the general. He said that I had been recommended to him as an officer who was familiar with the location of the camps, and who was acquainted with the commanding officers on the north of the river, that he wished me to come in next day, show him the camps, and introduce him to the troops he was to command after McClellan had embarked.

I, of course, felt very much relieved, and was much impressed by the genial courtesy of the man.

Next day, I came again at the appointed hour but it took the general a long while to get started. At last, Lieutenant Kress, his aide-de-camp, joined us and we were off. We rode out 14th Street and returned by way of 7th Street, stopping at all the camps that were on our way and on the list of troops in Kress's hand, and introducing the general to the regimental commanders. I remember that every one who was told he was to remain and help guard the city disputed the

order, and declared they belonged to some brigade that had marching orders. The army was in fact heartily sick of drilling and living in log-cabins within sight of the Capitol, and longed for a forward movement. At all events, the number of troops left behind, when McClellan had gone, was far less than the number General Wadsworth had counted on. The consolidated report showed only about 17,000, composed chiefly of fragmentary organizations. As new regiments came in, his command increased, and at one time the command counted upwards of 36,000 men.

While riding back to the city together, the General asked me how I should like to go on duty as provost marshal of the city. I told him I was afraid I was hardly fit to take the place, for I was, in fact, but twenty-five years old at the time. He replied that there should be no trouble on that score, and advised me to report next morning at ten. I did so, and the order appointing me provost marshal was made part of the general order by which he assumed command, as follows:

HEADQUARTERS, MILITARY DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON,  
WASHINGTON, March 20, 1862.

I. The geographical limits of this Military District are at present defined as follows: The District of Columbia, the City of Alexandria, the Defensive Works South of the Potomac from the Occoquan to Difficult Creek, and the Port of Fort Washington.

II. Commanders of Brigades not yet brigaded

and of independent Battalions or companies serving in this District will send to these Head Quarters every Friday a consolidated morning report of their respective commands for that day.

III. All orders issued from the Head Quarters of the Army of the Potomac for the maintenance of good order and military discipline among the troops, and the existing regulations in regard to passes, furloughs, etc., continue in force until otherwise directed.

IV. Commanders of troops arriving in or leaving this district will furnish to these Head Quarters a full return of their commands.

V. Major William E. Doster of the Fourth Pennsylvania Cavalry is appointed Provost Marshal of the City of Washington and will be obeyed and respected accordingly.

By command of Brig.-Gen. WADSWORTH,

THEODORE TALBOT, *Asst. Adjt.-General*.

JOHN A. KRESS, *Aide-de-camp*.

#### THE MILITARY GOVERNORS

General Wadsworth made a very favorable impression upon me, contrasting as he did with officers appointed as a result of the intrigues for promotion among the volunteers. He was apparently between fifty and sixty years of age, about six feet in height, of a spare but well-knit frame, with blue eyes, white hair, and side-whiskers, a thin aquiline nose, and an amiable, frank, and firm expression of countenance. Insensibly you felt that you were in the presence of a man of honor, who was above all touch of

affectation, who wished to help his country when in trouble without consulting his own interest or making the occasion one for bragging utterances. His dress was very plain. On the occasion of my first ride with him, he girt on a carved sabre of ancient pattern, which, I learned afterwards, belonged to his ancestor, Major-General Wadsworth. He also wore a common, light blue army overcoat. As I became better acquainted with him, I had occasion every day to admire his unusually fine qualities,—his incorruptibility, good humor, courage, and good sense.

I remember that a near relative of his who held a position as commissary in one of the Carolina departments came to Washington to procure a transfer to some other field, giving, as his reason, that it was impossible for an honest man to abide where so much swindling was going on. "Then," said Wadsworth, "you are just the man to put a stop to it," and he gave him peremptory orders to return.

I was told by his friend, Colonel James L. Graham, that when the Governor of New York, at the outbreak of the war, offered Wadsworth a major-general's commission, Wadsworth declined it, alleging his incompetency. He then served with great gallantry on McDowell's staff at Bull Run, ranking as major. He won his star before wearing it.

When running for Governor of New York in the ensuing fall, he was urged by repeated delegations from home to appear in New York City.

He was requested only to show himself, even if he made no speeches. It was said his mere presence would result in his election. But he positively refused to go, saying he could not play the politician when in the uniform and pay of the United States. After his defeat some of his friends called to condole with him. "Oh," said he, "that is no defeat in which two-thirds of the army is not engaged," a reference to the fact that the soldiers of New York were not allowed to vote.

Towards the close of the year, in addition to his defeat, he had to suffer the mortification of being left virtually without any command. This circumstance resulted from the action of the War Department in placing General Heintzelman in command of the Department of Washington, the creation of which at once absorbed the District of Washington. Wadsworth's staff officers were extremely loud and bitter in their denunciation. But the chief called them together and forbade them to say one word either in praise or in blame.

After the battle of Gettysburg I happened to meet Wadsworth on his way North to enjoy a short leave of absence. After answering his many questions about the part played by the cavalry on our right wing, where I had been engaged, I alluded to Meade's Report, then published, and the very handsome mention therein of General Wadsworth's conduct in that engagement. Wadsworth said he had never read it,—so careless was he of fame. At the same time he stated that the

tide had now turned in our favor. It was his opinion that the army needed privates more than officers. Under the circumstances he blamed no officer for resigning, but rather praised him for leaving his position in the field and assuming the duties of citizenship at home.

During the disasters in front of Richmond in the summer of 1862, although he had no immediate cause for disgust, so far as Washington was concerned, he was, nevertheless, greatly disturbed. He kept pacing the floor of his office alone till late in the night seeming to feel our defeats in a personal way.

No doubt the Secretary of War was inclined to make all around him nervous. When Stonewall Jackson was marching up the valley, Wadsworth told me that Stanton, from whose office he had just come, was as frightened as an old woman and had sent for the 7th New York. In the main, however, Wadsworth had not from the outset the remotest faith in McClellan's generalship, and it was this that made him Governor of the Capitol. As far as I could gather from his staff and himself, the circumstances were as follows: during the winter of 1861-62, Wadsworth's brigade was on picket duty in the advance before Munson's Hill. His observation of the enemy brought him to the conclusion that the rebel defense was a feint, and that only an advance was needed to demonstrate the fact that the grand army was held in check by a handful of troops and a few wooden cannon. He



so reported officially and in conversation. This bold taking of sides with the public on a vital point in strategy brought him into bad favor at McClellan's headquarters. Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Stanton, however, sent for Wadsworth and had a conversation with him on the subject. When McClellan finally advanced, he was glad to be rid of Wadsworth, and Wadsworth was equally gratified to be rid of McClellan. Mr. Lincoln believed Wadsworth could deal successfully with the administration of military law and in defensive operations. He accordingly appointed him military governor.

Wadsworth's capacity for defensive operations was not tested, for the Capitol was not attacked between March, 1862, and November, 1862, in which month he resumed command in the field. The interval was full of alarms of assaults on the Capitol, but none were made. During this period were fought the battles of the Peninsula, the famous change of base was made, Stonewall Jackson scattered Fremont's forces in the valley, Banks retreated to Harper's Ferry, Pope was driven back on his front at the second battle of Bull Run, the Army of the Potomac passed northward through the city and fought the battle of Antietam, and McClellan was finally relieved at Warrenton by Burnside. The command of Wadsworth changed in numbers according to the shifting circumstances of the war, running up to nearly forty thousand when Jackson made his raid and reduced to the

brigade comprising the provost guard, and numbering about three thousand, at the time of Bull Run. In command he was superseded three times: first by General Sturgis, then by Banks, and finally by General Heintzelman. I can but think that it was fortunate that his capacity as defender of the Capitol was never tested, because he was not a scientific soldier likely to shine in a siege, but, as he afterwards showed himself, essentially a fighting general, who thought strategy folly and who believed in giving hard blows. While at Washington, watching with anxiety the fate of a general whose ill-fortune he foretold, and waiting confidently for the time when the army would be in other hands, he became the center of the growing opposition to McClellan, which gathered strength by the trial of General Porter and finally triumphed. No sooner was Burnside in command than Wadsworth hurried to rejoin his brigade at Belle Plain. How he subsequently behaved at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and the Wilderness; how this wealthy, yet modest gentleman lived like a common soldier; with what supreme contempt of death he led his division; how much he gave out of his private purse; how he refused to draw his pay; how he finally fell, struck by a ball in the forehead, in the Wilderness; how his widow and his son Craig hunted for his body—all these matters are foreign to my story. I can but hope that the clear white record of this noble life will be handed down to later times in fitting terms.

(Since the above was written, the life of General Wadsworth has been published by Henry Greenleaf Pearson, N. Y., 1913, under the title of *General Jas. S. Wadsworth of Geneseo*.) His accession as military governor was hailed with pleasure by the people of the District. He had the reputation of being immensely wealthy, owning many miles of farms in the Genesee Valley, and of being related to the Murrays in England. As proofs of his generous disposition may be cited the following: He was reported to have sent, at his own expense, a cargo of grain to Ireland during the famine and to have sent out to Washington *via* Annapolis, when the rebels had possession of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, a shipload of volunteers, armed, equipped, and transported through funds supplied by his private purse. This lavish generosity suited the people very well. They were confident of being treated with kindness at his hands. In this, it will be seen, they were not disappointed, for he was not the kind of man to assent to any wanton outrages on the customary liberties of American citizens, without at least doing the utmost that a subordinate army officer can to prevent their perpetration. His popularity, however, later split on the bedrock of slavery.

In November, 1862, Wadsworth was succeeded as military governor by General John A. Martindale of Rochester, New York, who was less impetuous than Wadsworth and, in that regard,

better fitted for dealing with fugitive slaves and their masters. I served also under him until February, 1863. Martindale was succeeded by General Wisewell, who with his veteran reserve corps had charge at the end of the war.

#### THE POPULATION

On the basis of the census of 1860, the District of Columbia had an aggregate population of 75,080. Of this number 3185 were slaves, 11,131 free colored, and 60,764 white. The city of Georgetown numbered 8733, the city of Washington 61,122, and the remainder of the District 5225. By March, 1862, these figures had enormously increased, and kept increasing for the ensuing year. The estimate for the grand total of the population in the District of Columbia at that time, independent of the army proper, was 200,000 souls.

In 1860, the municipal government of the two cities was administered by a mayor and common council. Neither city had a regular paid police. The Capitol and grounds were guarded by what was called "The Capitol Police," paid by Congress. The ordinary guardians of the peace were the constables of the District of Columbia, about a dozen in number, who were officers of the court. They wore badges with the inscription "National Police," but had no uniform. The United States Marshal had charge of the city jail and employed a great number of deputies whose main business

was the execution of the Fugitive Slave Law. Their usual fee for catching a runaway slave was fifty dollars. The Marshal himself received his warrants from three commissioners, appointed under the law, who sat at the City Hall and received complaints of slave owners.

In 1862, Barrett, the Mayor of Washington, had been sent to Fort Lafayette. The Government had been changed by an Act of Congress. Richard D. Wallach was mayor, a board of police and 150 policemen, uniformed, were on duty in Washington. Wm. B. Webb was superintendent of police and Colonel Ward-Lamon was marshal.

In the interval between the tenures of office of the two mayors, General Mansfield and, later, General Andrew Porter of the 1st Mounted Rifles, with a guard composed in part of Colonel Sykes's regiment, the 3d Regular Infantry, and a part of the 5th U. S. Cavalry, carried on the city government.

The U. S. Marshal, however, continued to issue warrants to his deputies; these did not relax their efforts to catch fugitive slaves, the commissioners still sat at the City Hall doing a larger business than ever, and the city jail, called the "Washington Slave Pen," was crowded as never before—the army and generals notwithstanding.

In 1860, the native Maryland and Virginia families were in accord with the administration and the officeholders on the exciting popular question. They participated at the receptions of

Miss Harriet Lane at the White House, at the Arlington, at Mason's, at Mrs. Gwinn's, at the Banker Corcoran's, at Douglass's new house near St. Aloysius. There was no obstacle in their road to office, if they desired government posts for themselves or their friends. At that time the city itself was, in the eyes of the nation, of comparative insignificance, for the Government then was something no man was afraid of, and only office-seekers took the trouble to honor. Forty-five years had elapsed since the Capitol had been set on fire by the British, twenty-eight years since Jackson here had crushed Nullification; and the generation now on the scene knew of these things only by tradition.

In 1862, Washington was hated and prized beyond any other city in America. In the city and in the homes of the slaveholders, it was believed, had been hatched and planned the conspiracy which slowly dawned on the North, and here Southern sympathizers were still believed to be planning and coöperating with their friends at Richmond. Here Davis and Toombs had delivered their defiant harangues. Here Floyd, Toombs, and Thompson had provided for the Confederacy from the National Treasury. Here the President of the new party had come by stealth and been inaugurated among lurking dangers. Here an army had been organized by him, sent against the enemy, and defeated. A second had been assembled, disciplined, and

equipped, and was about to renew the march toward Richmond. Whatever of hope-deferred, shame, and insult had been felt by Northern people during the past year was associated with treachery in Washington and defeat in front of it. From a political point of view, it was regarded as the hub that held together the remaining spokes in the wheel that made the Union; from a strategic point of view, it was the objective point for the Confederate forces operating in front of Richmond, situated as it was in a slave-holding district, between two hostile States, with only one railroad to the North and communications in that direction easily severed, while two railroads connected the Capitol with the enemy's country in front. It was now the headquarters of the Army of the North, and that army's grand depot of supplies.

The Southern population had by this time generally declared itself or "defined its position." As a general rule the Southern army officers had offered their services to the sections in which they held property or had friends. Such as remained in the Northern Army were more or less under a cloud. Outside of the army, the native Southerners at Washington were almost invariably either openly or secretly in sympathy with the Confederate cause, and maintained that attitude to the end of the war,—the slaveholders because of their property, the society people on account of the ruder manners they professed to see in the Northerners, the politicians for the offices,

the merchants for the trade which was passing into the hands of the Yankees. Furthermore, the President in their opinion was desecrating the memories of the White House, and they hoped for the day when Lady Davis's carriage would drive down the avenue and dispel the Springfield rabble. For the Southerners there were no vacancies in the Departments, no contracts, no invitations, no influence—only suspicion, obscurity, the danger of imprisonment, and the great risk of confiscation of their real estate and the liberation of their personal chattels,—their slaves.

In 1860, the military force about Washington consisted chiefly of General Scott, his staff and orderlies, and the marine band. In 1862, in a circle whose confines were three miles from the Capitol were temporary canvas cities inhabited by a male population picked from the yeomanry of all the Northern States. Due north, on 7th Street, lay the corps of volunteer and regular cavalry organized by General Stoneman. General Cooke had his headquarters and barracks at the Parke Hotel. At Kendall Green, farther north, was Keyes's Division. At Brightwood were Generals Graham, Couch, and Birney. At Rock Creek Church was West's Artillery. On Meridian Hill were Zouaves, Scotch Highlanders, and the Irish 69th. On Kalorama Heights were hospitals. On 14th Street lay Pennsylvania infantry regiments and De Trobriand's regiment. On the south side of the river were Heintzelman, Sumner, and Porter's Corps.



The open country on the outskirts of the city was at this period occupied by fortified defenses. In a circle around the city was visible a chain of earthworks, extending from Fort Totten, near the Soldiers' Home on the north, to Fort Meigs, near the Anacostia River, and thence to Fort Ethan Allen, near the Navy Yard. Another line extended from Georgetown, on the right, to Fairfax Seminary, on the south side of the river—covering Long Bridge, the Aqueduct, and Chain Bridge, as the former did the roads to Maryland and the north. Within this continuous *enceinte* lay the army in an entrenched camp.

In the city itself was visible, everywhere, the presence of a volunteer army in preparation for a forward movement. At the depot of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad as many as ten regiments arrived daily. Nearby, the Soldiers' Retreat was crammed with soldiers waiting to secure transportation to the field, to the hospital, or to their homes on furloughs. The streets were filled with wagon trains, mules, cattle, ordnance, and stores. At the Arsenal, clothing and commissary depots, mustering offices, and at the various headquarters were crowds of officers trying to get mustered or to clothe and equip their commands. The military storekeepers were busy day and night issuing stores and making out invoices, while the Transportation Bureau had not teams enough to supply the demand.

As the sight of the Capitol and of its objects of

interest was something new to most of the volunteers, it cannot be wondered at that they embraced the opportunity to satisfy their curiosity and crowded the city, fascinated by the attractions it offered. In fact, shoulder straps predominated in all places—hotels, billiard-rooms, restaurants, theaters. Along the Avenue, in the lobbies of the Capitol, the Patent Office, Smithsonian Institute, the White House, the Departments, on the pavement, in the omnibus, were the eternal army blue and Mexican spur. So divers were the uniforms that a foreigner of almost any nation could see represented in the medley the distinguishing uniform of his people. There were Zouaves, Highlanders, Chasseurs, *Enfans Perdus*, Austrians in white, Italians in red shirts fresh from service with Garibaldi, and Englishmen who almost invariably had taken part in the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava (so they claimed).

In the midst of the chaos were seen the long array of rough, brown-stained coffins, carried in furniture cars, containing dead private soldiers, escorted, generally to the number of twelve, by a corporal and ten men. Less frequently there passed some general's funeral, with band, a brilliant staff, and arms reversed.

Over and above the hum raised by this myriad of men, horses, wagons, and cars were heard at intervals the booming of artillery practice, the firing of infantry platoons, the cavalry bugle, and the drum.

Fashion, politics, and luxury had all made way before this impetuous and imperious swarm of Union men. The workmen ordinarily employed at the public buildings were now busy at hospitals, depots, and prisons. The carriage horses were under the McClellan saddle, the musicians learning to keep step with brass bands; the fashionable ladies keeping boarding-houses, and the fastidious belles visiting hospitals, irrespective of their sympathies, or pulling lint and knitting stockings. The fine gardens on the outskirts were camps and the ancient groves fast becoming firewood. All reputable homes in the suburbs were headquarters and many dwellings in the city proper were seized for army uses. The public squares were generally barracks. Corcoran's Art Gallery became a clothing depot; the yard of the War Office, a show ground for patent tents and camp equipage; Senator Gwin's house was the headquarters of the military governor,—the sitting-room a detective bureau, and the parlour a provost marshal's office, crowded with clerks, citizens, contrabands, Confederates in butternut, and Federals of all grades in arrest. The Thompson house became a transportation office; the grounds of the White House, a quartermaster's depot. The stone cutters' sheds under the portico of the Treasury were filled with cavalry horses; on Capitol Hill was an infantry brigade. The Old Capitol was converted into a Rebel prison, and the room where tradition said Calhoun died, became a search office. Duff-

Greens Row was a smallpox hospital for contrabands. General Scott's home was turned into a boarding-house, and the Arlington became Whipple's headquarters. McClellan's family occupied the home at 15th and H streets, and the headquarters of Banks and of Heintzelman was later located at the junction of 15½ Street with the Avenue. I occupied Jesse Bright's home.

With the army came a long and pestiferous train of attendants—commission brokers, who undertook to secure commissions for enlisted men and promotions for officers, appointments from the President, and confirmation from the Senate; dealers in patent camp furniture, breastplates, and armor-oil; itinerant sutlers and agents; traveling tailors, who measured in camp and sewed in the city; liquor dealers of all grades, from merchants who brought cargoes from New York to vendors who smuggled whisky of the worst sort under their clothing and filled canteens out of milk-cans. Prostitutes from all the large cities of the North flocked hither in swarms and infested the most respectable streets as well as the filthiest alleys. They ranged from dashing courtesans who entertained in brownstone houses to drunken creatures who were summarily ejected from camp. The ancient gambling and drinking saloons flourished and new ones sprung up everywhere, for gold and greenbacks were plentiful and little prized by the volunteers. Prominent among the soldiers was the agent, who came into existence

under the perplexities and embarrassments encountered by nearly half a million of men who were soldiers in fact, but utterly ignorant of military routine. These agents were of all nationalities, and agreed only in the unlimited nature of the influence they professed to be able to exert in "getting things through," if paid. Discharges, passes, furloughs, citizens' dress for deserters, releases from prison, pardons, revocations of sentences, detachments on easy duty, transfers, protection against the orders of provost marshals, the passing of invoices, the approval of accounts, the securing of pay—the transaction, in short, of all routine matters from muster-in to muster-out—were in their power.

The feverish state of the gold market and competition for the earliest information regarding pending movements were responsible for a class of news-hunters who in enterprising audacity surpassed anything ever before seen in the Capitol. They obtruded themselves into every department where the slightest clue to information might be hoped for, seemed to be idle, rollicking fellows, but sat up at night telegraphing to New York as long as the offices were open.

Not least conspicuous was the irrepressible contractor, chiefly at home in the corridors of the War Department and the hall of Willard's, but visible at all places, boring persons of supposed influence by a narration of the merits of his grand invention. Finally, there was a crowd of adven-

turers of all sorts, keepers of concert saloons with waiter-girls, receivers of stolen goods, circuses, organ-grinders, bear shows, thimble-riggers, embalmers, undertakers, pickpockets, burglars, and common thieves.

For the honor of the land, not only vultures but good Samaritans followed in the wake of the army. There was the Sanitary Commission located on 14th Street above Willard's, with large powers from the President, and in possession of warehouses, teams, and floating hospitals of its own. Its influence was exerted at many points, doing good. It rendered service in bravely fighting violence and fraud. There was also the Christian Commission, sending out tracts, bibles, and chaplains, who generally had the good sense to turn nurses. There was also Miss Elizabeth Dix, and under her many noble women, of Catholic and Protestant faith, trying and succeeding in assuaging, to some degree, such of the horrors of war as were beyond the surgeons' and the chaplains' skill.

#### MILITARY AND SECRET POLICE

The duties I had before me were not defined. I was told by General Wadsworth to keep the cities in order while he devoted himself to the care of the defenses. These were all the instructions I received concerning the duties of my post, except what might be gathered from the general order issued by General McClellan, February 21, 1862,

which related, however, mainly to “that branch of duty in the Army of the Potomac on its projected forward movement. . . .”

V. The duties of the Provost Marshals, Generals, *et al.*, relate to the general police of the army and embrace the following subjects:

Suppression of marauding and depredations and of all brawls and disturbances, preservation of good order and suppression of drunkenness beyond the limits of the camps.

Prevention of straggling on the march.

Suppression of gambling houses, drinking houses, of bar-rooms, and hotels.

Regulations of hotels, taverns, markets, and places of public amusements.

Searches, seizures, and arrests.

Execution of sentences of General Courts-Martial involving imprisonment or capital punishment.

Enforcement of orders prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors, whether by tradesmen or sutlers, and of orders respecting passes.

Deserters from the enemy.

Prisoners of war taken from the enemy.

Countersigning safeguards.

Passes to citizens within the lines and for the purposes of trade.

Complaints of citizens as to the conduct of the soldiers.

To understand what was meant by keeping the cities of Washington and Georgetown in order in 1862, it is necessary to take a survey of the geo-

graphical features of the District of Columbia. Washington at that time had six means of communication, through which its trade and travel came and went—three bridges, one ferry, one railroad, and one canal. The Aqueduct Bridge, running from the north shore of the Potomac at Georgetown, connected that city with Alexandria, Virginia, and the roads towards Leesburg and Richmond beyond. The Ohio and Chesapeake Canal joined Washington to Harper's Ferry and Northern Virginia. Long Bridge brought Washington into touch with Fairfax Court House, Centerville, Warrenton, and Richmond. The Alexandria Ferry connected the foot of Seventh Street, Washington, by steamboat with Alexandria and the Orange and Alexandria Railroad, whenever that was in operation. The foot of H Street wharf was the steamboat terminus of the Manassas Railroad. The Anacostia Bridge over the Anacostia connected Washington at the Navy Yard, by a northerly route, with Annapolis and Maryland, by a southerly route, with Port Tobacco, Leonardstown, and Point Lookout. The Potomac River facilitated communication with the seaboard, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad with the North.

The obvious plan for any one who desired to control the freight and travel to and from the District was to maintain a cordon of sentinels around it, with posts at the depots. This had been established by General Porter. A chain of pickets had been disposed in a circle of about two



miles' radius from headquarters, guarding the minor roads and the open country between them, while the main reserves were stationed at the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in Georgetown, at the Aqueduct Bridge, at Long Bridge, and at the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. It was the responsibility of the pickets to cover also the river front from the Navy Yard to Analostan Island. The general instructions to the commandants were to intercept contraband of war as well as intelligence between the lines, to prevent smuggling, blockade-running, straggling, and the passage of citizens and soldiers without authority from our headquarters.

Particular instructions were given to each post. The detachment at Aqueduct Bridge had supervision over all vessels plying the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, and over all travel by the Bridge. Attempts were not infrequently made to forward salt and flour to the Confederates by this route, and all vessels were therefore required to show passes and countersigned invoices. The river shore, which was a favorite place of crossing by deserters, and for loading contraband goods, was patrolled from the Bridge to Rock Creek. The daily detail for this territory was one sergeant, two corporals, and eight privates.

The next reserve to the east was stationed at the Long Bridge at the foot of 14th Street. The river was at this point too wide to enable deserters to swim across, but the locality being directly south

of Willard's Hotel on the north and Alexandria road on the south was the central road for passengers and commerce southward. The three officers and one company on duty here were mainly occupied with inspecting stores and passes and patrolling the shore as far as Rock Creek.

The river from Long Bridge to 7th Street wharf was in charge of a daily detail of one lieutenant, one sergeant, two corporals, and twenty-four privates. They had charge of the Alexandria Ferry and of the ferry steamers which plied to Alexandria every half-hour, of the Manassas Railroad depot at the foot of 11th Street, and of the Mount Vernon boats. At this time the *Thomas Collyer*, belonging to the Ladies' Association, monopolized the travel to this place. At the same point, the detail superintended the shipping of quartermasters' and commissioners' stores to Aquia Creek, Yorktown, and later to Harrison's Landing.

The post at the eastern branch or Anacostia Bridge, near the Navy Yard, guarded the entrance to Northern and Southern Maryland. The road on the south of the bridge forked. One fork, conducting to Baltimore, formed, by way of Long Old Fields and Annapolis, a convenient and much frequented route for our deserters; the other, leading to Port Tobacco, the southern point of Maryland, was a favorite headquarters for rebel recruiting officers, contrabandists, mail-carriers, spies, and refugees. One company of infantry

here daily patrolled both shores of the Branch paying special attention to baggage and citizens. Between this point and Leonardstown a battalion of cavalry was on constant duty with detachments on all the creeks.

This land guard, watching such a long stretch of shore, was soon found incapable of doing its work thoroughly. The river and bay continued beyond its reach, and were filled with daring smugglers. To cope with these law-breakers on their own element, each river post was equipped with boats manned with sailors recruited from the volunteers. They coöperated with the Potomac flotilla, commanded by Lieutenant Shaw of the Navy. This officer was detailed by Commodore Harwood of the Washington Navy Yard and reported to me. He cruised from the Occoquan to Wicomico River.

These dispositions were made of our southern or exposed front: On the land, or north side of the city, a picket line ran from the Eastern Branch through Bladensburg to the depot of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, with headquarters at the depot. The detail here consisted of one lieutenant, one sergeant, one corporal, and twenty-two privates. It had charge of the Baltimore Turnpike, of the soldiers and citizens entering and leaving Washington, and of all freights. The Soldiers' Rest adjoining was under its control, and the recently paid and furloughed volunteers were protected against the depredations of the

thieves and impostors who were encamped in tents and shanties erected in this vicinity. Deserters in citizens' clothing, and arms and horses forwarded from the army homewards were here intercepted. The military force stationed in this region was assisted by a large detail of regular police and by a detail from the secret police.

From here the picket line extended northwest to the Tennallytown road, due north of Washington, where this thoroughfare intersects the road to the Soldiers' Home. The detail patrolled westwardly until it encountered the Georgetown patrol.

The last post on the land side was at Georgetown, which consisted of a separate organization, subject to my orders, of which more hereafter.

Coming now to the interior of the city of Washington, the central artery, Pennsylvania Avenue, from the Capitol to Georgetown, was occupied by detachments of infantry, at nearly equal distances from one another, exercising jurisdiction to the right and left across the city. The main posts were at Georgetown, the Circle; at 22d Street and Pennsylvania Avenue; 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue; 17th and K Streets; Soldiers' Retreat; Depot, and Capitol Hill.

At Georgetown were on daily duty one field officer, one lieutenant, one sergeant, three corporals, and sixty-six privates. The commandant of the force was held responsible for the peace of the city, which was outspoken in its Confederate sentiment. A judge advocate under him tried

and disposed of the prisoners and goods collected at a prison called "Forest Hall." He had charge, also, of the following hospitals: Seminary, College, Dunbarton, Trinity, Presbyterian, Kalorama, and Union.

The remaining posts were occupied as follows for daily duty:

Circle: one lieutenant, two corporals, twenty-seven privates.

17th Street; three officers, sixteen non-com. officers, ninety privates.

Soldiers' Retreat: one lieutenant, one sergeant, twenty-two privates.

K Street (Cavalry): one lieutenant, two corporals, fourteen privates.

Capitol Hill: two captains, three companies of infantry.

These were in charge of the Navy Office, Pay Department, Treasury, Patent Office, Corrals, Quarter-masters' Bureau, and all the public offices in the city. They were also responsible for prisoners of all sorts and for the maintenance of order.

## CHAPTER III

### THE OLD CAPITOL AND CARROL PRISONS, 1862-1863

THE first knowledge I had of this afterwards famous prison—the Old Capitol—was when acting as officer of the day under General Porter, with instructions to visit and inspect the guard at the Washington and Georgetown prisons. My orderly, who knew the road, guided me to a gloomy-looking building one square to the east of the New Capitol buildings, and running parallel with them. I dismounted and under my orders demanded to go through the prison and visit the guards within. The demand was made in an ante-chamber. The captain in charge of the guard answered derisively, “I guess you can’t,” and showed me a copy of the prison rules, admitting none beyond the guard-room without a special pass for that purpose from the provost marshal or the Secretary of War. I did not care to argue the point as to the powers of my orders when weighed against the prison rules, and reported that I was refused admittance. The action on the part of the captain was approved. After I was appointed provost marshal (partly from curiosity, partly in pursuance of

directions from the military governor), I made my first visit to the interior and this time in company with Brigade-Surgeon Stewart, who had been on duty here a long time and knew everybody well. Dr. Stewart was a most excellent surgeon, and an exemplary gentleman in every way, but as he was very large, very portly, somewhat pompous in his manners, and presumed very greatly on his loyalty as opposed to that of rebels, I soon found that I could not well have been introduced to my new charges under a more unpopular guide.

The result of my cursory investigations is as follows: The Old Capitol Prison was a long three-story building of dingy brick, situated on the corner of East Capitol and Carrol streets. In the rear of the main building, on East Capitol Street, was a brick extension about equal in length to the front on Carrol street. In the rear of this brick extension, still on East Capitol Street, was a new wooden extension. In the rear of this was an out-building used as a kitchen. In the rear of the lot, and running parallel to the front, were the sinks; on the south side of the lot was another new wooden building. On the unbuilt portion of the lot, fronting on Carrol street, was a high wooden fence. In the interior of the Square was a large open enclosure, or yard. On the east this Old Capitol lot was bounded by a lot and brick house, the residence of Superintendent Wood; on the south, by Carrol Prison (then Duff Green's Row or Contraband Hospital). Opposite the front of

the building lay the East Capitol grounds, containing the sitting statue of Washington, and of course, just beyond, the East Capitol front. On the north side the ground declined into a valley through which passed the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and the upper windows on East Capitol Street commanded a fine view of the country seats to the north of the city—St. Aloysius Cathedral, Harewood, and the woods about Soldiers' Home.

Viewed from the street the building offered no conspicuous peculiarity if one excepts the ancient and wide arched doorway in the center and the wooden latticing over the windows. Originally it had been the Capitol of the country, later it was converted into a congressional boarding-house, and as such was used when the war broke out.

A glance sufficed to show that this was no place where modern science had helped to hold secure the prisoners by the strength of the walls within or without—that it was, on the contrary, one of the many makeshifts to which an unexpected war had driven the authorities, and that the real walls were necessarily the bayonets, the bullets, and above all the incorruptibility of the soldiers who guarded the premises. The first room on the ground floor as one entered was utilized as a guardroom, and was occupied by the relief off duty. The room adjoining was the barracks. The next interior room was the office, occupied by the superintendent, clerk, captain of the guard,



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and officer in command of the guard on daily duty. Here parties who were admitted held interviews with the prisoners in the presence of the guard. Here also prisoners were registered, searched, admitted, and discharged. The clerk sent to my office every morning a copy of his register on which had been entered the prisoner's name, rank, and residence, the offense charged, and the officer committing. The rest of the ground floor and half of the rooms on the upper floor (front) were occupied by prisoners of war (rebel). The rest of the lower floor was occupied by Union soldiers under sentence. The inner rooms were reserved for prisoners of State. The lower floor of the addition in the rear was used as a washhouse and a dining-room, and the upper story as a hospital.

The officers of the prison were a superintendent (a citizen), and his assistant, a surgeon and hospital steward, and a captain of the guard who was on permanent duty, with a battalion of infantry. The superintendent derived his authority directly from the Secretary of War. The following shows his powers and responsibilities:

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 13, 1862.

Ordered, That William P. Wood be and is hereby Superintendent of the Military Prison called the Old Capitol Prison, and that he has possession, control, and management thereof, and of the prisoners that now

are or hereafter may be imprisoned therein, under the orders, rules, and regulations that shall from time to time be prescribed by the Provost Marshal with the sanction of this Department or that shall be given by the Secretary of War.

EDWIN M. STANTON,  
*Secretary of War.*

The rules framed and adopted by the Secretary were, in substance, that no person be admitted to the prison except on a pass issued by the Secretary of War, the military governor, or the provost marshal, and that, when admitted, he be permitted to abide there for only fifteen minutes and remain in the hearing and presence of a commissioned officer; that prisoners who could afford it were to be allowed such extras of food as they wished; that none were to be allowed to communicate together; that in case of fire the prisoners were to be at once assembled in the yard.

The captain commanding the guard held authority from the military governor and provost marshal, and was charged with the safe keeping of the prisoners.

It could be readily foreseen that two heads of one establishment—one military and the other civil, deriving their power from different sources—must needs prove very great friends not to come into conflict by the overlapping nature of their powers, or if not that, be brought into conflict by receiving orders from different sources that were not or did not appear consistent. My own duties

were to commit to this prison: (1) all prisoners of war; (2) all prisoners of State arrested by officers under me; (3) all prisoners sent me by the State or War Departments, and to inspect every room once a day. For releasing prisoners I never received any orders. Prisoners of war were, of course, held for exchange. But as for the release of the prisoners of state, no matter by whom committed, even if by myself, the inadequacy of provisions led to great troubles, as will be hereafter related.

On the occasion of my initial visit with Dr. Stewart, the first room we visited was that of Mrs. Rose Greenhow, imprisoned on a charge of having been instrumental in giving Jefferson Davis the information which led to our defeat at Bull Run, and of being too useful to the enemy to be permitted at large. We found her a tall but well-formed person, about forty-five years of age, with black hair that was beginning to turn gray. She had black eyes, an olive complexion, firm teeth, and small hands and feet. Her carriage was graceful and dignified, her enunciation too distinct to be natural, and her manners bordering on the theatrical. She had with her her daughter Rose, a child about eight years of age. In her room was all the furniture belonging to a second-class boarding-house, in which bedroom and sitting-room are combined—sewing machine, books, writing desk, and writing materials. She was actively writing when we entered and, when the doctor inquired about her health, deigned no

reply. As we were going, however, she inquired what this intrusion meant? Thereupon the doctor told her when a Union man called on a Secessionist it was not an intrusion but a favor. This doctor rasped up her sensibilities. To me alone she was always communicative.

Her history is in brief as follows: Her maiden name was McNeill. She was born in Montgomery County, Maryland, and, while a young girl, was with her sister (who married Madison Cutts and is the mother of Mrs. Douglas) placed under the care of her aunt, Mrs. Hill, who kept the old Congressional boarding-house in the Old Capitol building,—the same wherein she was afterwards imprisoned. Here she attracted the attention of Cave Johnson of Tennessee, who escorted her to balls and parties and introduced her to good society. She was at this time a bright, handsome, but illiterate country girl, and her fresh charm drew many admirers. Among others was Greenhow, an able young man, translator at the State Department, who kept a fine establishment and devoted himself absorbingly to abstruse studies. Greenhow finally married her.

Surrounded by such advantages, the vain girl did not fail to promote her ambitions and, in the circle where she was at first only tolerated, soon became a leader, famous for her beauty, the brilliance of her conversation, her aptitude for intrigue, the royal dignity of her manners, and the unscrupulous perseverance with which she accom-

plished whatever she set her heart upon. During her married life she lived in F Street, near the Ebbitt House, and there all her children were born. In — she went to California with her husband, who was killed by falling down a grating in San Francisco. Bringing suit against the city, she recovered damages. After her return to Washington, during Buchanan's Administration, she kept house in H Street, near Fifteenth, and her residence was the great headquarters of the Democracy. There was much gossip at this time arising from the intimacy between Mrs. Greenhow and the President.

When the Rebellion broke out, she was living with her daughter Rose (then about six years of age), on 16½ Street, in the rear of Lafayette Square and nearly opposite the White House. She had lost most of her beauty and vivacity—the society which she had charmed had passed away; still her masterly skill in managing affairs and turning them to her own account, or to that of her friends, her experience in parlor diplomacy, and her knowledge of all the forces which reigned at the Capitol made her still very formidable for good or for evil. Her love of notoriety and dread of sinking back into her early obscurity would have brought her into prominence, I have no doubt, under a peaceful administration of the Republican party. But when the aristocracy which had tolerated her, on account of her usefulness, was arraying its forces at Richmond against the plebeians who treated

her with scorn at Washington, she hesitated not an instant to throw her whole weight into the Southern scale. As far as one could see, her object was to be made a Southern martyr, to gain that applause for heroism which was now denied her beauty, and permanently to secure that place among the "first families" which her obscure birth had always rendered doubtful. Her room became a favorite rendezvous of Secessionists during the last days of Buchanan's Administration and the first of Lincoln's. She boasted of her success in beating the Union Army at Bull Run—and I have no doubt the moment of her arrest was the happiest of her life; for though seized at her own home and sent to the Old Capitol, she had the gratification of reading in the Northern papers her denunciation, and in the Richmond journals her eulogy. During her stay at the Old Capitol, she exerted herself to be as troublesome as possible and met her keepers successively with flattery, coquetry, denunciations, and finally with billingsgate, writing letters continually to every one she knew about the military authorities. About mid-summer, General Wadsworth grew very tired of her, and sent her before an informal commission of citizens, which sat behind closed doors. This was a sore disappointment to her for she looked forward to the notoriety of a public trial. She wanted to be estimated a dangerous stateswoman, but she was held only as an intermeddler with politics and finally sent to Richmond. Meanwhile,

she amused herself by running into the entry and pointing an empty pistol at the head of the guard, and by sewing Secession flags on her machine and hanging them out of the window.

From Richmond she went to England and wrote a book claiming that the victory of Bull Run was due to her treachery. On her return she perished miserably by drowning in Wilmington Harbor, being dragged down, according to the account at the time, by the English sovereigns realized from the sale of her work. I imported a copy, for which I paid \$16.00 in gold.

In my opinion, it was a mistake to arrest her, or, when arrested, to keep her one hour in Washington, as the real Secession families of the District laughed at her pretensions and would have nothing to do with her.

Another female prisoner of State was Mrs. Morris of Alexandria, daughter of a baker in the city. She was charged with giving intelligence to the enemy. She was an exceedingly fascinating and pretty little woman of about thirty, and of a temper so good that even imprisonment did not sour it. She always had a word of badinage for the officers. The first time I visited her, she pointed to the opening lines of Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon*, written over her mantel:

“Eternal Spirit of the chainless mind!  
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty! Thou art.  
 For there thy habitation is the heart—  
 The heart which love of Thee alone can bind,”

and wished to know whether we expected to subdue her. She referred to the "inexorable Danton" (Stanton) or the "Brigand Sergeant" (Brigade-Surgeon Stewart?). By pretending to be in *deshabille* at the time of the morning inspection, she used to worry the doctor very much.

A third woman, Mrs. Bagsley, was about fifty years of age, and was the most defiant and outrageous of all the female prisoners.

A fourth had been arrested as a spy, being dressed in men's clothing, and still wore the masculine garb. All of these women, except the last mentioned, who cleared herself, were sent to Richmond. At first they were allowed free access to one another's rooms, but later they were confined separately.

The arrested officers of the Union Army also had a high-ceilinged room on this floor, provided with bunks, wood-fire, and benches; but one officer was confined during my incumbency of the office for open treason on the field. He belonged to the Regulars and was of Southern birth. The other officers had been committed because of offenses too grave to admit of mere official arrest. They were either serving out sentences of court-martial or awaiting summary dismissal. One of those incarcerated was an officer who, when drunk, had repeatedly denounced the President. Another had been convicted of stealing, another was guilty of infamous practices, and so on.

One Sunday afternoon, while going the rounds,



I found here, a young, slimly-built, blue-eyed officer, whose shoulder straps indicated that he was a lieutenant-colonel. He informed me he belonged to a New York cavalry regiment, had been summarily dismissed for using disrespectful language respecting the President, and had been arrested in a street-car by one of Baker's detective force. He showed me a copy of the *New York Herald* and asked to be released on the ground that, in accordance with the statement in the paper, he was no longer in the army. I asked him to write me a letter presenting his case in its entirety. He did so. Finding that he had an excellent record, had come to Washington, and while under the influence of liquor had talked too loudly of the President, I recommended his restoration to the service. He was accordingly restored. By next summer he had won the rank of brigadier-general, and I was brigaded with him a short time. He later became one of our most distinguished cavalry generals.

The excuse most officers of our army gave for the extraordinary excesses many committed on coming to Washington, was that being unused to liquor and drinking freely of the vile stuff sold in the Capitol, they became temporarily insane. It was to me a matter of surprise that so many of these unfortunates, who were often of good family, were degraded for this species of insubordination, and I could only explain it by taking into account the American habit of free speech, and the very

violent language the best Union men employed during our reverses against the powers who conducted the war.

Another room was set aside for Union soldiers, privates who were serving out sentences. These offenders were on the lower floor, generally fastened with ball and chain. They gave the most trouble and, in spite of the utmost vigilance, were constantly caught in the act of escape.

The tier of rooms facing to the north was occupied by rebel officers and prisoners of State. The former were generally extremely quiet and submitted to their confinement with excellent grace, as well they might, for they were very well fed, had a coal grate in each room, lived in rooms accommodating eight or ten, had cards, newspapers, and were out of the reach of bullets. Sometimes they tried to escape. Two had already escaped on the north side of the prison, out of the second-story window. I ordered the guard to be doubled on that side. In the morning I read in the daily report that an officer of the Southern Army had been shot in the thigh trying to escape and was not expected to live. The surgeon went down and amputated his limb. He died in the course of the day. Before his death it transpired that he had been in collusion with the guard and had paid him about \$70 for conniving at his escape. The fellow took the money and then, when the prisoner was half-way out of the window, ordered him back, and when the latter refused,

shot him. This dastardly fellow was ordered before court-martial, but through some of the loopholes in red-tape he managed to escape punishment.

Every day for an hour, when the weather permitted, the Confederate as well as all other prisoners, were allowed exercise in the yard. At such times there were great comparings of notes and, as during my time most of the news consisted of the rebel victories of Jackson and the defeats of McClellan before Richmond, the congratulations and boasts were not stinted. To all Union officers the Confederates were extremely reserved and haughty. They made no complaints and asked no favors. In fact, there were no favors to ask which they had not already been accorded.

The Secretary of War had given a standing permission to three leading rebels of Washington to bring luxuries to these prisoners, and they fared sumptuously every day. Whenever they started out for exchange, they were equipped by this committee with brand-new rebel uniforms. I could never exactly reconcile this procedure with good loyalty, especially in view of the fact that our own men were treated so roughly at Richmond; and drew up a report to that effect under Martindale when he was military governor.

For example, one day 130 rebels were marched out, under escort of the 86th N. Y., to the steamboat wharf, where they were put on board one of the government transports bound for Fortress

Monroe. Most of them walked, but thirty who were sick, followed in wagons. Among those released were Lieutenant-Colonel Reynolds, taken at Fort Donelson, Captain Monaghan, and Richard Washington, who marched in front of the procession. All of these prisoners except the sick had grown fat on luxuries provided by the committee. The same body had supplied them with full Confederate uniforms, gray pants, coats, caps, some hats with black feathers, and high-top boots. The released prisoners walked as if they were in better condition for service than they had ever been. As on the march so in the hospital there was no luxury or medical attendance, no appliance in the wards of sweet air, no comfortable beds or mosquito nets, or confections which they did not get when sick. What a contrast to Andersonville and Libby!

Among the prisoners of State were spies, blockade-runners, Northern editors, contractors, mail-carriers, smugglers, hostages, and the like. I shall refer to a few of each class.

JAMES CONNOR was sent to me by the provost marshal general of General Sigel's Corps, charged with being a rebel spy. The allegations were that the pickets had caught him hovering about our lines and within them in a suspicious manner. Furthermore, on being searched, a memorandum book had been found on his person filled with geographical notes, taken between Richmond and

Aquia Creek, together with Confederate money and papers.

He was of venerable appearance, heavily built, old, and with a beard of bushy white hair. He spoke with the accent and had the manner of an educated Englishman.

The story he gave me was that he had been in business as an iron founder at Richmond, and that, being thrown out of employment, he had determined to get North to relatives in Canada (whose address he could not give), that he avoided our pickets from fear of being picked up, that the memoranda found upon him he had kept pursuant to his custom of jotting down noteworthy incidents and references to places on the way.

The judge advocate gave the case a patient hearing and after a thorough examination came to the conclusion that the old man's simplicity was assumed, the entries in his diary a ruse to cover unwritten observations stored up in his memory, and that he was just such an unsuspecting character as a capable general would select for a spy. Accordingly, as a spy he was held.

It was just such a case as would be hopeless before any tribunal which assumes that the prisoner is guilty and expects him to prove himself innocent, and precisely such a person as a detective would believe guilty because every one is in his estimation as acute and subtle as he is himself.

The military governor had his doubts and referred the testimony to me.

Against the accused were these facts: General Winder had passed him North (something unusual). Stewart had passed him out of his lines (another unusual circumstance). He had gathered valuable information on the route; he had avoided our pickets as a scout; he had a map of the country before Washington done in lead pencil, most useful to the rebel cavalry; he was caught inside our lines and esteemed a spy by those who captured him as well as by the provost marshal general of the army and the judge advocate.

In his favor stood these circumstances: In his diary were entered reflections of a moral nature on the vandalism of both parties at the grave of Washington, such as an intelligent but indifferent foreigner might make. On the supposition that he was a foreigner out of a job, making his way to Canada, somewhat eccentric in his habits and, therefore, turned loose by the Rebels, it appeared clear that the man's story was true.

With the supposition that he was a spy, his conduct scarcely agreed. The *bona-fide* spy, when in danger of capture, hastens to give himself up and requests permission to take the oath of allegiance, pretends to hate the bogus government, and idolizes the old flag. Connor did not care one straw for the differences between Lincoln and Davis, nor for the oath or flag, but only wanted

liberty to go to work on British soil. I released him.

The judge advocate was not satisfied. To test the question, we got detectives to trail him. After loitering a few days at Washington viewing the public buildings, he traveled North on foot, made his way slowly through New York State, and crossed into Canada at Niagara Falls. His memorandum book was still kept up and he made notes of the same character in New York State as he did in Virginia.

Occasionally, however, we had the real spy.

HEADQUARTERS PROVOST MARSHAL'S OFFICE,  
WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 1863.

Major RICHARDSON,  
Scott's 900 Cavalry.

MAJOR:

It is represented at these Head Quarters that I. H. Boyle, a Captain of C.V.A., and a member of Stewart's Staff, is at present staying at the house of his father, Dr. Boyle, in U. Marlboro, Md., wearing his uniform and defying the vigilance of the Federal authorities. It being very desirable to increase the collection of Confederate officers in the Old Capitol after the proclamation of Jefferson Davis, you are directed to send a force sufficient to capture him and bring him to these Head Quarters.

Very respectfully,

W. E. DOSTER,  
*Lieut.-Col. & Prov. Marshal.*

HEADQUARTERS MOUNTED PROV. GUARD,  
Jan. 21, 1863.

Lieut.-Col. W. E. DOSTER,  
*Prov. Marshal.*

SIR:

I respectfully report that Lieutenant French left camp last night at 10 P.M. for Marlboro, Md., with 16 men. At 4 miles beyond Anacostia Bridge they overtook 6 detectives of the War Dept. and followed them into town. He was unable to find the residence of Dr. Boyle, being answered by those of whom he made inquiries, that the Doctor had left town six months ago, in consequence of which he was obliged to remain in an old barn from half past two until four o'clock, when, having discovered the house, he surrounded it with his force, and, entering the house himself, found Captain Boyle in the custody of the detectives, who reported having arrested him in a house where he usually slept, about three quarters of a mile from his father's. Captain Boyle admitted that he was in the Rebel service and on Stewart's Staff.

The Chief of Detectives requested to be escorted to this city with the prisoner by Lieutenant French's Detachment, fearing that some demonstration might be made by the people of the town, which request was complied with.

Very respectfully,  
Your obedient servant,  
G. W. RICHARDSON, *Maj.*

On his person were found communications to and from the Rebel authorities.



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A few days before this, Captain CHARLES POWELL, also of Stewart's Cavalry, was captured within our lines by General Sigel. He was frank, acknowledged his identity, and showed his Confederate commission. He stated he was acting on behalf of the Confederate Government. He wore, when captured, a dark overcoat, which, he said, was taken at Dunfries from one of our soldiers. It was originally light blue, like all the soldiers' overcoats, but was colored by the use of a butternut dye, at a factory at Gordonsville, where this change from Federal to Confederate went on. These men were both confined in the Old Capitol.

Miss D. M. DIETZ of Alexandria was confined for carrying a Rebel mail between Richmond and Baltimore, and was captured in the following manner:

The Secession element had a kind of crude organization in the District of Columbia, with three separate headquarters where secret conclaves were held, letters for the South collected and delivered, and plans for sending intelligence to and aiding prisoners were made. These were also the points where Southerners gathered to rejoice over our defeats or lament over their own. To deceive the authorities, their headquarters were changed from time to time. Their meetings could easily have been broken up, but it was deemed more prudent to introduce detectives and checkmate them.

One of these rendezvous was on Capitol Hill,

at the house of Mrs. Phillips; another on 7th near E Street, at the house of Mr. McAllister; the third, in Georgetown, at the house of Miss Annie Mathews. At each of these visited, on terms of intimacy, a detective, in the guise of refugee, paroled prisoner of war, or Rebel spy.

To assume the first character—refugee, the detective needed only to borrow a Southern butternut suit at the Old Capitol and hail from some remote region in the South. A better part was that of paroled prisoner, to act which the detective had first to study well the local geography, the names of firms, families, and streets in Richmond—all of which he could learn in the Old Capitol. The most efficient part, however, was that generally adopted—Rebel spy. To such an agent were confided the more secret despatches and the greatest danger of treason was averted through the intercepting of this kind of intelligence. To succeed in the rôle of Rebel spy, the detective had to have a good knowledge of localities and families in Washington and Richmond and the intervening region. It was also incumbent on him to produce credentials from prominent men in Northern Virginia, and a budget of letters from the South. Of the last mentioned we had great numbers, having frequently made seizures of mails, and having acquired collections made at the headquarters by spurious mail-carriers and seizures effected before the missives came to the carrier's hands. The mail-carriers, however, got

shy of the headquarters and gathered and distributed letters at the houses of persons reputedly loyal. The arrival or departure of the mail was well marked by the great rush for papers to the Old Capitol which accompanied these events to get or give news to friends. As all letters written in the Old Capitol, or addressed to those incarcerated, passed through my hands, the messages enclosed always told of the mail's arrival or departure. Frequently letters, received in this way by outsiders, were sent through me for delivery or by prisoners to be delivered to friends for transmission by the secret mail. But who carried them? To follow the clew by inquiring of the person who received them was futile. "They were put under the door during the night and found in the morning," or "an unknown person left them without saying one word."

The detectives tried in vain to deliver letters to the carriers direct. They were permitted to drop their letters into a bag. They watched the bag, but it disappeared mysteriously. It was necessary to adopt an entirely new policy. For three weeks all detectives were withdrawn from Secession circles; at the end of that time these wary agents had lost some of their timidity.

A letter now came to the Old Capitol mentioning incidentally news received from the South that day. Through the persons who wrote it, it was ascertained that a mail-carrier had been at Washington that day and would return next day

to receive her mail matter at a house in the neighbourhood of 13th Street and New York Avenue. The detectives patrolled the neighborhood but reported the presence of no suspicious-looking woman in the vicinity.

The same day (Saturday) I passed through the Guard House and found in an upper cell a young woman begging piteously to be released. She stated that, on passing the Old Capitol, she had waved her handkerchief to an acquaintance, whereupon the guard had arrested her. The captain of the guard in making the arrest had only complied with the standing orders. Her act was, of course, only a minor offence in itself. I examined the record and found it agreed with her story, whereupon I released her. Her name was D. M. Dietz of Alexandria. On arriving at my office, one of the detectives reported that he had succeeded in securing the name and description of the mail-carrier that was to be at 13th Street and New York Avenue, but who had not made her appearance. It was D. M. Dietz, the very person I had just released! The subject of so much planning had been captured and released by mistake. Instant orders for her re-arrest were sent to the guard house, but she had already boarded a train from which she alighted when a few miles outside the city. A despatch to Baltimore ordering her arrest was unavailing.

However, she was known by name and by sight and was soon afterwards captured in Washington.

Her association with the carrying of the last mail was then established beyond a doubt.

The following will give the reader some idea of the contents of a Georgetown rebel mail:

ABSTRACT

Miss M. "Beauregard" H. of Georgetown forwards letters to Mrs. D., Richmond, by the latter's brother. Is a bitter Secessionist and evidently knows the secrets of the mail route. Who is Mrs. D.'s brother? Miss A. M. of Georgetown writes to Mr. A. E. M. Richmond. Speaks of "Billy" being married to Miss M. Says she writes with the O. C. P. staring her in the face. Her servant Ann was recently married to Mr. I. D.'s man. "Pussy s" uncle left Georgetown, carried with him \$1000. in gold. Lucy at School in Germantown, near Philada.

Mrs. L., Georgetown (sister of Mr. T.), writes to her daughter Miss V. at H. T., Virginia. Says S. keeps his trunks packed to go to Dixie if he is drafted. Has a son I. in the South. Mrs. P., sister of Mrs. B. whose husband is in the State Department at Richmond, is staying with Mrs. L.

Miss A. (sister of I. R.) writes to him at Mobile, Ala. H. E. Q. of E. 36th St., N. Y., also writes to him.

P. F. B., Georgetown, writes to Mr. I. S. B. at C. C. H., mentions receiving a letter by Miss A. M. B. also writes to the Rev. Dr. N. at Richmond.

The Rev. T. C. Conrad, a schoolmaster of Georgetown, was arrested for teaching his scholars the heresy of Secession, holding communication with the enemy, and sending his boys as recruits

to Lee's army. He was held in the Old Capitol. The Rev. Dr. Nouse and General Rogers were arrested at Middleburg, Virginia, as prominent Secessionists, and held as hostages for the good behavior of the Government of the Confederacy towards Union men captured by the Rebels at Fredericksburg. The Right Rev. Bishop Wilmer, who had gone South with his family at the beginning of the war, ran the blockade with letters from Jefferson Davis and other prominent leaders of the Confederacy, deputing him, as the delegate of the Southern wing of the Episcopal Church, to go to England and institute fraternal relations with the Church. The Bishop was caught by Harwood's fleet and examined. He was a most virulent Secessionist in spite of his cloth, and chafed much at the indignity of arrest. His explanation of his mission was to the effect that he was sent to collect bibles for the Southern churches.

General Martindale, who examined Bishop Wilmer, had no doubt that he was a Southern commissioner, instructed to get all the English aid possible by using his influence in the Church of England to carry out the plans of Davis. He was sent to the Old Capitol, but to spare him the humiliation of incarceration and out of respect for his cloth, he was assigned to the parlor of the superintendent's house.

A lawyer, a wealthy farmer of Marlboro, and a merchant of Colesville were sent to the Old

Capitol for aiding and abetting the desertion of Union soldiers.

As the roads around Washington were closely guarded and a strong circle of pickets was thrown about Baltimore, it was an extremely hazardous undertaking for Federal soldiers to pass through either city without being challenged or required to show authority for their absence. Every train that left Washington for the North, besides being examined *en route*, was also inspected by guards who entered at Annapolis Junction. After the first few battles of the Peninsula, when most of our troops smelt powder for the first time, it was found that many deserters from the Army of the Potomac turned up in Baltimore and were there arrested. There was, it was obvious, either great negligence or corruption among the Washington police, or else an underground railroad passing around Washington. The former hypothesis was not long tolerated, the visits of the officers of the day showing great vigilance, and the frequent changes in troops forbidding such systematic connivance as the multitude of deserters implied.

At length, under promises of freedom, a deserter confessed that he had been shipped North by a Rebel agency, which furnished rations and supplied transportation by steamboat between Alexandria and Baltimore over a circuitous route entirely free from pickets. The particulars were as follows: At Alexandria the deserter was taken by an agent to a private ferry and ferried over the Potomac

to the Leonardstown Road. Here he met many other deserters and together they were carried by stages through Long Old Field and Upper Marlboro to Fair Haven on the Chesapeake shore. Thence they were conveyed by a steamer to Baltimore. During the trip they were supplied *gratis* with citizens' clothing, food, passage, and money. With this information before me, I determined to make an end of the business.

Two private soldiers of the 86th N. Y. were dressed in their ordinary uniforms and ordered to go to Alexandria and allow themselves to be shipped to Baltimore by the new route. They were to note the names and the appearances of the parties who assisted them to reach their destination. At the same time, they were strictly charged not to take the initiative, and to distinguish sharply between friendship offered a soldier in the way of hospitality and the assistance thrust on the deserter. At Baltimore they would be picked up as deserters and, of course, returned to Forrest Hall Prison, whence, by an understanding with the officer in charge, they were to be liberated and at once make their report.

A week elapsed before I heard anything of my counterfeit deserters. I began to fear they had been discovered or that some untoward incident had befallen them. At length they arrived and reported. They told the same story as that related by the real deserter, with the additional feature that an agent on the steamer distributed



citizens' clothing and gave directions how after reaching Baltimore to proceed North.

Orders were given for the simultaneous arrest of all the agents along the route and the seizure of their line of stages and steamboats. Four detachments of cavalry consisting each of one commissioned officer and ten men were detailed to surprise Alexandria, Long Old Field, Marlboro, and Fair Haven. They were to move by circuitous routes and each make its seizures at six in the morning. They succeeded in their undertaking and at three o'clock next day the entire Rebel agency for Federal deserters rode down the avenue in its own coaches to the Old Capitol.

Desertion by this route ceased.

BELLE BOYD was a lively, spirited young lady, full of caprices and a genuine Rebel. In person she was tall, with light hair and blue eyes. Her features were too irregular to be pretty. It was her dashing manner (fashioned after Lady Gay Spanker), and air of joyous recklessness which made her interesting. At the time of her arrest she was living with her father, a farmer, beyond Winchester, and became known for the influence her coquetry acquired over the Union officers under Banks, and for the information she gave Jackson. I never saw the charges against her, as she was arrested by order of the Secretary of War, but the detective who arrested her told me that

she had been employed as a Confederate scout, riding between the lines of the two armies and equally intimate at the headquarters of each. She was taken to the room formerly occupied by Mrs. Morris and, as she was at the time the only woman prisoner in Washington, was well pleased with the attention of which she found herself the object.

The first time I called on her, she was reading *Harper's* and eating peaches. She remarked she could afford to remain here, if Stanton could afford to keep her. There was so much company and so little to do. Besides, it was an excellent chance to brush up her literature and get her wedding outfit ready. This defiant indifference soon subsided. Open air and horseback exercise were in her case constitutional necessities. She soon began to languish and begged to be permitted to walk out in the company of an officer. The Secretary, to whom the request was referred, refused to grant the permission. Then she became subdued, always, however, jesting with the surgeon and asking when he intended to give her the medicine he had prescribed—freedom? During the whole stay, she was never, to my knowledge, found in ill-humor, but bravely endured a tedious and companionless imprisonment.

She used to say she was a Rebel to the backbone and, if she had the chance, intended to help the Confederate cause all she could.

After about three weeks' imprisonment, she was

sent, much against her will, to Richmond. She said she was engaged to marry an officer of the Rebel Army and wanted to buy her trousseau in Washington before leaving. Of course, the Secretary would not listen to the suggestion. After she arrived at Richmond, however, she sent a schedule of the articles she wanted to Mr. Wood, the superintendent, who, I understood, forwarded them to her under flag of truce.

One day there called upon me a young gentleman of twenty, one of the Maryland branches of the Lee family (who are divided into the Red Lees and the Black Lees, General Lee being a Black Lee). He reported himself as paroled by General Porter. He had early in the war run off from Richmond and had been caught in Maryland, where he was visiting a young lady of whom he was enamored. I could find no register of his parole, but suffered him to continue as if on parole. He took the oath of allegiance and appeared to become thoroughly Union in his sentiments. He afterwards applied for permission to join his relatives in Richmond. He offered his parole of honor not to join the Confederate forces. His request was granted and he was exchanged.

Nevertheless, he soon turned up in the Confederate Army. It is charitable to assume that he was obliged to serve.

I was acquainted with the son of our Minister to Copenhagen and received a call from him. He was at the time a student of Georgetown College.

When I returned the call about a month later, he informed me that he had run the blockade to Richmond and returned perfectly disgusted with the Confederacy. He seemed then perfectly loyal. I heard nothing further from him for some four months. Then he wrote me a letter from the Old Capitol. I visited him and found him a prisoner of war, utterly demoralized and out of funds. He wanted to take the oath. This time, however, he was sent back and exchanged.

The most perfect farce ever played was the pardoning of prisoners at the Old Capitol, or the administering of the oath of allegiance. The prisoners used to take the oath under duress and considered themselves not bound to observe it because they were not free agents when the obligation was assumed.

WILLIAM P. WOOD, the superintendent, was an ex-soldier, ex-filibuster, and ex-model-maker. He had served in Mexico, in the Mounted Rifles 3d Regulars, in Captain Andrew Porter's Company (afterwards general provost marshal). He then joined Walker's Nicaragua expedition and finally was model-maker at Washington, where as a witness in the Woodworth patent case he made the acquaintance of Edwin M. Stanton. Stanton afterwards appointed him superintendent. He was in many respects a remarkable man—short, ugly, and slovenly in his dress; in manner affecting stupidity and humility, but at bottom the craftiest

of men. For some reason, which no one could fathom, he was deeper in the War Office than any man at Washington, and it was commonly said that Stanton was at the head of the War Office and Wood at the head of Stanton. I remember once that finding occasion to make some rule sanctioned by the Secretary, and demanding obedience to it, Wood refused contemptuously to carry it out, and on my applying to Assistant Secretary Watson for a special order to enforce it, Watson told me that when the order giving Wood unlimited power in the Old Capitol was issued, Provost Marshal Porter came to the War Department one day furious with rage, saying his own orders had been contemptuously rescinded by "that dog of a citizen Wood," whom he used to tie up by the thumbs in New Mexico, and on the ground that he was amenable to no one but the Secretary himself, Porter demanded Wood's instant dismissal from the post. Stanton heard him out and then gave him the alternative either of being insulted by Wood or resigning his commission. Porter succumbed but hastened to go into the field to escape the hazy atmosphere of Washington, where they made brigadier-generals submit to citizens.

I knew very well, then, that it was dangerous to interfere with Wood. But I was so placed that in obedience to the orders of the military governor, I was obliged to visit daily all the prisoners. I could not see them innocently imprisoned without

making an effort to have them released; and I considered it preëminently my right to release persons committed by me, whenever I deemed it just they should be liberated.

The captain of the guard, too, could never as a soldier stand under a civilian and these circumstances caused continual friction.

The great fault of this prison (and one for which the Secretary is and ought to be blamed) was that it operated like a rat-trap—there was only a hole in but no hole out; in other words, plenty of provision for arresting people, but none for trying them or disposing of their cases.

Baker could arrest, the detectives could arrest, the military governor could arrest, the provost marshal could arrest, the Secretary and each of his two assistants could arrest, but none of them could discharge without running great risk of getting into trouble with some or all of the others.

The consequence was that the prison was constantly crowded with people, many of whom, when their cases came to be investigated, had waited for a long time to offer a simple explanation.

General Wadsworth felt this matter very keenly, and could never allude to it without expressing his indignation at the Secretary's policy. "If they are guilty," he said, "this imprisonment is too light,—if they are innocent, a day's confinement is too long." But nobody was responsible. The charges against the people incarcerated by order of the Secretary were on file in the War Office,

but neither I nor the Governor were allowed, as a rule, either to see the prisoners or to hear what was alleged against them.

As for those arrested by order of our office, or committed, as was often the case, by scores, sent in from all parts of the country, I visited daily each chamber occupied by such, let every occupant tell me his story, and, if it seemed truthful, asked him to commit it to writing and send it to me. Days were then appointed for the examination of special cases, and if I was convinced that the accused was innocent of the charges, I released him at the office. As long as I did this, all went smoothly. But the moment I sent an order down to the superintendent or to the captain to release any prisoner of whose innocence I was convinced, the superintendent would bring charges against me at the War Department, which I was obliged to answer. This, then, was the situation—to commit was meritorious, to release was criminal,—and this continued so, in aggravated form until I went away.

The military governor at length secured the consent of the War Office to the establishment of a commission, which sat about a month after our coming thither and disposed of the cases then on hand. But the great multitude of prisoners which arrived every week required the constant sitting of a board of officers. This was detailed and very successfully acted on the cases submitted to it. The difficulty was that the board only remedied

the one evil (which was the greater, it is true); they could only release, but neither acquit nor punish. Furthermore, the board passed judgment only on prisoners of war and on our own soldiers confined under grave charges and not on the cases of prisoners of State. Immediately after the battle of Bull Run I resolved to test the question whether, of all this crowd of citizen offenders, no one could be punished by a severer sentence than "to be held until further orders."

A mail carrier of Washington named Vincent had gone out on the field of Bull Run and had been captured with other Union nurses.

After they were all exchanged and again in Washington, three of these nurses came to the office and testified that, while at Richmond, Vincent had in their presence cursed the Washington government, had given the Rebels a complete plan of our fortifications, and had been as useful to them as he possibly could be, even boasting that he had been willingly captured for that purpose. He had, furthermore, invited the Rebels to his house should they come to Washington.

The order of the President directing civilians to be court-martialed in certain cases, as provided for by Act of Congress, had then been issued. I preferred the necessary charges against Vincent and sent them up.

The Secretary sent them back, first, with the remark that treason was not a military offense and not triable by court-martial or commission.



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They were corrected and returned disapproved as it was impossible to try a citizen without declaring martial law.

Accordingly, I released Vincent on bail upon the doctor's representation that he had consumption and was slowly wasting away.

For this release I was then charged by Wood with disloyalty, and called to account by the Secretary. This was the Secretary's method: if you tried to punish traitors, it was wrong; if you let them go, it was wrong too.

I do not know that the consequences of the Secretary's system of jail without jail-delivery were very serious except in one case. It is true that when I did see those who suffered from it, as happened occasionally by mistake, they expressed an amount of settled revenge such as "cutting his heart out," "following him to his dying day," and the like, which were sufficient to have terrified him had he heard. It is, however, not very flattering to the consistency of the hatred of the American people to know that those who expressed the greatest and most enduring vengeance appeared to forget their set purpose as soon as they were liberated, and seemed rather anxious that other people should forget it likewise. If the Secretary acted on that principle, he had nothing to fear from retribution.

There was a captain of the Regulars, Elwood by name, who mustered me into the army, and was mustering and disbursing officer at Washington.

He was a rather weak-minded gentleman, but amiable and courteous. On suspicion of his having taken monies of the Government for his own use, Stanton arrested him and sent him to Carrol Prison. I knew that he had disappeared but could only conjecture what his fate was. One day I read in my morning report from the captain commanding that one of the prisoners had committed suicide, and was ordered by the Secretary the evening after to hold an inquest. I sent for the coroner to do that and at the same time summoned a few officers to attend. We found poor Elwood, his throat cut by his pen-knife, on the floor of a little inner chamber, where he had been lying since the previous night. The inquest decided he came to death by suicide.

The fact was that this gentleman had been snatched away without warning from his wife and children, who lived at Washington, kept three months, as far as I could learn, without communicating with a soul except the silent keeper who brought him his meals, and a detective of the War Department, who daily went up, made him confess to all sorts of things, badgered and confused him, and finally so mixed up his mind that in despair he took his own life.

Several very pertinent questions suggested themselves to the minds of the officers who saw this body. Why was not this officer tried by court-martial?

Why, if he was guilty, was it necessary to

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worm confessions out of him by detectives? Who ever authorized any Secretary of War to arrest Regular officers through spies, or place them under espionage? Whoever before dared to deprive an officer of his right to appeal to the President, his next superior officer?

A lieutenant in my regiment, a brother-in-law of the officer, came afterwards to claim on behalf of his family, his relatives' effects, which I understand he failed to secure.

This brings me to the War Department and its secret police.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE WAR DEPARTMENT AND ITS HEAD, 1862-63

UNDER a military officer at the head of the War Office, it is not likely that a subordinate like the provost of Washington would have often come into contact with the Secretary or his assistant.

One versed in the science and routine of war would not in all probability have wasted much of his time in attention to local matters at the Capitol, especially not those entrusted to the secret police. Had one so versed found it necessary to interfere he would have transacted his business with the military governor or later with the commander of the department of Washington.

The Secretary, however, and his assistant, Watson, were lawyers and Washingtonians—that is to say, they were no respecters of army routine and were too familiar with Washingtonians to be able to let local matters quite alone, and so they busied themselves very much with the duties of the provost marshal, and skipped the military governor and department commander in their communications.

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In this I could not see much policy, as there was no honor or glory to be gathered in such things by a Minister of War; on the other hand, a great deal of odium, that he could have shifted on other shoulders, was inevitable.

I have no doubt that acting as he did, the Secretary was inspired partly by a sense of duty, partly by a desire to oversee in person the smallest as well as the greatest matters, partly by the desire to convince people that his reputation for incorruptibility and his talent for stopping Government frauds, because of which he was appointed, were deserved.

Be that as it may, although Wadsworth and Martindale were my ostensible superiors, my real immediate superiors, from whom after a while I received my orders directly and to whom I either reported directly or through the military governor, were Edwin M. Stanton and Philip H. Watson.

The following were the circumstances under which I received my first impressions of the Secretary:

One of Blenker's German quartermasters had been arrested by Wadsworth's order for swindling the Government. On being searched, about \$700 were found on his person,—too much, in the general's estimation, for an honest quartermaster to have about him. The accused was committed for a further hearing. The same day a young and interesting-looking young German

woman came and begged with tears for the release of the "lieutenant," and when that was denied, she said he was her husband and that by his imprisonment her means of support had been entirely cut off. There were at this time many soldiers' wives in Washington; also many mistresses claiming to be wives, and Wadsworth would not do anything for her. Shortly thereafter I received an order to report myself at once to the Secretary of War. I did so, and found the German woman sitting on the sofa and Mr. Stanton standing by her side. When I entered, he wanted to know why this woman was not relieved. I told him the general had no evidence that she was what she claimed to be—a wife, but was inclined to think she was the mistress of the accused. "Well," said Stanton, "give her a weekly allowance out of the money seized until you can find out what she is."

Here was certainly justice, quick and safe, and with a strong leaning to the side of mercy.<sup>1</sup>

After this I was summoned almost daily and heard him give audience and despatch business. At 10 A.M. and 3 P.M. he gave receptions, each lasting about an hour. Before his entrance the hall and reception room were filled with an eager crowd. When he entered, it was with a quick step. He stood behind a high writing-desk reaching to his shoulders, placed near the window. He occupied the space between the desk and the window. This attitude and a certain irritable look

gave him somewhat the air of a schoolmaster, to whom his scholars came with complaints or to ask favors. He was a broad-shouldered man of about fifty, not more than five feet seven or eight inches in height, with a long brown beard, sprinkled with gray, and lively, though severe, little eyes that looked through spectacles. His complexion was dark and somewhat mottled as if with high living, his head about half bald. He would lean his left arm on the desk, settle his spectacles, and wait for people to come and state their business,—a peppery little man who looked as though he had not slept well, and as if it would not give him much pain to refuse your most urgent request.

The orderly would stand by the door (a red-headed cavalryman of my regiment), knowing very well that most of the applicants were wasting their time, and that nine out of ten would go away muttering curses. There was no noise, people conversed quickly and under their breaths. The adjutant-generals, orderlies, and clerks on duty moved gently and deferentially. The general feeling was that Stanton was no respecter of persons, precedents, formulas, or tape, and that he was capable of dealing heavy blows with great coolness and celerity.

“Influential” people tried their influence only once, acquaintances of the bar tried it and were rebuffed, corrupt people found themselves suspected before they drew near. Women in tears,

venerable old men, approached slowly—but withdrew quickly as if they had touched hot iron. A few got what they wanted and earned it in the getting.

Certainly the Secretary's facility in saying "no" was extraordinary.

Without searching far or deep, I think it was observable that his habit of mind was self-willed and inclined to oppose suggestions and propositions principally because they were not his own.

But at bottom there was nothing terrible. Stanton was an able, overworked Pittsburg lawyer, suddenly called on to play the combined rôles of Carnot and Fouché, apparently utterly ignorant of both rôles, and equipped with no special talent or habits other than the professional ones—ability to work, dogmatic temper, a bullying propensity. He was possessed of an assurance that lays hold of the most novel cases, a contempt for scientific training as compared with talent and labor, a keen insight into shams and disguises, an insensibility to all emotions except that of danger of bodily harm. This lawyer was really practicing law—his case a little larger than the Woodworth Patent, and a nation his client, but the difference was only in the size of the case. As in his law office, red tape, papers, precedents, decisions were his business here. As there he knew he could abuse his client as much as he chose, provided he won his case, so here he knew, no matter what he did, all would be right, if he



secured the verdict. One thing was mandatory, he must not throw up the case—that no good lawyer does. Now let all people stand aside and give him scope. He must make experiments; he must study his case; he must not be interrupted—before him he had an army to set in motion and behind him a hostile party to keep in check. His logic was now *logistics* and his *finesse* the secret police.

So he went on working up his case, obstinately having his own way, scolding this man, rewarding that one, reading and endorsing papers, in a perennial passion, doing gigantic labor, with apprenticed genius, until the temples throbbed, and after midnight, too busy, too earnest in search of the verdict to notice that he had hurt the feelings of the Court by his vehement disrespect for her venerable character—in other words, had become through arbitrary measures against citizens and against soldiers the most universally hated man in America.

No lawyer respects authorities that are cited against him—why should he reverence civil liberty or the army regulations if they stand in his way? The verdict—victory—the suppression of the Rebellion were the goal. Nothing else counted.

To show how inaccessible he was to State politics and the influence of former associations, I cite the case of a colonel of one of the Pennsylvania regiments, who had won eminence at the same bar, had been a fellow Democrat, and who, as soon as Stanton was appointed, was much culti-

vated, on account of his supposed influence with his old colleague, by people who had any favors to ask of the Secretary—and they were not few. The colonel was at this time on agreeable duty in Washington and hoped himself to get the governorship on McClellan's departure. To his astonishment he was relieved and ordered to join his regiment on the advance. After the battle before Richmond he came to Washington on sick leave and took rooms at Willard's. No officers were allowed here during this time even on sick leave unless by permission of Dr. Clymer, who was very strict, and Clymer had given him his certificate. The War Department, however, ordered him to the front. The colonel managed to get to the War Department and tried to persuade Stanton in a personal interview that he was suffering from chronic diarrhœa and unfit for service. Stanton, as soon as he saw him, ordered him to leave the room instantly, and on pain of dismissal join his command. The officer obeyed, but persisted in saying and believing ever afterwards that Stanton had exercised a mortal enmity against him and that there was no use staying in the service, while Stanton was at the Department. On the pressure of Governor Curtin the President soon after appointed this colonel a brigadier, but his name was not sent in. All this the colonel ascribed to Stanton's animosity, and resigned. I cite this incident to show how useless it was to try personal influence on Stanton.

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### STANTON'S CONTEMPT FOR ARMY OFFICERS

One day, when I was at the office, General Ripley was directed to report himself immediately. Stanton was standing by the window examining a new kind of lock for a musket, with one who appeared to be a contractor. General Ripley, a white-headed veteran and head of the Ordnance Bureau, entered and approached. Stanton asked him how many of the kind of lock he had adopted. Ripley answered. "Now," said Stanton, frowning, "if you dare to adopt another musket of this kind, I'll dismiss you from the service." "But, Mr. Secretary," interrupted Ripley. "Not another word," snapped out Stanton. "You can return to your Bureau." General Ripley flushed and passed, shaking as if struck with the palsy, through the crowd who had witnessed the incident.

This threat of dismissal was not uncommon. By orders issued at one time through the War Office, no one was allowed to visit any prisoner in the Old Capitol unless provided with a pass from the War Department. The public, of course, did not know of the change immediately and used to apply as formerly to me. My subordinates refused all applicants. Parties were, however, not to be put off. They would stay and insist on knowing where they could get a pass. Occasionally, to be rid of them, they were told that no one but the Secretary could issue a pass. Accordingly,

they would at once hasten to the Secretary and worry him. In such cases I would invariably be summoned to Stanton's presence, and the Secretary would say to the applicant, "Who sent you here?" "Some one in the provost marshal's office." Then, turning to me, "If this happens again, I'll dismiss you from the service." To have replied that I was not able to prevent people from calling on him would only have added fuel to the fire. This happened so frequently and was, in fact, so absurd, that I finally grew moderately indifferent to his outbursts, although the rebuke in the presence of citizens was not very flattering. Occasionally Stanton would meet his match. A judge from the interior of Pennsylvania, whose son was a colonel and home on sick leave, applied with his son to the Secretary in person, for an extension. The Secretary turned to the colonel and in an extremely insolent way bade him begone. The young man hastened to limp away, but the judge was not to be bearded in this way, and getting up from his chair, said:

"Sir, my son will not go to his regiment to die. He will go with me to the President, your superior officer, who will grant my reasonable request."

The Secretary stood as one in a trance and said no more.

NOTE.—See address on Lincoln.

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### ANOTHER INSTANCE OF STANTON'S RESPECT FOR PLUCK

A Pennsylvania butcher, wealthy and fat, came to Washington to bring his two sons and other boys blankets, to replace those they had lost in the battle of Fredericksburg. As he was an acquaintance of mine I went with him to Stanton and found the thing was impossible under the orders, which were imperative against transportation of citizens.

Nothing daunted, my friend pushed his way before the Secretary and finally in a rough way stated his case. The Secretary refused his request and passed on to the next. "Well," said the butcher, "how many sons have you got at Fredericksburg? I guess not many, or you wouldn't want to freeze mine." The pass was granted.

There was a queer story afloat at this time which, whether true or false, shows, at least, what people wanted to believe true.

A lieutenant of a cavalry regiment, stationed at Alexandria, received a dispatch announcing the death of a near relative and requesting him to come home. As the routine of red-tape was too slow for his case, he hastened to the War Department, where he encountered Mr. Stanton and humbly stated his case. Upon this Mr. Stanton without ceremony pushed him by the shoulders out of the door. The lieutenant in despair hurried to Willard's, got pretty drunk, mounted his horse,

and galloped wildly about on the road between Washington and Alexandria.

The same afternoon the Secretary rode out in a carriage, unattended except by the driver. He drove along the river road, where the outraged lieutenant was likewise. The latter, catching sight of the man who was the cause of his trouble, galloped alongside, and saying, "Aha! now it's my turn," grabbed Stanton by the beard, shook him, and let him drop. The story went farther,—it was stated that the Minister, afraid of publicity, let the affair pass over unnoticed.

When the Secretary's faults of manner and his indecisive policy at the Capitol are stated, I think that all that is detrimental has been said. These faults were very great and hard to endure. That they were inseparable from the order of ability he possessed, and which was absolutely indispensable at the time, I do not doubt. There was wanted some one who had no friends to repay for past services, and who cared not to make any in the future, one whose hands were free from State cliques, who understood how people were cheating the Government, and had the nerve to baffle them, one who had the courage, or rather audacity, not to be blinded by any plans of strategy or policy proposed by no matter how high a military authority, one who was utterly insensible to the clamors of the press, as regarded either military measures or his own continuance in office, one who had that dominance of feelings of duty over

sentiment necessary to execute a draft in a Republic, and that unbounded, dogged self-confidence which, when everybody gropes blindly for advice, is the very sublimity of manliness—in short, one who was able and willing to save the country at his own expense.

I do not pretend to insist that some one might not be found to combine all these qualities with suavity of manner, but I doubt it, and my impression is that the country at large understood his character, and that his resignation before the close of the war would have been esteemed, by the men who knew what he was doing, a calamity to the Union.

There was another point of view—one perhaps not generally considered—from which the Secretary's coarseness and arrogance were most effective virtues.

Any one who had much to do with the wealthier and more powerful class of Secessionists both at Washington and at New Orleans, or at any other large city, soon found that the animus of Secession was at bottom an idea fostered through many years of fashionable living and political flattery; that the Southerners were, after all, socially considered, a much better-bred and blooded people than the Northerners. In view of this assumption, it was idle to overcome a Southerner with arguments or with arms. He still maintained, however defeated, a reserve of aristocratic scorn. To meet that there was only one weapon—a brutal arro-

gance, with which to degrade Secessionists as far below their real level as their imaginations had exalted them above it. The idea was not only their own but they had spread it, and many a Northerner, who traveled in Europe before the war, will remember that these people had spread the belief among the better educated classes, that they were the nobility of the country and the Northerners the serfs, or *bourgeoisie*. It was therefore, in this American uprising of the Fauburg St. Antoine against the pretended Fauburg St. Germain, just as essential that their leaders should meet insolence with insolence, and pretensions of superior refinement with unmitigated coarseness and disdain, and these were the qualities in Stanton (as well as in Butler) that enabled them to undermine the foundations of Secession, while the army, by treating its opponents as equals, had rather a tendency to encourage it. I doubt whether any Secessionist, who passed through Stanton's rough hand, continued to have that lofty idea of his comparative social superiority that he entertained previously. "Contempt," says the proverb, "pierces even through the shell of the tortoise."

More than that, when Stanton was appointed, a military aristocracy of the Regular Army and of immense power had arisen in the bosom of the army of volunteers. This aristocracy had at its head the commander-in-chief and stretched its roots into every corps, regiment, and bureau,



defying the Government at home with only a little less disdain than Davis manifested at Richmond. It cannot be that one rebellion shall be put down by another. Our own army was first to be made subordinate to the President, and then the Southern Army made subordinate to it.

To relieve McClellan, court-martial Porter, and eliminate all traces of West Point class-traditions, uniting by nicknames, I consider victories as important as Appomattox, and these nothing but the wooden and numb audacity of Stanton dared to achieve.

Both Porter and Williams (McClellan's adjutant general) had permanent rooms in Washington at the house of a cousin of General Lee, an old lady whose two sons were in the Rebel Army. After Porter was court-martialed and dismissed, he ordered a beaver, which was sent home by the hatter with a card inscribed "Mr. Fitz-John Porter." He used to say he never felt the force of his sentence until he saw this card.<sup>2</sup>

This old lady, charming in every way except in her Secession proclivities, which were extremely bitter, had become poor and so straitened as to be obliged to let her rooms. Boarders, of course, she was unable to tolerate. Even then the old aristocracy was dominant, and she never allowed any of her lodgers to communicate with her or her daughters, unless they paid a formal call, rang the front-door bell, and sent in their names or

cards by the negro servant. Nevertheless, all the members of her family picked lint and relieved the sufferings in the hospitals to the best of their power—perhaps more than the real Union ladies of the Capitol.

Let me also give Stanton credit for never refusing to alleviate real—not fancied—distress, in all cases (and they were many) which I brought to his notice, including meritorious soldiers and officers who needed furloughs, reinstatements, promotions, and the like, always doing what he did promptly and with the air of a man who is glad of an opportunity of conferring a kindness as quickly as he is satisfied the object is deserving, and there is no attempt made to impose on him.

PHILIP H. WATSON, the Assistant Secretary, was like Stanton a Washington lawyer and associated with him in practice, with quite a reputation at the bar for skill in patent cases, plodding industry, and mechanical ingenuity. He had made a fortune in business, and it was a source of wonder that he should follow his partner into this laborious office which required the incumbent to work day and night like a drayman. His build was, like Stanton's, short and stout; but he had red hair and beard, and was younger than his chief. Under his direction and supervision was organized and carried on a system of secret police, which first consisted of one man, and culminated in a regular force called "National Detectives" presided over

by Colonel L. S. Baker. Of this system Watson was the inceptor and director.

The first time I came in contact with Baker was under the following circumstances: A medium sized, lean man of about forty, with a suspicious look about the eyes, came to my office and requested a commitment to send to the Old Capitol a prisoner he had arrested,—a detective whom, he said, he had been watching a long while in Alexandria, and who, according to this man's statement, was levying blackmail on the sutlers over there. I knew of no one who had authority to arrest in that way, and asked for his credentials. He refused to show any, at the time, and went away in a passion. Next day, from my morning report, I saw that the prisoner had been committed, by order of the Secretary of War. His name had, however, been withheld and his offense was not described. I inquired of Superintendent Wood who this Baker was, and was informed that he had a kind of roving commission under Watson. Wood's opinion of him was not good. I also inquired of the Pinkerton detectives and found the same opinion. I allowed something for professional jealousies but found the Washington police had him down as a doubtful character. Watson then told me that he found it necessary to have the man about, although he retained him on the principle of "set a rogue to catch a rogue." I was, however, surprised when he appointed him special provost marshal of the War Department as that gave him

free scope to act without the guidance of Watson—and such an extension of power I esteemed a dangerous thing.

The sequel showed that I was not far wrong. People of all sorts now suddenly disappeared and after a long interval were found to have been last seen entering the Carrol Prison, where neither Wadsworth nor the provost marshal of the District could see them, or even discover why they were there, and against whose incarceration even feeble remonstrance was very dangerous. Now began the reign of terror.

Wood, according to his own statement, acted in connection with other detectives as the inquisitor of these people, and secured the evidence. His way was, as he said, never to approach his subjects until separate and long confinement had made them anxious to talk and to beg for their release. He was always the personal friend who would get any one released provided he confessed. In time the most innocent would acknowledge himself guilty. In obstinate cases, a suspected accessory or near friend was imprisoned with the accused, their conversation overheard and taken down. In case there was no accessory or friend, then Wood created one, by confining in the same room a detective who feigned being guilty of the same charge. In more obstinate cases Wood used to counterfeit testimony convicting the prisoner, and read it to him. That would sometimes extort confession. At other times the prisoner was allowed to give

testimony in his own defense. With this, Wood mixed spurious evidence and read it to the prisoner who, seeing himself hopelessly entangled, would hasten to make a clean breast of matters and throw himself on the mercy of his torturer.

The extraordinary proceedings,—solitary confinement, a kind of inquisitorial process, denial of hearing, and examination even to regular officers and all kinds of Northern citizens, confiscations of property by detectives without preliminary notice or chance of redress, the arrival of a well-known character like Baker with almost dictatorial powers,—while it created fear and consternation everywhere, filled Wadsworth and myself with indignation, as we knew very well that the exigencies of the Service called for a retrenchment of the secret police—on which account the Pinkerton detectives were discharged—and that this creation of a regiment of detectives could be explained by nothing except a growing spirit of absolutism in the War Office. Military necessity could doubtless excuse the moderate use of detectives in the early stages of the war, when the machinations of Secessionists compelled the loyal citizens to stand guard over the White House. But at a time when the result depended on success in the field, the establishment of a special prison with solitary confinement and the subjection of people to mental torture by a thousand lawless characters, appeared entirely inexcusable.

How was this state of affairs to be remedied?

To protest was a very delicate matter. The people who had brought the subject to the attention of Congress were Coxe and Vallandigham, sympathizers with the Rebellion. How could any man use their arguments without taking their places in public estimation? The chief of the civil police was indignant but, as he was a native of the district, he was scarcely the man. The mayor was indignant, but as his predecessor had been sent to Fort Warren, he was not the logical person. The only man at this time who thought he might be a patriot without assenting to the proceedings of Watson and Baker was Wadsworth, whose position as the prospective candidate for governor on the Union side in New York and irreproachable character with the President placed him above suspicion of disloyalty to the Government. Wadsworth denounced these proceedings in the loudest terms, while he directed me to have nothing to do with Watson and the detectives of the War Office and to permit them to have no transactions whatever through or with me. Watson was not troubled much by this procedure. Instead of sending his orders through Wadsworth, and giving him a chance to disobey them, he sent them directly to me. Wadsworth then ordered me not to obey Watson unless by his consent. Watson got around this by summoning me to report to the War Office, gave me my orders, and bade me carry them out at once. In this awkward dilemma between the contending powers, Baker took advantage of the

situation to use his powers upon me, and successively preferred charges of misappropriation of Government funds, violation of the orders of the War Department in releasing prisoners at the guard house, excess of authority, connivance in the smuggling of liquor to the army, sympathy with traitors in releasing certain parties, while Wood preferred charges of sympathy with traitors because of the release of those detained at the Old Capitol. I answered these charges successfully and was acquitted in each case; and so complete was my vindication that Watson turned round and gave me directions to arrest Baker and any of his force that could be found at his office opposite Willard's, and send them to the guard house, which they had designed as a place of detention for me. Baker himself could not be found, but his subordinates were apprehended. Their chief ever afterwards left me in peace. The liquor pass, on which Baker preferred the charge that I had connived in the smuggling of liquor, turned out to be forged. This turned the tables. He either forged it himself, or shut his eyes purposely to the fact that it was forged, or was not sharp enough, detective though he was, to discover a forgery. Either alternative told against him.

Once only, I got into difficulties at the War Office. That came near resulting in my severing my connection with the army, in disgrace. One day, as I was going to my dinner, a servant brought a message from my next door neighbor, an ex-

officer of the navy, to the effect that there were two ladies who desired to see me at once. They had waited all day before the office and had been unable to get admission. Would I step in only for a moment? I entered and found an old lady and her daughter, a fine-looking girl of about twenty. They told me they lived beyond the lines of General Sigel and desired to return home that day. I asked, as usual, for letter of recommendation. They quickly produced a letter from a member of the Cabinet whom I knew well and who had often given me personal intelligence of Secession movements, and had placed at my disposal his colored servant in ferreting out such movements. The ladies produced, besides, General Wadsworth's pass not yet expired. Deeming this ample, I wrote on the back "renewed for thirty days" and signed my name. About three weeks after this and when, in the hurry of a thousand incidents, I had forgotten the event, I found on coming home one evening two men sitting on my doorstep, who, on being questioned as to their business, said they were resting. The thing looked suspicious and I began to scent trouble. Soon after, I was aroused one night at one o'clock by an orderly requiring my instant presence at the War Office. On going there, I found Mr. Stanton, Secretary of War, alone. He shut the door with much gravity and, handing me a piece of paper, wanted to know whether that was my signature. I answered "Yes." He then wanted to know by whose



authority I had passed two loads of quinine through Sigel's lines. I answered him that I had given the pass on some one's recommendation but whose I could not recollect. I was then told that unless I could explain this matter, I was by the Secretary's order dishonorably dismissed. This hastened the action of my memory. Still I could not remember who gave the recommendation. After a search all night in the pigeonholes of the office, I found the memorandum of the Cabinet officer's letter, which, being produced, ended the incident. It seems that these women were niece and sister-in-law of the person who recommended them and, in company with a minister called Buck Bailey, had filled their crinoline and a false wagon body with opium, sulphur, and quinine, then in great demand, and had gone on their journey. They were arrested by Sigel's pickets and my pass found on their persons. They did not stay long in the Old Capitol and the whole thing was hushed up.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup> The alleged husband was, however, convicted of selling pistols in New York, and his friend of having attempted to bribe the authorities by a gift of diamond rings. He was dismissed from the service.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence was later revoked and Porter was restored.

## CHAPTER V

### INCIDENTS OF PROVOST DUTY

ALTHOUGH possessed of a power over the property and persons of the Capitol that was undefined, I soon found that the post was not a bed of roses. It is sometimes hard to please one master; how much harder to satisfy a dozen! My regular superior was Wadsworth, and above him the Secretary with two assistants, above them the President and Cabinet, above them the members of Congress, and above all the great American people, who, in this war, meant to have their own way, in spite of their Government. With all this came every few weeks a new commander of the forces in and about Washington who would have things done in his way. It is evident that I was often obliged to satisfy no one except myself, or at most General Wadsworth alone.

Thus, I remember a private soldier of an Iowa regiment who came to me complaining that he had forwarded by Adams Express \$50 to his aged parents at home, and that he had taken a receipt, but that the money had never reached the persons for whom it was intended. He had letters and affi-

davits showing that the money had been demanded at home, but had not been received. He had then applied again to the Washington office, had demanded his money back on his receipt, and had been ordered out of the office; whereupon he came to me for relief.

I sent a polite note to the officer of the company at Washington requesting him to attend to the matter without delay, as the soldier's furlough was nearly out. No answer was made. I wrote again requesting an answer. They replied evasively and defiantly. I then directed the cavalry patrol to seize the first loaded wagon belonging to the company and bring it to headquarters. In half an hour a two-horse truck, filled with trunks and boxes, was driven into the yard and a few moments later in rushed the excited superintendent of the company. The soldier got his money and went off rejoicing.

On another occasion a private soldier complained that he had left his silver watch with a jeweler on Seventh Street, and had taken his check for it, on the presentation of which he was offered instead of his own, a pinchbeck article utterly worthless.

I made him give an accurate description of the article and bring evidence of his comrades to corroborate his statement. On this the jeweler was brought before me. He protested indignantly that the soldier's watch was the pinchbeck. He was ordered to the guardhouse. On his way down he requested the guard to go home with him, and

this being done, the original was found and restored.

The order compelling bar-rooms to be closed at nine o'clock in the evening was generally obeyed in all the principal hotels; but when, after the battle of Bull Run, the sale of all liquors was interdicted, great numbers got into trouble by selling liquor in secret bars, and Willard's, Hammack's, Beninger's, Gautier's and the Metropolitan's stocks of liquor were seized and held. They were finally, however, returned on promises of better behavior, which were kept.

I was frequently in receipt of complaints from respectable ladies living in good neighborhoods that bawdy houses were open in the same row, causing their residences, by reason of the rabble entering them by mistake, to be intolerable.

No one who has not witnessed it can believe the freedom with which this business was carried on and patronized at this time in Washington. Keepers of brothels from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and even the Western cities of St. Louis, and Chicago, were attracted hither by the chance of making money, and occupied entire blocks on the south side of Pennsylvania Avenue. Four hundred and fifty houses registered were in Washington alone. One establishment supported, in addition to a fine mansion surrounded with gardens, and luxuriously furnished, a summer retreat twelve miles up the Potomac, at Great Falls, whither the women retired when the busi-

ness was dull. All of them were crowded at night. Even in the day it was not unusual to see a long row of saddled horses standing before such resorts. The keepers were, of course, most complaisant to the police. The moment the tramp of the patrol was heard before the door, they made the girls open every room door to the guard. They made it a kind of point of honor to obey with alacrity what they could not help. Of course, it was impossible to do more for this evil than to keep it in check. But the demoralizing influence of war is so great that it was no uncommon sight to see young officers of good families driving or riding side by side with these characters in the most public parts of Pennsylvania Avenue, and even taking them to the theater.

At one time, I drew up a plan to license the most orderly of the class, and to close up the rest; but it was not approved.

I accordingly did the best I could, had each house registered and had a weekly report made on the conduct of its inmates.

When the sanitary condition required it, I ordered them out of the city, and saw that they were safely landed in New York.

Against the invasion of these characters into respectable neighborhoods the civil law was powerless. Landlords were paid immense premiums and winked at it. If arrested by the civil police they were always boarding-house keepers. In such cases, I used to have the premises exam-

ined, and, if found as charged, I put them into the street, without notice, and took the key to the office. To give them such notice as humanity dictated, was to give them leave to stay, for the many officers whose plans were disarranged by such summary proceedings were almost sure to get a higher order countermanding mine. If they got too troublesome the depot guard sent them out of the city as often as they came back.

Not frequently mothers and fathers came to hunt for missing sons, or wives for lost husbands, while officers of Union and Soldiers' Aid Societies with material supplies for the sick and wounded were numerous, and in all these cases it was a pleasure to be able to do the right thing on the spot, without the delay of red tape. But the people generally supposed the provost marshal to have greater power than he had, and if an impossible or unreasonable request was denied, it was frequently explained by some personal hostility. I have frequently received the most profuse thanks for granting a pass to people whom I never saw (that being done altogether by subordinates), and again, the most revengeful messages from others because they had been refused, by the same subordinates. Even officers in the field, if their request for a supply of liquor was made to conform to the general order that none be sent except when recommended by at least one brigadier-general, were not moderate in their denunciations. I remember allowing the wife of a Polish colonel to

join her husband in the Shenandoah Valley, as a special favor. On her return, she overwhelmed me with thanks and tried to make me many valuable presents, which were declined. On the other hand because the Secretary refused all passes and I could therefore not grant one to a gentleman who desired to visit his son at Aquia Creek, he denounced me to the President as a military tyrant.

The friends of repentant Rebels were a great source of annoyance.

One son of a bishop who had gone South and fought under Lee was captured and in the Old Capitol. He got his friends to try to affect his release without taking the oath. They worked earnestly for him. But I forwarded him to Fortress Monroe, for exchange. My experience was that this oath was regarded as straw, and merely the means of deliverance, and that as soon as these gentlemen were tired of doing nothing, they turned up again under Lee. One Pennsylvania boy, who had left his State for the South, and who appeared in the Old Capitol, wrote an affecting letter to his aunt in Pennsylvania, declaring his repentance of his folly, and asking for a remittance. She answered very briefly that as for his professions they were scarcely supported by his conduct, but she enclosed him twenty-five cents in U. S. stamps, with which to write good Union letters to his affectionate aunt.

One evening, the son of a Washington lawyer

with his wife and family arrived in Washington, having run the blockade, and appeared at his father's house. The old man was strong Union, and next morning came right to me and told me his son went to link his fortune with the Confederacy and thought the tide had turned. He was a Rebel and was not to be permitted to take the oath. The son accordingly was held for exchange, but finally, on account of his family, he was permitted to take the oath and was put under heavy bonds to keep it.

A fruitful source of trouble was the possession of Government property by citizens; which the guards were ordered to seize wherever found and restore to the Government. At the depot the guard daily took away from citizens who had visited the battlefields and who had gathered trophies, from ten to one hundred pieces of swords, muskets, and side arms. A large trade was also carried on by our own officers in this way. Many cavalry officers managed to send to their friends at home their captured horses, instead of turning them over to the quartermasters. But these were generally found and stopped at Washington. The shipment to friends at home of arms and property captured in the South was not unusual. This sort of property was sold at the market and the money turned over to the Government.

But the item of greatest account was the swindling in Government property by quartermasters.

One of Blenker's division, when the army moved,



had a three-story wareroom crammed with property which was being taken by his confederates out of the alley in the rear and being sent to New York.

A common dodge of quartermasters was to get large amounts of sutler's stores in their invoices, convey them to the army, and sell them at great profits.

Another scheme whereby the Government lost to a great amount was in buying horses and selling them. An inspecting officer, who had been properly manipulated, imposed on the Government, at the rate of \$120.00 per head, horses worth on an average \$50, and condemned as worthless horses that were sold at \$5.00 and netted the buyers \$30.00.

Sutler's stores commanded such immense profits that it paid to take all the risks of confiscation. In this business the Baltimore Jews excelled. Their favorite route was *via* Port Tobacco, stopping at the Kimmel House at Washington. The favorite plan was to send a woman with a large pile of trunks, with false bottoms—the tops being covered with articles of female clothing. Quinine, morphine, opium, and Confederate buttons appeared to be in the greatest demand. The proprietor of the Kimmel House was frequently arrested on suspicion of complicity, but the Secretary as often released him.

The amount of liquors daily confiscated at the bridges, endeavoring to pass without authority,

averaged in value about \$500.00, and that confiscated for illegal sales in the city was about the same. The cellars of the office were crowded with boxes of the choicest French and German wines. These were eventually turned over to the Commissary Department.

With the large sums of money in the hands of newly fledged officers, the gambling houses of course did a flourishing business; and with the houses of ill fame, the most that could be done was to keep them under restraint. To suppress what was under the patronage of leading people in the United States was out of the question. In many cases, officers complained that having become incited with liquor they had entered gambling-hells and been fleeced out of all their pay. Ordinarily I would give no redress, thinking the punishment deserved. Sometimes, however, there were circumstances that showed a downright robbery—and if satisfied on that point, I would direct an instant return of the money or enforce a confiscation of the house, furniture, and tools, depositing the key at headquarters. This, in all but one case, brought forth the stolen money. As a rule, the proprietors of these establishments appeared to feel an interest in preserving a reputation for fair play, and hated publicity above all things. They needed only to be told what the military authorities wanted—short of closing them up—to comply. One of these establishments, the largest in the city, was never kept closed, although frequently

ordered to be. They had the saloon upstairs, entered through a winding passage, and through one outer and three inner doors, at each of which stood a watchman, communicating with a guard on the pavement outside. At the slightest approach of alarm, the signal was given and passed upstairs, the dealer hid his cards and chips, and the inmates escaped through a passage in the rear.

The doors were then opened and showed nothing but a splendidly furnished *suite* of rooms, with chairs in crimson, and richly framed oil paintings on the walls, and a supper table laden with delicacies of food and wine, superior to any that could be procured elsewhere in the city. The secret police, of course, were frequently here as spectators and players, but they were never sharp enough to bring the guard in at the moment when the playing was going on. Of course, the proof was abundant, but the influences that baffled me were of too high a character to be overcome by a subordinate officer of the army.

Many attempts were, of course, made to remove me from office, but I had no need to fear such as long as General Wadsworth was in command. He knew the natural result of a vigorous restraint on established nuisances, and he expected retaliation.

The other natural resource—bribery, was also not left untried. To induce me to let this same gambling establishment alone, I was offered, by parties who claimed to be authorized, a colonel's

commission. I never inquired whether they had such authority, but kept battering away at the gambling until I left.

The largest pecuniary bribe I was ever offered came from Jews. One of them, a quartermaster of a cavalry regiment, had been arrested for shipping navy revolvers to Baltimore and selling them, and was awaiting trial by court-martial at the Old Capitol. The case was a clear one and the evidence sure to convict him.

His wife, a young and beautiful woman of Baltimore, apparently highly educated and refined, and dressed in silks and diamonds, came and threw herself at Wadsworth's feet imploring him, in tears, to have mercy on her and her family and spare them the disgrace of a conviction for dishonorable conduct. Wadsworth would not hear her. She then begged for only a few minutes' interview with him. But the Governor, disgusted with her husband's treachery, would give her no satisfaction.

She now shifted her attack to me. That day, while sitting down to dinner at Willard's, I was told that a lady wished to see me upstairs in her parlor, on the most urgent business. I promised to come after dinner. Nothing would do, however, but that I come immediately. I went upstairs and found the quartermaster's wife, who made to me the same appeal. I told her I could and would do nothing.

It appears, however, that I must have ex-

pressed myself with too much courtesy to forbid all hope.

Next morning, before I had arisen, I was awaked by a Jew from Philadelphia with whom I was well acquainted, and who afterwards turned up in the Old Capitol for making too much money out of a horse-contract. As we were alone, he sat down on the bed and proceeded to talk business and come to his point at once. He wanted that quartermaster honorably out of the scrape, and was willing to pay to get it done, without regard to cost. To begin operations he laid down on the counterpane a roll of one thousand dollar treasury notes and a cluster diamond ring, and presented his plan of accomplishing his friend's release without compromising myself. I could either connive at his escape, or prevent his trial, or influence the War Department to release him, or, if it came to the worst, pack the court with officers directed to acquit.

It was also possible, although he did not say so, or seem to think it, for me to take his money, keep it and put him (the briber) out of the way of telling.

But his chief argument was that if I did suffer for it, I had a fortune to console me. I, of course, refused and asked him to leave. He refused to go, until I rang the bell, when he packed up his roll and rings and went away. When he was outside the door, however, he apparently thought of firing a farewell shot, and threw the ring into the room through the ventilator. I showed it to Wadsworth

and sent it to the quartermaster's wife, to whom I suppose it belonged. Her husband was convicted and was sent to the penitentiary.

Prudence alone would have dictated such refusals. My successor in the office was unfortunate enough, although I believe a strictly honest man, to have consented to take a ring from an Italian woman, advancing her money on it. This transaction led to his trial and dismissal, although he was afterwards reinstated.

Small bribes, or to speak more gently, presents, were sent in great numbers, and generally were left at the rooms with a card,—cases of wine, boxes of cigars, money, jewelry, tickets—and were returned or turned over to the Government. There was no sense in offering me bribes, for the good reason that had I wanted to steal or even to make money by methods that were dishonest, but not dangerous, I could have had abundant opportunities without any risk whatever; in the disposition and sale of the vast amount of confiscated Government stores, which were uninventoried, and of which I had the disposal without being responsible to anybody,—depots of clothing, ships and cargoes of smuggled goods, Confederate and Government money—horses, medicines, and a thousand valuable things which I could ship North and sell, and keep the money, without the knowledge of any one. So, in purchasing stores for the contrabands, that was entirely my business, and I was not obliged to render to any one an

account of what I did, or to whom or how much I paid.

The theatre and concert saloons of Washington understood very well how to get along with the military powers, and gave the officers of the guard every assistance in the disagreeable duty of passing through the audience and arresting and taking along every officer and soldier who had no proper authority for being there. To show the number at the places of amusement of an evening, I submit the following report:

HEADQUARTERS PROVOST MARSHAL'S OFFICE,  
WASHINGTON, D. C., Dec. 30, 1862.

LIEUT. COL. DOSTER,  
*Provost Marshal.*

COL.:

In compliance with your order to visit all the places of amusement in this City and report to you the number of officers and enlisted men, I report the following number, as being correct to the best of my knowledge, found at the following places—

Grovers—Theatre	63	officers and	76	enlisted men	
Fords	“	“	“	“	“
Washington	44	“	“	“	“
Canterbury Hall	28	“	“	“	“
Washington					orderly &
Varieties	22	“	“	51	“
Winter Garden	5	“	“	4	“
Academy of Music	1	“	“	12	“
Metropolitan Hall	18-224	“	“	16-257	“

At the Varieties they sell drinks, both strong and otherwise but I saw no one intoxicated; at the Academy of Music, Winter Garden and Metropolitan

Hall the same was going on but saw no disorderly conduct, nor liquor sold to soldiers—(Privates).

ELMER D. MCINTOSH.

As the audiences were mainly officers and soldiers and Northern citizens, the natural desire to please the audience produced a drama that, if not very high, was with few exceptions loyal. I remember only twice being obliged to interfere on that account. Grover, after the second Bull Run, represented General McDowell in a ludicrous light as running away from Bull Run field; which was interdicted. Canterbury Hall was once closed for indecencies. It was notable that the plays ordinarily were far removed from war and its horrors, and the most popular were such light plays as dealt with pastoral and peaceful subjects. Any allusion to "mother" addressed to the crowds of young men absent from home, although made *ad nauseam*, never failed to bring down the house. The war appeared only in the songs and the poor poetry—

Oh! I've come down to Washington  
To fight for Abraham's glory,

and the other,

The Captain with his whiskers cast a sly glance at me,  
were the favorites.

It happened only twice in that time that new regiments refused to cross the line that divided the enemy's country from ours.



Once a Pennsylvania regiment embarked at the Arsenal on a steamer bound for Fortress Monroe became refractory. In the morning it was found that the entire ship's crew and the officers had been seized and confined and the enlisted men were masters of the ship. The commandant of the Arsenal sent word of the situation. I went aboard and demanded of the men the instant release of the prisoners. They claimed that they had been enlisted only for the defenses of Washington and not for the Army of the Potomac. I answered that they could settle that when they were at Fortress Monroe, by appealing to their commanding General, but now they must obey orders and release their officers. Making no movement, I drew up a battalion of infantry, with orders to sweep the decks and fire by platoons. The clink of the ramrods in the muzzles brought them to terms and they went off with a detail of the guard on board.

On another occasion, the men of a new regiment refused to embark at all until their officers were changed, saying that their colonel and lieutenant-colonel were entirely worthless. The sequel, in which the lieutenant-colonel afterwards landed in the Old Capitol for horse-stealing, shows they were not entirely wrong. But orders had to be obeyed, and they were driven on board, at the point of the bayonet, and the officers sent by land to Fortress Monroe.

An interesting class, whom the authorities often

had to deal with, were the foreign adventurers who sought their fortunes in the Union Army. Notable stands the "Brigadier-General" Bolen, who was to be found at the Kirkwood, wearing a uniform of brigadier-general, but without any authority whatever for wearing it except—that he had a plan for pontoons and knew Mr. Seward. He was three times taken to the guardhouse and stripped of his uniform, but his perseverance brought him back. The third time he was showered and ordered to New York, under penalty of the ball and chain. He then disappeared.

Another little gentleman appeared at Willard's wearing a staff captain's uniform, claiming to be the natural son of Lord Byron, by a Spanish Countess, and gave his name as George de Luna Byron. He was ordered to take off his uniform and did so, but pertinaciously reappeared in it until ordered out of the city. He was otherwise quite harmless. The Count de Schweinitz, a barber, and a most elegant and courtly looking man, of manners, which the Washington ladies pronounced most charming, had letters to Mr. Seward who secured him a colonel's commission on McClellan's staff. Husemann, the Austrian Minister, also vouched for his genuineness, and cashed a large draft for him, when his funds ran low from giving dinner parties. The landlord of the New York Hotel, a very clever German, in addition to letting him run up a large account, lent him \$800.00, for what will not a landlord do for a rich count? After he had had all

these he was suddenly discovered. There were no counts de Schweinitz. The guard was ordered to arrest him, but on a Sunday afternoon he quickly rode by the picket on the Baltimore Turnpike and never was heard of more.

At this New York Hotel, 6th and D streets, could be found a great gathering of the German officers, many noblemen of Blenker's, Sigel's, and Steinwehr's commands. There was a summer garden and music in the open air. Here, nightly, a Prussian lieutenant of artillery played on the piano and sang comic songs, for his board, while he was working his cards at the State Department. He finally succeeded in getting a lieutenant-colonel's commission in a New York infantry regiment.

Colonel D'— quarreled with his quartermaster. The mistress of the former prefers charges against the latter who is sent to the Old Capitol. When the latter is released he turns round and informs on the mistress, that she has Government property in her possession, and D'— is sent to Sing Sing.

Lieutenant-colonel C— quarreled with Colonel S— of Scott's 900, his chief, and the first is sent to the Old Capitol. C— is made colonel of the 4th New York and turns round and gets S— dismissed. He is also reinstated.

One colonel of a Pennsylvania cavalry regiment, a German Jew, is dismissed and thrown into the Old Capitol, for stealing horses. He is released

and tries to be made a brigadier-general but fails. Undaunted he deals in substitutes.

Another German, lieutenant-colonel of a Pennsylvania cavalry regiment, is imprisoned for the same offense, is released, and opens a lager-beer saloon on the Avenue.

Among these foreigners was a Danish lieutenant of cavalry, a lieutenant in the 5th Pennsylvania Cavalry, who excited the wonder of all who saw him for his great size and personal beauty.

Colonel Havelock, whose breast was covered with decorations, and whom McClellan appointed colonel and inspector-general on his staff was, the colonel claimed, most shabbily treated by McClellan, who, on leaving for Yorktown, left him behind, as if he had utterly forgotten him. The old and venerable colonel was very much insulted and applied to Stanton for assignment. Stanton sent him to Wadsworth, and Wadsworth had him inspect *one* battalion of cavalry—all he had. The colonel endured this for a year and then went home in disgust.

It was a singular thing to see how many Englishmen applied to me for assistance to commissions, on the ground that they had participated in the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava, considering the number who fell in the charge.

The second battle of Bull Run was the most exciting event of my term in its effect on Washington City.

About four o'clock on Saturday evening a bulle-

tin was placed on the eastern front of the Treasury Department announcing in large letters, that a great victory over the Rebels had been won at the old battlefield of Bull Run—that 10,000 dead and wounded men were lying on the field, that all good citizens should meet there at 5 P.M. with such articles of food and medicine as they had on hand, and be carried to the field in ambulances. Signed by E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War.

Around this placard was a big crowd, some arguing against the probabilities of victory, others swearing by Pope who had his "headquarters in the saddle," others hurrying to spread the news and get ready for the ambulance train.

At the same time, a telegram was flashed over the Northern wires, announcing a signal victory, that fighting was still going on, that there was a great want of physicians and nurses. All patriots who could assist in either capacity should hasten to report to the surgeon-general and be sent to the field.

At 5 P.M. the crowd at the Treasury was already dense. No ambulances appeared. The mass of people extended from the surgeon-general's office to Willard's. At length the train arrived and was quickly filled with eager passengers, but not one quarter found room. More trains arrived and until 9 P.M. an incessant stream of ambulances carrying commissary stores, medicines, liquors, doctors, nurses, and curious citizens passed down 14th Street over Long Bridge. In the confusion,

there passed through our lines, at this unexpected and sudden news, well-known traitors, officers on leave of absence, convalescents from the hospitals, generals and staffs on duty in the city, women, children, and girls, congressmen who wanted to see a battlefield, State, sanitary, and Christian commission agents.

When the ambulances had gone, the crowd seized carriages, cabs, omnibuses, dog-carts, horses, and many walked to the field. Still the insatiate and turbulent crowd needed conveyance, still the surgeon-general had another body of excited nurses to forward, still the quartermaster had more supplies to send and no way to send them. Transportation must be furnished and I was ordered to furnish it. I scattered a regiment of cavalry and two of infantry throughout the two cities with orders to take every animal that could draw and every vehicle that could be drawn, and bring it to my office with drivers.

The cavalry, delighted with the sweeping nature of their orders, with drawn saber commanded cabmen to "unload and come along." The traveling world of the avenue was forcibly or peaceably ejected. Strangers arriving in the cars and taking cabs were obliged to dismount before reaching the hotel, ladies in dinner toilette,—all were compelled to alight and let their drivers follow the cavalry despot.

By 9 P.M. I Street down to 17th, the Avenue, 19th Street down to the Avenue were jammed with

a variety of vehicles and drivers in every shade of rage and indignation. A caravan was formed and loaded and ordered off under cavalry escort. Before reaching Georgetown, some drivers upset, and the back of the sabre was used to straighten them. So the night continued. New trains were formed, loaded, and forwarded. At twelve o'clock a peremptory order arrived to furnish a train for quartermaster stores at 22nd and G Streets by six in the morning.

Orders were then issued to seize the horses of the horse-cars and harness them to the extinct omnibus line; and to search the livery stables, cab depots, and private stables for horses and drivers.

At five in the morning, the whole visible region of streets was again packed with omnibuses, cabs, market wagons, old family coaches, hay wagons, dog-carts, rockaways, sulkies, *coupés*, and gigs.

They were again formed in line and ordered to move to the quartermaster's to be laden. The drivers refused; their horses were not fed or watered; some were suddenly ill; others had broken axles or tires; all were able to swear roundly and copiously. At last, however, they moved forward.

Then news came that the victory was not so brilliant. There had been first a check, then defeat, then defeat explained by McDowell's alleged treason,—a report that Sigel had tried to shoot McDowell for treason—next, a report

that a council of war called and concluded to fall back—report that Pope had been baffled by McClellan, that Porter had refused to come to time—defeat and apologies for defeat—the army back in the defenses of Centerville.

By the arrival of the New York train at eight o'clock the effect of Stanton's telegram was apparent in the crowds of country practitioners, professors, undergraduates, and nurses who came and offered themselves as called for.

The exigencies of the service had been changed since they were sent for. Nothing except quartermasters' stores were now admitted across the river. The patriot nurses were superfluous and wandered about in the vain hope of being smuggled across or of receiving an appointment at Washington. The majority hastened back, after a vain effort to get even their passage paid, cursing the Government which played upon their patriotic instincts and obliged them to pay the piper.

This Sunday, at noon, the ambulance trains began to return filled with wounded, some of the nurses with them. They considered our defeat a terrible one, and the demoralization was very great. Their feeling against McDowell was very bitter. They reported that many nurses had wandered into the hands of the enemy, and that our troops were hurrying towards the city, hunger driving them faster than the enemy. All this while McClellan, with only his bodyguard, was staying at Alexandria out of command.



Monday. All eyes were turned for salvation to McClellan. He received command within the fortifications of all the troops that comprised the Army of the Potomac. The same day Pope and McDowell passed through Washington, the one for West Point, the other for the Northwest.

The fortune of war has brought McClellan back to his house on the corner of Fifteenth and H streets, and with it the command of his army, because his rival Pope has been tried and found wanting. Here I saw Reno and Burnside receiving their instructions. The army passed through. It looked terribly worn with marching and fighting, but it was commanded by the only commander in whom it had confidence. There was a great deal of drunkenness, although the sale of liquor was forbidden altogether. The straggling was not great. The boys wanted a victory, and believed they would have it. They were on Northern soil and that cheered them.

We all breathed freer that McClellan was again in command, at least every one looked so. Of course, his enemies, to be consistent, were not sanguine. The army once through the city, we relapsed into our habitual routine, wondering what the two armies to the North of us would do. The leading surgeon of Washington was arrested and sent to the Old Capitol for attending the Rebels and refusing to touch the wounded Unionists.

The examples of Florence Nightingale in the

Crimea and the fame of Miss Dix brought many young women to Washington and to me, for places as nurses. As a rule, they seemed to be actuated by the most humane motives mixed with a great deal of sentiment. I used to send them all to Miss Dix, until this lady came and requested me to send none that were unable to turn a full grown man round in bed, and could do the most menial work. This thinned the ranks of applicants very much. As I was called upon to inspect the hospitals frequently, I cannot forbear paying a tribute of admiration to the cleanliness and excellence of all the arrangements and the beautiful and devoted side of human nature drawn out by them. Douglas Row Hospital, in charge of the Sisters of Mercy, was a model in the way of sweet, pure air,—a very paradise for a wounded man. The Sisters had a little oratorio or chapel upstairs. The patients too bore up in all instances that I saw with great patience and bravery.

I remember the case of a young man, which excited a good deal of interest at the Baptist Church Hospital. He belonged to a cavalry regiment, was quite delicate, and seemed to be dying of consumption. The daughter of a high Government officer took quite a fancy to him, brought him a great many luxuries, and corresponded with his mother. In time she noticed that the boy had something weighing on his mind which he wished to tell. Several times he began but failed to come to the point. Finally she pressed him to reveal

his troubles as he would to his own sister. "Well," he said, "I'm almost afraid you'll be offended." "No, I assure you I will be delighted to hear it." "Well, Miss, I've been thinking for ever so long that the breeches I drew of the Government were too wide, and I want them taken in." The young lady took them in, but she wasted no more sentiment, and confined herself to practical services.

Two other young ladies were cured of their romance. One day the officer of the guard arrested two puny looking soldiers, supposed to be drummer boys. They refused to give the names of their regiments. To cure them of their obstinacy, they were ordered to be showered, when the discovery was made that they were girls. Then they told that they came from Hagerstown, Md., had enlisted in the service to be with certain of their friends in the field. General Wadsworth gave them a kind admonition for the folly of their course and sent them home on the cars. They were aged respectively eighteen and twenty, and had passed through the battle of Bull Run.

As it was the great desire and effort of the military authorities to stifle information instead of spreading news, the reporters of the New York press, who were an extremely active and energetic class, were exposed to a great deal of insolence and suffered a great many repulses at the various headquarters in the city. It should be remembered by the future historian who starts on the hypothesis

that the daily papers furnished the best material, that they contained only such information as the Government either voluntarily gave (frequently that it was in such shape as the Government wished) or such as leaked out through subordinates, and that they are by no means as authentic and full as they might have been if there had been no suppression. The great field for collecting news used to be the hall of Willard's, from about five to seven-thirty in the evening. At these hours, the Congressmen had dined and were willing to chat, the officers on duty who knew anything that was going on were sauntering about to meet acquaintances, and whatever had happened of note was apt to be spoken of or within the knowledge of some one present.

Accordingly, at these hours, the reporters made their grand attack. This required great dexterity. Those who knew much did not care to tell. Those who knew little were apt to gull with vague or false reports. Besides all were people of real or fancied importance, who could not be handled with too much suavity. A new hand would say, "I'm the reporter of the New York so and so—what do you know?" and be answered with a shrug. The older gleaners gently led people into conversation on rumor, feigned or real; argued, discussed, and left people in surprise at the amount of knowledge they had let escape. They were comrades, intimates with every one, who was connected with information; they were constantly

moving, talking, taking a note here in lead-pencil, another here on the memory.

By seven-thirty they were full and hurried to their offices to make up dispatches which had to be in by eight P.M. Of course, the evening papers of Washington supplied the best basis of information. They were censored and shaped into items. If there was a dearth of news, there were always rumors to deny. So Washington got its own news first from New York.

The leading reporters were Puleston, Hill, Stanton, Henry, McCormick, and Gobright.

Although at the time Mayor Wallach and the superintendent of police were in office, and gave me all the assistance in their power, they practically could not do much. The period was military, and the citizens were not slow in finding out that all privileges came from that source, and many availed themselves of it to turn civil complaints into military, for quick redress. A common complaint of the merchants along the avenue was that rival merchants were engaged in acts of secession.

## CHAPTER VI

### FREE NEGROES, CONTRABANDS, AND SLAVES

AFTER the Gordian knot, as to the disposition of slaves who were abandoned by the masters on the advance of the Union armies, had been cut by the decision of General Butler, accepted by General Halleck, classifying the slaves with abandoned rebel cattle and corn, and as such liable to be held and used by the Union forces, the provost-marshal general of the Army of the Potomac forwarded great numbers of them to Washington for disposal.

It did not follow, however, that the disposal of them here was an easy task. General Butler's logic did well enough with negroes captured on the advance, but that was the smallest part. How to deal with those who abandoned their masters instead of being abandoned by them? And it followed by no means because the runaway said so, that his master was disloyal or even outside the Union lines. In addition, they were entirely unused to freedom, and were like so many children asking us to take care of, rear them, teach them, and support them until they knew how to manage

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themselves. The free colored negroes at Washington hated them as rivals. The slaves despised them for being runaways.

Washington, Baltimore, and Alexandria were still slave cities and the Fugitive Slave Law was in full force. The three cities each still had its slave pen, surrounded by gangs of professional kidnapers, who found in the contrabands an inexhaustible field for the exercise of their inhuman trade and for filling the Washington City jail. Warrants were daily issued by the commissioners, under the Fugitive Slave Law, which enabled the slave-owners of Maryland, or the District of Columbia to send deputy United States marshals into the midst of a Union regiment or contraband quarter, to secure for himself the property in any negro who had escaped from Virginia, and for the pure legal expenses.

There came to our relief the Act of Congress of July 17, 1862:

That all slaves of persons who shall hereafter be engaged in rebellion against the Government of the United States, or who shall in any way give aid or comfort thereto, escaping from such persons and taking refuge within the lines of the army, and all slaves captured from such persons or deserted by them and coming under the control of the Government of the United States, and all slaves of such persons found on, or being within, any place occupied by rebel forces and afterwards occupied by the forces of the United States, shall be deemed captives of war, and

shall be forever free of their servitude, and not again held as slaves.

SEC. X. That no slaves escaping into any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, from any other State, shall be delivered up, or in any way impeded or hindered of his liberty, except for crime or some offense against the laws, unless the person claiming said fugitives shall first make oath that the person to whom the labor or service of each fugitive is alleged to be due is his lawful owner, and has not borne arms against the United States in the present rebellion, nor in any way given aid and comfort thereto. And no person engaged in the military or naval service of the United States shall, under any pretense whatever, assume to decide on the validity of the claim of any person to the labor or service of any other person, or surrender up any such person to the claimant on pain of being dismissed from the service.

To retain the grip the military police had on their people, and comply with the law, the following measures were taken:

Each contraband, on his arrival, was examined by the detectives in relation to the loyalty and residence of his master, and was furnished with a paper signed by General Wadsworth, entitling him to the protection of the military authorities of the United States. He was sent under guard to what was then called Duff Green's Row (later Carrol Prison) next door to the Old Capitol Prison, and guarded by a detachment of the Old Capitol Guard. The house was di-



vided into many small rooms. The contrabands were lodged and under the superintendent of the Old Capitol and were supplied with rations and fuel. For clothing, I turned over to them the stolen second-hand blankets and uniforms recovered in the hands of citizens. The men were divided into squads of twenty, under white non-commissioned officers, and made subject to requisitions for laborers in the medical and quartermaster's bureaus, and received as wages from fifty cents to one dollar per day.

The quarters now became densely crowded. Efforts were made to secure them employment in families. But as they were farm hands, nobody cared to have them. Shortly afterward the smallpox broke out among them. The sick were kept here, the house turned into a hospital, and the whole removed to the barracks, about a mile north of Washington, formerly occupied by McClellan's bodyguard. A permanent guard was necessary. The smallpox broke out among them again. I offered to relieve the lieutenant in charge and ordered him to move his men to a distance from the contagion. He thought it his duty however to stand by them in trouble, caught the malady, and died. During the winter I turned a lot of goods confiscated at Leonardstown into \$2000, and bought them cheap bedding and clothing at Philadelphia. As fast as we could get the contrabands employment we shipped them North and made room for others. In spite of the utmost precau-

tions, the slave-catchers—principally two named Wise and Allen, succeeded frequently in running these freemen into the Washington Pen.

One evening, the chief laundress of the Harewood Hospital, Rachel Sutherland, a contraband who came within our lines at Aquia Creek, and had General Wadsworth's military protection on her person, was surprised at the unaccustomed absence of her husband Sandy Sutherland, employed at the Patent Office Hospital. She suspected foul play, and requested Dr. Johnson the surgeon in charge of Harewood to go with her to the city jail. When there, she was told she could come in, but as soon as she had passed the door was consigned to a cell. Her three young children were left at the hospital and the mother's distress was extreme. Dr. Johnson turned to me and indignantly demanded redress. A little investigation proved that this notorious pair, Wise and Allen, had run her husband into jail although he had also a military protection on his person.

I sent down a lieutenant and ten men with orders to release the negroes, peaceably if they could, forcibly, if they must.

The jail guards refused to deliver them, but the lieutenant marched his men inside and, resistance being useless, the fugitives were given up, the mother restored to her children and the husband placed under the bayonets of the United States at the Patent Office. Next day I caught the kidnapers and gave them six weeks' solitary

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confinement in the Old Capitol. When released they returned to the business. This dispute was referred to President Lincoln, who refused to interfere. [See an account of this case in address on Lincoln.]

On another occasion the jail officers were not so easily frightened.

Complaint having been made to Wadsworth, in the evening, that the contraband quarters had been invaded and a Virginia negro taken to the jail, the general ordered a lieutenant to go down and release him. The deputy, Phillips, refused and sent for Bradley, his attorney, to advise him what course to pursue. Bradley came and advised him not to give up his negro.

Meanwhile Lamson returned and ordered off the lieutenant. The lieutenant made a charge and captured Phillips and Bradley, and Lamson captured one private soldier and quickly locked the door. There was no use trying to force the door at that hour, and besides he had no instructions to proceed to violence. So he took Messrs. Bradley and Phillips to the Central Guard House where they stayed overnight. Early in the morning, Lamson summoned a *posse comitatus* in the name of the United States to release his deputy and his faithful counselor. One man responded. The rest had no fancy for charging on a house full of soldiers. So the two remained in confinement. Meanwhile I came to the headquarters and Wadsworth, somewhat chagrined at the excess of his

orders and failure, directed me to go down and set matters to rights. I accordingly took down a battalion of infantry and waited for the marshal. Diplomatic negotiations ensued. I demanded my soldier and my negro—together with the keys to every cell, and stated that after that I would be willing to talk about the deputy and the counselor. The marshal refused to give up the keys. Meanwhile, McDougal, Senator from California arrived and began an oration on the sacredness of the Constitution of the United States as embodied in the person of the marshal. To cut matters short I took possession by force, released the soldier and the contraband, and found a number of others in like situation with military protections hidden away in cells. There was a general delivery. Then I thought we could afford to be magnanimous and released the deputy and counselor. Lamon hurried to the White House to procure the instant arrest of Wadsworth and myself. Fortunately for all concerned President Lincoln was not at home. I say fortunately for him, for these conflicts were not to his taste—he preferred to let matters decide themselves. Such secret catching of slaves continued, even after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued January 1, 1863, and after slavery had been abolished in the District.

The passage of the Act of Congress provided for the emancipation of slaves, and the payment of the masters in the District of Columbia fell like a

stroke of lightning on the slaveholders, and when they had recovered a little, the impulse of most was to run their slaves into Maryland. They seemed to act like a master whose house is burning and carries his furniture from room to room, unable to comprehend the system as doomed and bound to go down. The trouble they had to encounter was getting the negroes off. These knew their right very well and any attempt at force would of course have produced an outcry and would have brought the military down on the heads of the masters. Therefore, there was, all at once, a strange benignity about the bearing of masters toward these people and then gentle persuasion to go on a visit to Baltimore or across the Anacostia or to some country seat beyond the District line. One man had the hardihood to ask me to just do nothing about his slaves. He was going to coax them off and if I wouldn't interfere would succeed. I declined to be neutral, and saw to it that this class was very well informed of what they had to gain by staying where they were. Thus, masters who were wise hastened to draw their pay and retain their servants for wages. As a rule the people were very much attached and stayed where they were, but the number of rich, free negroes at Washington forbade any general, successful attempt to trick them out of their freedom. I heard of some who were run out into Maryland and also that they escaped altogether—leaving the master with nothing.

## CHAPTER VII

### CABINET MEMBERS AND ARMY OFFICERS

PREËMINENT for ability appeared to stand out, during this Administration, Salmon P. Chase. At the age of seventeen, Chase was known to the Washingtonians as a New Hampshire school-master, patronized by a few of the best families of the city in I Street below Nineteenth. The old residents have told me that at this time he read law and was noted for his fine presence.

On his return, he was the beau-ideal of a fine-looking American gentleman, had been twice Governor of Ohio, was eminent as a lawyer, and had a great reputation for integrity. His manners were affable, but very dignified, as one to whom position could add very little.

Personally he was a large, powerful, handsome man in whose face one saw the propensity to make large and intricate plans and carry them out in detail. Socially he was by no means as brilliant as Sumner. His conversation was apt and rather judicious, while Sumner's was an ever-flowing current of literary reminiscences. On seeing them together one would say that Chase rather had a

regard for Sumner as a visionary, but had too much tact to confess it.

In business, Chase was impervious. There never was a man's fall so cheered by his own subordinates as was Chase's, when Lincoln removed him. He seemed never to have any friends—only admirers. There was a certain air of policy, perceptible behind his good humor that does not create affection.

He was not without genuine good feeling. A certain treasury clerk—one of the old families, who had gone to Chase's school, but never could stoop to remind the Secretary of it—had grown old in the service of the department, and now, when the new currency was brought out, was detailed to sit up nights and cut the greenbacks from the rolls into notes. His eyesight being poor by gaslight, he clipped rather too far into the margin, and, the offense being reported, he was summarily dismissed by the secretary, although he lived opposite Chase in Sixth Street, where his daughter was a visitor. The clerk, having a large family to support, sent a letter to Chase stating who he was, and the Secretary not only instantly revoked this dismissal but found time to write a charming note to his old pupil, apologizing for the injury and promoting him a step higher in the department. This act was attributed, wrongly, I think, to the daughter, for the Secretary had the queer luck among his subordinates of having all the good he did attributed to his daughter, and all the ill to himself.

Indeed, this lady plays too prominent a part in our war to be overlooked. It is not rare, indeed, among the daughters of English noblemen, to find many who bear, at sight, the mark of generous breeding and who would assert their merit as well in a log cabin as in a palace. But in our Republic, where all are nurtured for a more general destiny, it would be difficult to find one more admirably fitted for her place than Miss Kate Chase. Her person was not preëminently beautiful. The nose too *retroussé*, the figure was too lithe, but that was balanced by a finely modeled head, large hazel eyes, a delicately cut mouth and chin, a graceful and dignified carriage, and a voice of great sweetness. The great charm of the lady lay doubtless in her conversation and in her ability to entertain men and women of the most diverse character—a quality nurtured, I hear, by presiding early at her father's table. Was there a tournament of wit, she was sure to say the best thing. Was the war the topic, she left the impression that no weakness in the character of any general or move in strategy had escaped her attention. Were politics talked about, she calculated chances, and fathomed the popular disposition as keenly as did James Gordon Bennett. Yet no idea of the blue-stocking or strong-minded was given. The modesty of the woman and the affection of the daughter remained paramount.

Nevertheless, the house of Chase left an impression of politics in every part. The attitude,



the embroideries, the dogs seemed designed and posed. Her independence was seen by the following. It was the custom of the ladies in incoming Cabinets to make the first calls on the people of Washington. Miss Chase refused to make them. In spite of it when she gave a reception it was the most popular of the season.

A lieutenant of cavalry was found a supernumerary and suddenly mustered out. She was applied to and sent to Mr. Stanton for a blank captain's commission. Mr. Stanton sent back a blank lieutenant's. She returned it saying she had sent for a captain's commission. The commission was sent and the captain mustered in. He was afterwards dismissed, but at her request, reinstated.

There was a quiet dogmatic way of exercising patronage in this lady, which I never saw surpassed, and I have no doubt many a general's star is owing to her favor. All this came from Mrs. Lincoln's want of the terrible power of beauty and brilliancy, which in Miss Chase, made her as much more courted than the President's wife as her father was more admired than the President.

The admiration people felt for Chase has several prominent causes:

1. Ability at Washington was a jewel just now.
2. The power to raise money was one that every one could appreciate, and which every one, hitherto vexed by the absence of change, felt.
3. He was the only successful man in the war.

Davis was still ahead of Lincoln and Siddons of Stanton. Memminger's system had collapsed, while Chase's was in triumphant operation, and his money good in the army and Wall Street.

4. Chase showed tact. He seemed to have somehow persuaded the people that Lincoln was the body and he the brains of the Administration. He had many qualities such as manners, craft, polish, education in which Lincoln was inferior, but the main thing seemed to be that Abraham occupied the chair which Chase wanted to fill.

Ambition was the man's bane, and flattery his weak point. It was generally thought a fine stroke in Lincoln to pigeonhole Chase in the office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. With Chase's credit for being real President and the precedence given his family in the Blue Room, it was about time that Lincoln reasserted himself.

Montgomery Blair, Postmaster-General, was a tall, sandy-haired gentleman, who cultivated the homespun Thomas Jefferson style in dress, and the candid in manner. His eyes had a keen, sharp, gray look and denoted a restless disposition, but the other part of his face was marked with good nature and geniality. He was of great assistance to me in keeping the run of Secessionists in Georgetown. He made a detective out of his negro, and had hunted up some arms that were going to Dixie from Georgetown. His sentiments were as extremely Union as if he were afraid of

being constantly suspected of the opposite. His Secession relatives gave me more trouble than all others in the military district.

After his ouster I saw him send in his card to Assistant Secretary Dana, who had no time to see him. What a fall was there!

The business which the State Department had to transact with me was carried on through Webster, afterwards famous in the Impeachment Trial, and Mr. Frederick Seward. Webster used to act in connection with our detectives in discovering the movements of suspected Southerners.

Secretary Seward had a body slender, shoulders slanting like an Englishman, neck long, arms and hands thin and wiry, lips thin, and a head of bushy white hair. His manner was that of a refined New York criminal lawyer enacting *Richelieu*, his air that of a man who has read books all his life and would rather have it believed he has read nothing but men. One would have said that the man's natural career lay in philosophy, belles-lettres, or art in the quiet shade of a college, but that the intrigues of Albany had made him knowing and subtle but neither wise nor practical. The great service he was doing and has done was in persistently saying that the Rebellion would come and would be put down—no matter if he erred about the date. The historic confidence was nevertheless contagious.

There was in Washington at that time a gentleman who considered it his bounden duty to show the American people that they were worshipping a humbug, in the person of McClellan. Count Adam Gurowski was a bundle of extravagances and contradictions. With the best blood of Europe in his veins, once the companion of Napoleon and Kossuth, he was now a \$400 clerk in the State Department, by charity of Mr. Seward, where his business was to cut slips out of the foreign files, paste them on one sheet and lay them before his chief. A failure in politics, he pronounced dogmatic decrees on the future of America. He and Wadsworth were great "cronies." Indeed his conversation, from his vast fund of learning and personal experience and its application to our present affairs, was very interesting. There was such great lack of positive opinion that this gentleman, either at Willard's, or in the government offices, never failed to draw a crowd. His general topic was the "imbecility" of Lincoln and Seward and the supreme necessity of sending McClellan home. It was something at that time to hear a man speak his mind freely.

#### HALLECK

As heretofore stated, the custom was to direct officers found drunk and disorderly at Washington to report themselves under arrest to me. Most of them obeyed, and that was generally the end of the matter, unless the offense was repeated.

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Many however did not obey, but went away without reporting, having given a false name and regiment. That was put a stop to by the officer of the guard obliging officers found in that condition either to have themselves identified, by their hotel register or otherwise. Nevertheless, no precaution and no amount of severity seemed able to prevent scenes of drunkenness and disorder that shamed the whole army, until I was instructed to send all officers found in this way to Halleck, the General-in-Chief of the Armies, for dismissal. This brought me occasionally to Halleck's headquarters. I know of no instance in which he dismissed an officer for such conduct unless the facts were supported by the affidavits of the arresting officers.

I take his endorsement from the case of a captain of the 98th Pennsylvania Volunteers and a lieutenant of the District of Columbia Volunteers, charged with being drunk and disorderly in the street, for an example:

“It is not necessary to bring these officers to trial before a court-martial, but I wish an affidavit made as to the facts, and will then properly dispose of them.”

Once in a while, officers requested to be dismissed, as in this instance.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 30, 1862.

DEAR SIR:

Thinking it better that I should leave your regiment, I write to inform you I am in this city and you

will please report me absent without leave and dismiss me from the service that I feel I cannot longer serve in justice to you and myself.

I am dear Sir, your obliged and humble servant.

Upon this was endorsed by Halleck:

WASHINGTON, Oct. 12, 1862.

Respectfully referred to the Provost Marshal who will detail an officer to go to-day to Philadelphia, to arrest this officer and bring him to this city for close confinement.

In person, Halleck was of the medium height, inclined to fatness, with a double chin, bald forehead, and small busy eyes, twinkling under uplifted eyebrows. His carriage and dress were somewhat ungainly and bespoke a solid citizen rather than the active soldier. He walked generally with his hands behind his back or in his trousers pockets, slightly stooping, in an apparently meditative attitude, but the incessant activity of his eyes showed much wariness and circumspection. His address was open, direct, almost surly; his words pithy, few, and to the point. He abhorred circumlocution, introductions, and prefaces. He would anticipate what you had to say, and decide before you were half through. Affectation of either humility or greatness he had none whatsoever. He was just General-in-Chief, no more—no less; that he knew and felt, and made you know and feel. There was no use trying

treachery or flattery here. There were a chair and a cigar at your disposal, if you had business and enough time—if none, not one second.

The rôle this person had to play was a difficult one. He was the home director of military operations in the field. In being that alone, he occupied the most unpopular post known in the history of war; for to such a power, whether it be a cabinet or Aulic Council, is always ascribed the failures; the victories go to him who is on the spot. But more than that the commander in the field had been deprived of his third star and it had been conferred on Halleck, and he as well as the army which he commanded believed he had been unjustly degraded. So he started with an army which considered its success under Halleck as its own failure; its failure under Halleck, the best proof of its ability without him to succeed. Such a false position could only be carried through by either vigorous support of his own superior, or by the weight of his personal reputation as a soldier. He had neither—sufficiently. Authorship of a book on war and the conduct of a suspended siege were little to weigh against a powerful, jealous, idolized, and indignant young chief in the field, while the facility with which the President listened to direct criticisms by subordinates of the army and the self-willed way in which Stanton adopted or rejected his suggestions took from his orders that absoluteness which means certainty that they cannot be changed, which is the essence of the

military code. In simple truth, the force of Halleck's position lay altogether in the superiority of three stars over two. Such a relation could not last long. The success, even through insubordination, of the field commander would have ended Halleck's career. But the failure, through insubordination, of the field commander, and the breaking down of the regular aristocracy by Stanton, which followed right afterwards, redounded to the glory of Halleck. This really was no proof of Halleck's ability, it was only proof of the other's incompetency, and while it fortified his position could not prevent his own powers from being gradually but surely absorbed by successful field commanders, until they were eventually merged in the supreme success of Grant. Halleck's favorite resort for meditation was Lafayette Square. Here, every fair night, he could be seen wandering under the pines, either alone, meditating, or arm in arm with some general officer, talking over the affairs of the army.

One night, as he thus sauntered alone, the keeper of the gates, as usual, locked the gates at ten o'clock, but the general meditated and strolled on, unconscious of time. When he came to one gate it was locked. He hurried to the other. It was locked also. Not a soul on the street. What was to be done? To scream would be ridiculous. To climb over the fence impossible. To sleep on a bench—what a position for a General-in-Chief! Luckily a private of a Massachusetts regiment on



duty in my office came along, and was in the same predicament. The general let the private mount on his back and scale the iron palings. He was over,—succeeded in waking the keeper, and the director of the Armies of the Republic was again free. Halleck took care of this young soldier ever afterwards.

McCLELLAN (THE ENGINEER, ETC.)

The engineer, a very “natty” officer, a regular of the Regulars, a “big little man,” as our Western troops call him, with broad shoulders and sandy mustache and hair inclined to red, but brown at a distance, a gentleman whose entire person is copied over and over by inferiors; the treble force of bootblacks at Willard’s; the polished stirrups, the clean collar visible above the waistcoat, the general air of dandyism or precision were all McClellan’s influence. Before him we had dirt and affectation of dirt; militia, obedience by favor, “trainings,” and tactics at discretion. We had, now, instead, drill, discipline, polish, organization, and routine, clean boots and an *esprit de corps*. All this was delightful—this fine, melted mass had a mold and was gradually chilling into its shape. This is a plain merit. He promulgated Washington’s order against Sabbath breaking. That satisfied our religiously minded. He had seen Sebastopol during the siege. That looked like experience. He had been successful in West Vir-

ginia—that was luck or ability, equally needed. Yet there were some hardy enough to say he was not the man. Why? The answer is, the rise is too sudden.

This much then is sure: his part in the war was to change citizens into soldiers,—a vast and motley multitude of individualities into a machine, and to fortify Washington. This he did excellently well. No other general that succeeded him can claim that work of genius; it is his entirely. And he succeeded because he was himself that which he made others—a man of formulas and routine,—nothing if not West Point; capable of everything that mathematics could do, nothing beyond.

That is to say, a certain element that generals, in time past, have had essentially: combativeness,—the fighting propensity that carried Blücher into the midst of bullets—the bulldog nature, was not here. Not that he lacked personal courage, not that he was ignorant of how people do fight, but that he could not be coaxed to fight without trouble, and after he was fighting had rather stop than go on for the pure love of it. This goes by different names: “incompetency,” “timidity,” “over-caution,” “hesitation”; West Point cannot teach it. It is only—non-combativeness. Again, there was beyond this man of mathematics nothing but mathematics in war. A war of opinion—the sublime spectacle of an uprising in favor of an opinion,—the moral forces of freedom operating

in conjunction with the army and supporting it,—the changes made by war in popular and political opinion—these were not taught at West Point, and were beyond him. He understood other men of mathematics very well, also the volunteers as soon as they had grown mathematical, but the rest—independent owners of opinion—these were riddles. This want went by the name of “Southern Sympathy,” “Democratic Training,” “Conservatism.” It was really West Point mathematics.

The army organized, Washington fortified, McClellan had really played his part. To ask him further to go and lead the army to Richmond was unreasonable. To demand fight from a man who would rather not, to insist that he heed the growing opinions of the country, to a man whose opinions could not grow,—this was to require of the man what was not in him. There are certain sure effects of such unreasonable requests. You will get out of him only what is there—mathematics—or “strategy.” If you force him, so much the worse; he will only strategize more vigorously and on a grander scale. The big blows he will not strike, the unyielding grip he cannot take. If you confront him with political opinions you frighten him. He gathers around him all the other mathematicians to defend themselves against such military heresies as waging war for the carrying out of political opinions, and against all powers that would disarrange mathematics by opinions. Worried, he grows first insolent, then stubborn,

then finds companions in stubbornness, and finally is insubordinate—all because you try to extort from him what he never had.

Thus the army, made mathematical, pitied and deplored its father; the people, the holders of Union opinion in the North, believed he was against them when he was against all opinions, and believed he did not want to fight, when he could not do it for the life of him, except behind intrenchments.

I repeat his work was done in March, 1862. Nothing remained fit for his talent except to defend, under Lincoln's eye, the fortifications he created.

That is not to say that the occasion, the species of war, could never arrive in which McClellan would shine preëminently great. The pet inclination of the engineer to spade and siege-guns, and horror of a sudden assault before the enemy has time to fortify, which so marked McClellan's campaigns, is the very trait which, in the English camp at Sebastopol, where McClellan learned his practical lessons, was an immense fault in Sir John Burgoyne, the engineer of the Allies, the attacking forces; but the same trait, which in Todleben, the Russian engineer, brought out, in conjunction with Korniloff, the most admirable defense of modern times.

What McClellan could do in a defensive war in conjunction with a commander whose soul was enthusiastic in the cause, within the walls of a

besieged city, when his mathematics could have free play, can of course only be conjectured. If the defensive works of Washington City are to be the test, I cannot doubt that he would have been, under such circumstances, admirably fitted for the post. I have thought that McClellan felt this himself, and waited the long winter of 1861-62 inside his defenses, in the hope that Beauregard and Lee would attack him and turn the war into the channel best suited for him—the siege of Washington and defense of fortifications.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CAMPAIGN ENDING WITH CHANCELLORSVILLE

IT is the month of March, 1863. The Army of the Potomac is lying between the Potomac and Rappahannock with its base of supplies at Aquia Creek, its left resting on Belle Plain, its center on Falmouth, and its right on Stafford Court House. Its picket line runs from Banks's Ford on the extreme left to Stafford Court House on the extreme right.

Lee is at Fredericksburg, occupying the line of the Rappahannock. On his right, the Rappahannock grows wider and harder to cross; on his left, as you near its source, it grows narrower and fordable. The first ford on the left is Banks's—twelve miles from Falmouth. The next ford, six miles farther up, is U. S. The next, twenty miles farther, is Kellys Ford. The next, two miles above, is Rappahannock Station, and two miles above that is Beverly Ford.

Lee is connected with Richmond by the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac R. R.; the Orange and Alexandria R. R. also connects him with Richmond by means of the Chancellorsville

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Plank Road, which connects with this road at Orange Court House.

Hooker maneuvers in three ways: (1) a direct attack on Fredericksburg; (2) a flank movement below Fredericksburg; (3) a flank movement *via* one of the fords above Fredericksburg.

The first had failed under Burnside.

The second is not feasible, not only on account of the width of the river, but because it uncovers the capital and allows Lee to swing by his left into Pennsylvania.

The third is a flank movement *via* one of the upper fords on Lee's left, accompanied by an attack on Lee's right by Sedgwick and a raid by Stoneman in his rear to cut his communications.

In selecting the ford proper for crossing, he had first: Banks's, too near to deceive Lee; U. S. with an objectionable wilderness on the other side; Kellys or Beverly with an admirable battlefield across the river.

In detaching Sedgwick, he divided his forces and ran the risk of being beaten in detail.

In sending Stoneman around to cut communications, it was essential he should cut the Orange and Alexandria Court House and the Richmond and Fredericksburg beyond Orange Court House Junction and drive the enemy back, otherwise there was no sense in it.

Having the choice of battle-ground, and having decided to break his columns in two, it is to be supposed he will, no matter at which ford he

crosses, finally dispose the flanking column in such a way as to be near the column at Fredericksburg, and be able to coöperate with it. This is of the utmost moment should Sedgwick be unsuccessful. If unsuccessful, then the connection should also be quickly made. If there be, as there is, at Banks's Ford (the one nearest Sedgwick) on the south side of the Rappahannock, a wide and spacious open country, which admits of a battle and commands the two railroads, then it seems reasonable he should, whether he crosses at Beverly, Kellys, or U. S., move down as far as he can, throw his pontoons across in his rear, and wait for the action of Sedgwick and Stoneman. He gains by this: concentration of his forces, keeps his army out of the woods, and has, in the high ground on the southern bank of the ford, an admirable point for guarding his pontoons with artillery in case of a freshet. He has the same power over the plank road that he has at Chancellorsville, and in addition can use his cavalry.

If he halts at the edge of the wilderness he at once says good-bye to his cavalry, neutralizes his artillery in the woods, and throws his infantry on the defensive, for while the edge of a forest offers a natural intrenchment to infantry and artillery, every man and gun having its own cover in a tree, and the darkness hiding the columns from the enemy, the disposition of infantry in the midst of a tangled wilderness where they see nothing before them except a mysterious gloom, nothing



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behind of their supports, fills the imagination of the soldiers with vague apprehensions of danger; they insensibly and unconsciously intrench, and the minute they do that, they feel on the defensive, and all hope of a spirited advance is gone. Chop down these woods in front, or lead them through to the edge and they will rush into action with a shout.

Politics, the season, the condition of the troops, call for an advance. The nine months' regiments will be mustered out on the first of May. The spring is early here and trees are budding. The Emancipation Proclamation has given a new impetus to the war. The unsuccessful McClellan, Pope, and Burnside have given place to the dashing, sanguine Hooker.

The country remembers Fredericksburg and is waiting for an advance and it is time it was made. The unfriendly party North is growing bolder and more defiant from its fall successes. Something must be done and soon.

*Potomac Creek, Va., March 17th.* The first time in this war our cavalry has met the Rebel cavalry and whipped them in a fair fight. Yesterday at dawn Averill's division crossed at Kellys Ford, met Fitzhugh Lee on the other side, and thrashed them soundly. My Adjutant McBride was shot through the lungs. The Rebels could not stand the charges of our cavalry. The moment our squadrons advanced, theirs broke and scattered. It looks as if they felt that their prestige was

gone. The spirits of our men never were as good as they are now. We have just arrived again at our old quarters at Potomac Creek. More, doubtless, will be expected of us than hitherto. If we can cross at Kellys Ford, why not the whole army?

*Potomac Creek, April 1st.* Our division has made another attempt to cross the Rappahannock. This time at Beverly Ford. We first advanced on Rappahannock Station, found it entrenched, retired to Elk River, and tried Beverly, two miles farther up. A river, a canal on the other side, earthworks beyond, and artillery in the woods above, forbade any attempt. They shelled us before we attacked. We return baffled to our camps.

*Potomac Creek, April 16th.* President Lincoln to-day reviewed the army. The day was rainy and dismal, with an occasional glimpse of sunshine. The general conjecture is that this review forbodes a great battle, and Mr. Lincoln and General Hooker want to satisfy themselves about the condition and size of the army. Speaking only for the Cavalry Corps, I think they have reason to be satisfied. The *morale* of our division, which has fought the only victory hitherto achieved on the Rappahannock, is high. It is not lowered when we see Averill prancing along the line with Mr. Lincoln and staff, and apparently in favor at headquarters.

Lincoln rides a dapple-gray horse, and is conspicuous for his black citizen's dress and the fearful manner in which his horse jolts him up and

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down. Our men would have preferred a closer inspection so as to let it be observed how excellently well they were uniformed, mounted, and equipped, having even gone to the expense of sending to Aquia Creek for white linen gloves. We have the chance later in the afternoon, when we pass in columns of squadrons before the President who is seated on horseback next to General Hooker. The farce of the inspection appears when we are obliged to ride through a deep mud pond or slough just before we come to the reviewing officers, and remark that our citizen commander-in-chief often bows to the sergeant in charge of the pioneers who rides first in a cavalry regiment, mistaking him for the commander of the regiment—an error he would correct on its being pointed out by the general. I noticed a number of ladies of my acquaintance from Washington about Mr. Lincoln. The display of men and arms is certainly marvelously great.

*Monday, April 27th.*

We start at 10 'oclock in the evening for the south and finally reach Kellys Ford in the morning. We are dismounted on the slope on the right of the ford and to our astonishment see the red breeches of Zouaves, and the various corps of the Army of the Potomac, some dotting the fields south of the Ford, in squares like a checkerboard, others crossing by a pontoon bridge. The infantry appears now to halt for the cavalry to precede it.

By three o'clock we are across, but instead of halting, we continue to advance up the road—the Culpeper Turnpike, which runs to the right of the ford—the road to the left, which the infantry appears to be leaning towards, running towards Chancellorsville. We have scarcely advanced a mile when we are ordered into line of battle. Stoneman comes up, a consultation is held, the order is given to charge, and we move in line of battle into the woods. They receive us with artillery and carbine firing. It is evidently Fitzhugh Lee's Cavalry rear-guard. By nightfall we have cleared them out of the woods but sleep on our arms, in the open field beyond.

*Tuesday, April 28th.*

Day arrives. No sign of the rear-guard. They vanished during the night. We have scarcely time to feed when the entire division of Averill moves in line of battle, each regiment being in column of squadrons, and being preceded by a triple line of skirmishers march towards Culpeper, in hot pursuit. The line being over a mile in length is with difficulty kept up. As we near Culpeper the skirmish line reports the Rebels just ahead. We trot, and at noon enter Culpeper like a whirlwind (the negroes tell us the graybacks have just passed five hundred to five thousand strong, according as they have judgment of numbers), and our skirmish line just reaches the hill beyond the town as the last Rebel horseman

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disappears on the Richmond Road. Our men rifle the stores and load themselves with hams, honey, and Lynchburg tobacco. It is the first visit of Union troops to Culpeper since Banks's retreat.

We press on toward the Rapidan still following the line of the Orange and Alexandria R. R.

Halting to rest in the afternoon, below Cedar Mountain, we find ourselves among the bones of the dead of the battle of Cedar Mountain, which had been here rooted out of the low trenches in which they had been hastily interred. No insprising sight on the advance, especially as the weather is rainy, and the sides of the mountain look like a natural point fitted for the Rebels to make a stand, and attack us in flank as we pass along the base.

Night comes and we push forward more rapidly. Nine o'clock and no halt. Ten o'clock and no halt. Eleven o'clock and we are said to be nearing the Rapidan River and halt. My regiment is ordered on picket and swears loudly as only cavalrymen,—hungry, sleepy, and in an unknown country at night can swear, when ordered on further duty.

*Wednesday, April 29th.*

Morning breaks hot and sultry like June. We climb an eminence near and see the Rapidan apparently strongly fortified on the south side. The orders are to keep the horses saddled and bridled—that most excruciating torture to animals.

*Thursday, April 30th.*

No advance. Horses saddled and bridled. Forage beginning to give out. It is reported that some of our men have burnt up a locomotive and some cars and torn up the track.

*Friday, May 1st.*

Orders to slacken girths, but allow no horse to be unsaddled or unpacked. Our men forage and lay in corn for one day's feed.

*Saturday, May 2d.*

We start early to retrace our steps toward the Rappahannock, this time leaning east in the direction of the mouth of the river, where it empties into the Rappahannock, marching at a pace that is increased every hour. The early spring wheat is out in blades three inches long, and in the afternoon we halt and graze in a fine field. Our entire division of horses allowed to run loose is a queer spectacle, while Averill sits on the porch of the mansion overlooking the rambling horses.

Again we advance, pressing vigorously towards the mouth of the Rapidan. Horses are beginning to feel the effects of the heavy saddles, and without forage many of them give out and die by the roadside. By night we near the heights above Ely's Ford. A scene like a picture of hell lies below us. As far as the horizon is visible are innumerable fires from burning woods, volumes of black smoke covering the sky, cannons belching in continuous

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and monotonous roar; and the harsh, quick rattling of infantry firing is heard nearer at hand. It is the Army of the Potomac, on the south of the Rappahannock, engaged at night in a burning forest. At our feet artillery and cavalry are mixed up, jammed, officers swearing, men straggling, horses expiring. But we are extricated and weary and seek camp on a beautiful green slope reaching down to the river, which here is scarcely twenty yards wide. Exhausted by the terrific march, men and horses receive with joy the order to unsaddle, unpack, and make ourselves generally comfortable. Everything is stripped off in confusion; we feel the raid is over and infantry and artillery are now to do the work. We build bonfires, eat and drink and fall into that hard sleep the cavalryman has, when he throws off the dangers and hardships of a week for ease and security, the fires burning high and making the slope as light as day. At eleven a peal is heard as if lightning had come out of the clear heaven and struck us; a close and continued volley of musketry not more than thirty yards south of us. We start out of our dreams to see the spark of the embers scattering with the rain of bullets aimed at them beyond from the wooded eminence; south of us and across the river a long line of fire from the assailing party. Instantly the horses break their ropes and stampede; the men grab carbines and hurry down to the bank, so as to be out of range of the fires, and fire back. The firing ceases as

suddenly as it began, having lasted ten minutes. We were greatly surprised but suppose it was our own men firing on us by mistake, and are indignant at Averill for leaving the woods unpicketed. The rest of the night is spent hunting horses. Many were wounded in the limbs; only one killed, a private who was kneeling, saying his prayers, and by that act, threw himself in range. It would be strange any escaped this murderous fire if infantry were not always given to firing too high.

*Potomac Creek Station, May 5, 1863.*

The great battle has been fought in the woods of Chancellorsville and we are again just where we started.

Two weeks ago our entire corps moved out on the old beaten Hartwood Church Road, which runs almost parallel with the Upper Rappahannock, but this time instead of turning to our left for some of the fords, we swing to our right following the line of the Orange and Alexandria R. R. as far as Warrenton Junction. We are in perplexity about this movement, supposing we are marching to intercept another of Stuart's raids into Pennsylvania and are to cover Washington. The purpose is plain when we reach Warrenton Junction and find the locomotive and cars unloading hay and commissary stores. We now conclude that we were brought here to get supplies for a raid on Culpeper as well as to deceive Lee as to the movements of the infantry.



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*Sunday, May 3d—Near the Phillips House.*

This morning I crossed the Rapidan to see what had become of the night attack, with instructions to penetrate one mile. Found marks of blood and scattered arms. Met a squatter who told me a brigade of Alabama Infantry had seen our fires and given us the ambushade. Six of them were badly wounded by our fire. Penetrated to the Plank Road, ran into a cavalry picket, shot at him, and returned and reported to Averill. There is nothing but dense woods all the way from Ely's Ford to the Plank Road. I judged the enemy held the Plank Road at this point. Left Ely's Ford at noon, made the connection with the infantry of the extreme right, and marched by the road facing the enemy, along the interior line to Hooker's headquarters.

When we arrive, the Rebels are making their third attack on our right, and Berry, Williams, Whipple, and Birney are engaged. The great battle, however, has been fought. It only remains to describe what the field was like and what we hear of the past. Any description of the ground will be unintelligible to one who has never been in burning woods. The timber here is chiefly white oak, almost impassable by infantry, utterly impervious to artillery and cavalry except in rare open patches. Whether from the firing or from the camp-fires of the troops made in cooking coffee, the greater part of the undergrowth beyond our line is on fire and in many places the trees are

slowly blazing to the top. Where the fires have retreated or gone out, a thick smoke has settled among the charred brush and is exuding from every object it has touched. Where it is still raging, the heat, added to the hot temperature of the day, renders breathing almost impossible. As we march along on horseback, our eyes and nostrils are filled with smoke so that we can scarcely see or breathe. On each side of the road are intermingled the dead, wounded, and living, all of them blackened either by the smoke and powder or in the usual way of death by gunshot wounds; only occasionally one dead man whose calm face looks white and still. The endless stretcher, the continual ambulance meets you, both moving quietly; once in a while a group hanging over some popular officer who has just received his shell or minie ball. Besides the usual noise of an engagement it is surprising to see how still and quiet the soldiers are. There is none of the hopeless ardor of an advance, but instead on every face a sullen determination, not unmixed with vague apprehensions of fear; as if there were impending some mysterious source of terror, which no one could define. Here and there you see a sharp action,—what would be in the cavalry corps a heavy engagement; at another point, the spade and pick busy throwing up intrenchments, and the officers peering wistfully into the vistas of thickness in front; at another, nothing except the scrub oak slowly snapping and crackling in the fire.

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For a while the scene looks like a spring ride through quiet shades, while ever and anon the earth seems to scream with mingled musketry and artillery and the shrill cheering of the combatants; and if, here and there, you see an opening in the trees and a scrap of sky promises to be mingled with the tumult, you find it dotted with the round white clouds, the smoke of exploded shells. Then again comes the painful pause only to be broken by the same horrid din;—all this which you feel by reason of the woods, the fire, the smothered reverberations of sound, choked, smothered, paralyzed, as if this were a place made expressly for Rebels, but not for Union men to fight in.

This Army of the Potomac, the brilliant host which Lincoln reviewed, it is plainly to be seen, is beaten and demoralized. Not demoralized only because it is beaten, but before it was beaten by the Wilderness. It is admitted at all hands that in the previous night, Stonewall Jackson utterly routed the 11th Corps under Howard, Von Steiner, Schurz, and Von Gilsa, and that the latter had fled back to the the U. S. Ford; that Sickles, Berry, and Hooker saved our right wing; that at midnight the enemy retired; that this morning at five the enemy came from the west along the turnpike, forcing us gradually back until 10 o'clock when they retired. The men of the 11th tell us they were stationed some six, some twelve, feet apart while Jackson's column was massed and attacked with unheard-of fury, marching in regimen-

tal front right into the mouth of our guard. They believe the Rebels put powder in their whiskey before making an attack, they threw away their lives so recklessly. Von Steinwehr says he knows neither what is in front, in rear, or on either side of him. Birney says he knows no topography in this wilderness.

The rebel fire is gradually diminishing to picket shots alternating with occasional discharges of platoons. Most are apprehensive of another attack and think it will, if made, be apt to finish us. No one wants to do any more fighting here if it can be helped—anywhere else, only not in these mournful forests.

At the Phillips House, the woods end, and we suddenly enter a wide plain in which we are massed with a vast park of artillery and cavalry intended to cover the communications with the ford.

In the rear of these is the ford, and beyond that, on high wooded ground above, the hospital and baggage trains of the army. While we are resting here a rumor spreads that Stoneman and Averill have been relieved and ordered to report at Washington, and that Pleasanton is in command. "Who is Pleasanton?" is the general inquiry.

This explains a strange sight we saw on our road behind the extreme right. Averill was sitting alongside the road, under a shelter tent, quite alone, and with his head resting on his hand, seemingly dejected. It looked then as if he had

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been relieved. His humiliation at being abandoned on the march like a condemned cavalry horse, to be criticized by his poorest orderly, must have been extreme, but what is the destiny of one man in comparison with the onward march of an impetuous Republic! Our regret at parting with an officer who had shed so much luster on our army before this last march and who was in fact very careful about exposing his men, was keen but a little moderated by the ambushade of last night. What was his offense? Rumors stated that he had not obeyed orders to return as soon as he should. That is horrible, as we spent half a day at Ely's Ford reconnoitering and three days at Rapidan doing nothing. Another rumor is that he was ordered to proceed as far as Orange Court House and to seize the junction of the rail and plank roads, which he did not do.

Soon we are ordered to camp in regimental front in rear of the 11th Corps and to fire on everything that approaches us in front, whether friend or foe. We do so but, with exception of skirmishes, nothing is done in front.

We now hear that Hooker was wounded and that he was drunk, again that Sedgwick has again captured Fredericksburg and was on his way to join us.

This night is most pleasant in comparison with those of a week before. We are in the midst of our army, and not a small division, camping in anxiety one hundred miles in the enemy's rear.

You can allow your horses to graze, and wrap yourself peacefully in your blanket, for before you can be attacked, a long line of infantry must be broken. Here is tobacco, the soldier's solace, and rations, and the river for your horse to drink.

*Monday, May 4th.*

This morning we are awakened by the familiar shell, but it seems rather near. A battery is evidently occupying the high ground in front of us, and throwing shells over our little plain, upon the baggage train and hospitals. They continue to shriek in the clear May morning and we wonder why it is not silenced. Soon a cavalry regiment is ordered out, charges and captures it.

Before long we receive orders to fall back upon the heights on U. S. Ford. I am placed in command of the 2d Cavalry Brigade. The guards at the ford drive back great numbers of stragglers. Officers too are seen among them, with dejected faces, as if they cared little for dishonor, but much for life.

The weak point of our position is plainly not alone the possible rise in the river, but also the extremely precipitous bank on the north of the ford. First as you land north is an acre or two of flat, sandy deposit, on which a few regiments can be formed, but as you begin to climb up you find a miserably constructed winding corduroy road, passable only by a single horseman at a time, and that with the greatest risk of rolling down back-

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wards. Certainly this defile would, in case of an attack n flank and sudden retreat, be found too narrow, and the army liable to be cut to pieces while forcing itself upwards towards the crest beyond. I was not sorry when we gained the open Falmouth Road out of the treacherous river bottom.

*Tuesday, May 5th.*

Last night at two we were ordered to ride to Fredericksburg *via* Falmouth and intercept a body of Lee's cavalry reported to be tearing up the railroad between Falmouth and Aquia Creek, and severing our connection with our base. We pass thither, part of the way over the corduroy road made by Hooker, but find no troops to intercept. Fredericksburg captured again by Sedgwick is again in the enemy's hands and they shell us as they see us, hiding in a hollow opposite the city. A heavy rain this night.

*Wednesday, May 6th.*

In the middle of a great rain, which sometimes hid the road, we left Fredericksburg and at six this evening inhabit our old log huts and tents, which we had hoped to have abandoned forever, seeing no difference before and after the battle, except in the long rows of hospital tents which now whiten the fields from Aquia to Potomac Creek, the number of missing and dismounted men, and the big corrals of sore-backed mules.

Of the cavalry, and the part it took in this battle, may be said what was said of Cardigan's charge "*C'est magnifique, mais c'est pas la Guerre!*" Stoneman's raid and Kilpatrick's dash to within the fortifications of Richmond were fine things, considered by themselves, and could have been made to contribute to the final victory had Hooker stayed where he was on the south of the Rappahannock. As he came north again, the value of the cavalry operations reduced itself to the value of the property destroyed and the encouragement with which it inspired the entire corps—a flower that bore fruit in the next campaign.

As for the infantry, it doubtless fought gallantly as it did always, but here under the most disadvantageous circumstances. Nevertheless it achieved a success, not alone in the death of Stonewall Jackson, but practically and immediately by executing a flank movement and holding it for three days. Was there any reason why the army should have abandoned the position it had won? That the dispiriting nature of the woods was no good reason for retiring, though it might have been an excellent reason for refusing to offer battle there, is proved by the later actions of Grant in the Wilderness.

The great rain and rise in the river did not occur until the army was partly across and could not have been the cause of retreat. Sedgwick retired by Bank's Ford because we drove him across



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before he made the connection with Hooker's left wing.

My impression is that the cause will be found partly in Hooker's nature. He was a cavalryman, prompt to advance and prompt to retreat when his command was demoralized, and handled the army as he would a cavalry division out on a reconnaissance.

This was no position, being on the enemy's flank, to maintain with security. Hooker was too far from his base and liable at any time to see Lee between himself and Washington. It could only have been tenable after defeat in case he had turned Lee's right wing, compelled him to retire to Orange Court House, and placing Washington on his rear had been able to use Fredericksburg as the base of supplies for the Army of the Potomac. My impression is the Army of the Potomac fell back on Falmouth for the same reason that the cavalry did—to prevent Lee from getting in our rear. The impression was general, that Lee, seeing the advantage he had gained, was about to flank us in turn and get between us and Aquia Creek. Independent of all this, it follows from what was said at the beginning, he should have offered to deliver battle at Bank's Ford, where he had good open country, would have connected with Sedgwick and with Aquia Creek, and should have kept his cavalry in hand to use on the field, whereas he did use some of it, when it came back from a useless raid, to cover his communications, or else,

to complete the ruin of the enemy in case he showed signs of wavering, by that maneuver which the cavalry corps waited for, a charge *en masse* against infantry, at the decisive moment.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CAMPAIGN ENDING WITH GETTYSBURG

THIS action is preceded by cavalry combats which have lost their luster somewhat, in the light of the succeeding great victory. The duty of our corps between Chancellorsville and Gettysburg was to feel the army beyond the Rappahannock, and the interval between the fifth of May and second of July is occupied in such enterprises, in which we dealt with Stuart, Fitz-Hugh Lee, and Robinson.

The battle of Beverly Ford was the result of an attempt to feel the enemy, and we felt him somewhat to our cost. The corps crossing early under Pleasanton, part at Beverly under Pleasanton, part under Gregg at Kellys Ford, was to effect a junction on the southern side. We were then under Duffie, and the junction was never made. Accordingly, our division advancing in line soon ran foul of the Rebels in the wood and charging through drove them out, with the loss of a few men on our side. We had no sooner reached the open country, however, than we encountered a heavy fire from a battery commanding the road. Accord-

ingly we turned back, but only to encounter new Rebel batteries, with greater forces than ours. Meanwhile our mule-train and part of our ambulances fell into the enemy's hands. In this manner we were driven about in a circle all day seeking Pleasanton and finding Rebel batteries. About four, my men, who had been awake forty-eight hours and in the saddle all the time, having been on picket the second night previous, and having marched during the last night, told me they could not keep awake any longer. While we were lying under a shower of shells I gave the permission, and for fifteen minutes we slept, and arose refreshed, the enemy finally obliged to fall back into woods, at the edge of which we found the welcome muskets of a Minnesota infantry regiment. The "Dough-boys" are very popular with cavalry when they feel themselves worn out. Indeed, without a battery in which they had confidence our cavalry brigade was by no means eager for fighting. We were long with Tidball's battery and with them we never feared of holding our men. The enlisted men of a cavalry regiment have such a constant chance to criticise the merits of the artillery officers, and acting with them they are their continual backers, that, once losing confidence in them, it is idle to ask much unless the artillery is changed. Artillery, however, appears to be equally powerless unless it has confidence in the efficiency of the cavalry with whom it acts, to protect them against capture. On this occasion we had a new battery

with us, commanded by a very young West-Pointer, and as his shells appeared to fall short and threatened the advance of our own men, it was hopeless to get our troopers into energetic action. Near night we joined Pleasanton as he was crossing the Rappahannock. We were, however, not yet across before the rebel artillery posted itself coolly on the high southern bank and made us retreat out of range, under cover of the woods at Bealton. We now knew at least that Lee's Army was in the neighborhood of Rappahannock Station.

BEVERLY

During the heat and exhaustion of this action, having been forty-eight hours in the saddle, sick and much indisposed at the time, I found the proper place and uses of whiskey; ready to lie still and be captured rather than move. I begged our surgeon for a drink. He had but two swallows in his canteen, red and hot as fire, which I drank, and I endured the rest with the greatest ease.

There appears to be a lull and we move across, under command of Duffie, as far as Culpeper, unmolested and return. Suddenly the corps moves again and this time by forced marches to the north. There is a race for the Gaps of the Bull Run Mountains. We move as if towards Washington City at first and camp on the field of Bull Run. From Bull Run we turn towards the mountain and drive Stuart through Thoroughfare Gap. We

return to Centerville and again meet the enemy at Aldie where we drive him again. Here the Colonel of the 1st Maine, Colonel Davis, is killed. This is June 17th.

*June 18th.*

Pleasanton seems determined to push Stuart. The whole corps advances in line of battle towards the west; Pleasanton and staff on the road, the divisions to right and left. We are now in the beautiful valley between the two ranges of the Bull Run Mountains. I am ordered to take Middleburg and charge through, driving the enemy out. This is accomplished.

At evening I am told the position is untenable and ordered back. On our way through town, the Rebel dead are seen lying on the porch of a hotel, ranged in line. They are all finely formed fellows. We retire to about half a mile to the east of the town. Rain and night come, but the enemy remains quiet.

*June 19th.*

Being still in advance, am ordered to retake the town. This time the advance is more difficult. They drive us back on the main street; and we charge them in flank. They retreat to the woods, one mile beyond. At ten, the whole of Gregg's division come up and go into action. The line of battle is a semicircle of about a mile. The most obstinate resistance is about an old cemetery. Our men, under Major Biddle, are behind the grave-

stones and walls. The vital point of their position is the road leading into the woods on the brow of the hill in front. The 1st Maine charge again and again. Each time they come out of the woods like a swarm of bees. The road is crowded with the dead. We draw in our line and make a united charge on the center and the position is carried. The Rebels retreat toward Upperville.

*June 20th.*

We spend the day in camp, slaughtering the cattle we pick up in this fine farming country. They seem to be of excellent stock and the soldiers pant for fresh beef. Alas! it is tainted with the wild garlic on which they graze, and uneatable. We return to crackers and bacon.

*June 21, Sunday.*

Pleasanton still cries "Forward!" and gives Stuart no rest. We march again as before—Pleasanton in the center, in line of battle, each regiment in column of squadrons. We are hindered much by the stone fences in this country and the pioneers have heavy work of it. The blue mountains are nearer, and their sides look fertile and clear in this fine weather. The roads are dry and hard. At four, the artillery opens. The enemy has made a desperate stand at Upperville, which lies in a valley, just this side of Ashby's Gap. First I am ordered by Gregg to support Tidball. Scarcely in position before an order

comes from Pleasanton to join Kilpatrick in the road and charge to the Gap. We charge through town; when we get beyond, we meet the rebels firing from behind two high rocky eminences on each side. Kilpatrick gallops towards me, swearing, and brandishing his sabre and ordering me to stop. But there is no stopping five hundred wild and infuriated men with drawn sabres. My orderly falls; I try to get two squadrons to charge on flank. Before the order is out of my mouth, we close hand to hand with Robinson's brigade, who comes tearing down the level slope from the Gap. Neither party can give way as we are shut in by high stone fences. Now we are all intermingled, every man for himself; with carbine, pistol, and sabre—a jammed mass slaughtering one another. My two squadrons break the lock and come in on the left and right flank. They had been detained by the fences and now fight leaning over the fences and pulling each other off their horses. Suddenly the mass moves backwards towards the Gap. There is a panic and I am swept with the Rebels. I release myself from the rider who holds my rein by a thrust of my sabre. He drops between the two horses and his horse and mine gallop back together. We form a new line and advance as skirmishers but it is unnecessary. The Rebels have retreated through the Gap.

Soon we are ordered into camp on the eastern side of the town. As we ride through the high road, it is mournful to see the heaps of dead blue



and gray men lying on their backs pale and stiff, some still grasping their sabres, others dead in the act of tearing open their clothes to reach their wounds. Everywhere lies the horse, with the side swollen, the eyes open and distended, the mouth emitting foam. It reminds one of Byron. His description is accurate.

“ And there lay the rider—distorted and pale,  
With the dew on his brow and the rust on his mail.

. . . . .  
And there lay the steed with his nostrils all wide,

. . . . .  
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,  
And cold as the spray of the rock-beaten surf.”

The surgeon of my regiment stopped to examine a few who appeared to give signs of remaining life; but announced every one fatally injured. The counter charging over the fallen troopers of several thousand horse gave even the slightly wounded no chance for life.

I indulged in another reflection. These men were all dressed in homespun. Their saddles and harness, holsters, sabre knots, and even carbines were home-made. In the latter you recognized the shortened musket barrel. How desperately in earnest must such a people be who after foreign supplies are exhausted depend on their own fabrics rather than submit! Again, how hard it seems for us strangers to kill these young men in sight of the

cottages where some of them were raised, fighting, as they believed themselves to be, for their own friends! Thus passes a Sunday in war. But the enemy is gone, driven through the second and last hole in the mountain range, and further pursuit is out of the question.

That night we make our beds of hay and sleep soundly. Stuart cannot stand before Pleasanton.

*Monday, June 22nd.*

We retire at our leisure from Upperville, through Middleburg again back to Aldie, with a strong but unnecessary rear-guard. No one pursues.

*Tuesday, June 23rd.*

We march northeast towards Leesburg, where we find a great deal of infantry on the march.

Wednesday, June 24th; Thursday, June 25th; Friday, June 26th—On picket at Goose Creek, with instructions to guard all the roads leading to Edwards Ferry. We hear that Lee is to the north of us in Pennsylvania, and Stuart behind us in pursuit.

*Saturday, June 27th.*

Fine weather. Ordered to withdraw my pickets and fall back on the main body at Edwards Ferry. When we emerged from the woods what a sight was there—pontoons across the Potomac, and on the other side the army of General Hooker on the heights! We are in pursuit of Lee. Crossed this

evening. Read a Washington paper saying that Harrisburg is threatened and Ewell at York. Again Lee has escaped us. We took in forage and supplies and marched for the north. The night was dark and confusion reigned supreme. The brigade and regiment all mixed up. One half of my regiment is gone. When day breaks only three squadrons remain. The same in other brigades.

*Sunday, June 28th.*

Fine and clear. We have gathered our commands. At 12 noon we start again and by evening reach Frederick City—5 P.M. Part of my best command got here before me. The country through which we passed seemed all loyal. Women waved their handkerchiefs and children handed us bouquets. The troops moved in parallel routes; infantry, cavalry, and artillery frequently got confused.

At Frederick is the Grand Army. I hear that Hooker is relieved and Meade in command. We all remember Meade, as a Pennsylvanian and General of the Reserves, and are well satisfied—although the change just now looks dubious.

*Monday, June 29th.*

One of my men killed in a drunken row. We pass through Frederick, and taste the luxury of fresh bread. Everyone has something he wants to buy. Tobacco, whiskey, and riding whips appear to be cavalry wants.

Halted at noon and grazed in a fine field of timothy, near an elegant mansion. The owner

did not appear to like it. We get entangled so frequently with wagon trains and infantry that the progress is slow. Rested at Unionville.

*Tuesday, June 30th.*

Passed through Westminster and camped near Manchester. We are clear of the infantry and march fast. Horse after horse is giving out.

*Wednesday, July 1st.*

Reached Hanover at five in the morning and are once again on the soil of our native State. Slept in a field of wheat. No rest. At seven we are again on the march. A clergyman, before whose house we halted, came to the window in his night-dress, and told us Lee's Army was at Gettysburg. A battle had been fought, Reynolds killed, and Howard in command. We pressed on vigorously. At Hanover the dead cavalry horses showed a cavalry fight. They said Kilpatrick had defeated the enemy there.

All corps march furiously.

*Thursday, July 2nd.*

This morning at eleven we reached Gettysburg and halted. McClellan is reported in command and Butler Secretary of War. Met Colonel Taylor of the Reserves who used to be at my house at Washington.<sup>1</sup> Gregg ordered us into a field of clover on Rock Creek, between Hanover and Taneytown roads. At three I was ordered to

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Taylor was killed that same afternoon. He was a brother of Bayard Taylor.

accompany a staff officer of General Pleasanton's with my regiment. We hastened through the crowded roads to what I afterwards learned was Little Round Top, in rear of some artillery, McGillery's artillery brigade of Sickles's corps, where I left my regiment and went with my guide to Pleasanton for instructions. This was the headquarters of our army.

The house was a small cottage on the left of the Taney Town Road, sheltered somewhat by the hill above. Outside were many staff officers and orderlies. Within was Butterfield, Meade, and Pleasanton. They occupied a room that contained the ordinary bedroom furniture of a poor Pennsylvania farmer. Their gentlemanly manner and brilliant uniforms contrasted strangely with the surroundings.

Pleasanton begged my pardon for having made me ride so far. There was no need of exposing the cavalry in front. I should rejoin Gregg on the right and tell him to take good care of it. My orderly's horse was struck by a shell here. I rejoined my regiment, who were very glad to get out of the fearful rain of shell which, directed to the caissons in front of them, dismounted a number of them. On my way back noticed Sickles on a stretcher, smoking a cigar. They said his leg had been shot off in the last charge. This is giving the "Solace Tobacco" a new meaning. By the time I reached Gregg he was just going into camp in the clover field above mentioned. The men

were just leaving their horses run at random to graze and sitting down to make coffee, when a long Rebel infantry skirmish line issues from the woods and advances towards us, while artillery on the edge of the woods reach us with shells. We get our artillery limbered up again, throw out a stronger line, drive them back, and then, in sight of one another, take supper, for the first time since we left Edwards Ferry, with some degree of comfort. But our rest is short. At eight we march in division down the Tennallytown road for camp. Pleasanton seems to be anxious to guard the rear from attack. I again report to Pleasanton and he orders me to picket the left flank beyond the infantry. These are extremely agreeable orders. The night is dark. I have no knowledge of the locality. No one can tell me where the line is. Pleasanton does not know. I must find out myself. I enter the first road turning to the left. First we run into ambulances, then into infantry, then again know we are among the wounded by their groans, and so, groping our way between the pickets of the two armies, we finally run some kind of a line by one o'clock, but whether it runs inside the rebels or inside of our wagon trains, I cannot tell. The men must take care of themselves.

*Friday, July 3rd.*

Morning arrives and I visit the line. It is all right—the men, being old picketers, have disposed

themselves in hailing distance of one another and beyond the infantry. Soon after daybreak I am ordered to withdraw my line within the infantry. We are now stationed at "Two Taverns" and have some rest to observe the battle. At ten the cannonading ceases and thousands of Rebels are driven in; thousands of wounded carried to the rear. At one a terrific fire opens. The whole heavens are dotted with the tufts made by exploding shells. Pleasanton anticipates an attack at Littlestown and orders me to send a patrol to discover what is going on. Before they have time to report, I am ordered to join our cavalry on the right. We march through the woods and find Gregg heavily engaged between the Hanover road and York road, on the enemy's left. The 3rd Pennsylvania suffers severely. My own regiment is badly shelled, but the enemy is driven in towards the rear. At night we pass over the unburied dead towards the Hanover road and camp, which we reach at eight. Scarcely are we asleep before a tremendous volley of musketry resounds along the whole line and then all is still again.

*Saturday, July 4th.*

The morning is misty. We move out to the old fighting ground near the York road, to renew action. At eleven we are in line. Gregg rides off. We see and hear nothing except a heavy rain. At 5 P.M. we are ordered to go to camp. We surmise the enemy has fallen back. A rumor

spreads that Lee is in full retreat. We return drenched to camp. A prisoner of an Alabama regiment is captured and says Lee is gone, and the Confederacy at an end. He wants no more fighting.

*Sunday, July 5th.*

The ground is still wet with the night's rain but the air is heavy and sultry and the day extremely hot. At 6 A.M. we march over to the York road and take possession of about five hundred prisoners who are stowed away in every place that has a roof—houses, barns, outhouses, haymows, threshing floors, corncribs. They have nothing to say, and crawl about at our coming with a kind of dazed and stupid stare. Around the buildings are scattered amputated limbs and sheet-iron breast-plates. Our ambulances remove the wounded.

At ten o'clock receive orders to march through the town by the York road and wait for the rest of the division beyond. On the road we find Ex-Governor Bigler in a carriage, driving into town. We enter and tear down the barricades in the streets. They are up to the second story of the brick houses and composed of wagons, rocking-chairs, bureaus, stones, rails, planks, and palings. They took what seemed handiest. Occasionally we see the mark of shells on the houses, but not many. The inhabitants are few, and look, as we pass, in stupid astonishment. The houses are all hospitals. The dead are removed from the streets,



but beyond the town is a scene and a smell that cannot well be described. The odor of the decaying bodies is so sickening that some of my men vomit. As far as the eye can reach on both sides of the Cashtown road you see blue-coated boys, swollen up to look as giants, quite black in the face, but nearly all on their backs, looking into the clear blue with open eyes, with their clothes torn open. It is strange that dying men tear their clothes in this manner. You see them lying in platoons of infantry with officers and arms exactly as they stood or ran—artillery men with caisson blown up and four horses, each in position—dead. Occasionally the yellow stripe of a cavalryman beside his horse. You meet also limbs and fragments of men. The road is strewn with dead, whom the Rebels have half buried and whom the heavy rain has uncovered. Our horses snort as they approach them and jump to one side. Plenty of fresh earth is thrown up too—the graves of Rebels to whom their comrades hurriedly performed the last offices. In the road too are fragments of citizens, clothing, stolen and abandoned again, and all the vestiges of a great and beaten army hurriedly retreating—stragglers in every corner too anxious to be taken prisoners; caissons, harness, piles of shells, ammunitions, cracker-boxes; abandoned horses and mules; the hoofs and footprints and ruts made by a myriad of trains, horses, cattle, and fugitive soldiers. Soon we see plainer marks of a demoralized retreat.

We reach what first seems regimental tents. As we approach we find they had left their hospitals all standing with the wounded and surgeons. Barns, houses, sheds, the roadside, the fields, the hayricks, were full of rebels eager to be captured. At every turn of the road farmers appeared with pitchforks and flails, having driven together a flock of stragglers, and handing them over to the cavalry. These farmers appeared especially enraged because the retreating column had abandoned the road, and had marched over the grain, making a swath, twelve feet deep, parallel to the road, of trampled wheat and rye. Caissons, shells, cartridges, guns, arms of all sorts, baggage-wagons, wagons stolen from the farmers, drums, strewed the road.

So we advance, driving the stragglers in, through Cashtown, across the mountain, the 16th Pennsylvania in advance. As we approach Stevens Furnace, my regiment is ordered to the front. We have caught up with their cavalry. It is now late in the afternoon,—the cavalry utterly exhausted by the forced march. We attack them in the road and one of my men is killed. Night comes and we encamp along the creek at the Furnace. In the morning the rebel rear-guard is gone.

*Monday, July 6th.*

It is now our day for the advance. I receive orders at Fayetteville to charge down the road to

Greencastle. Gregg's adjutant general rides with me to see that the pace is rapid. He insists on galloping. About one hundred stragglers fall in. But no signs of the rear-guard. At Marion the march has made an end of any efficiency in my force. I count up out of the five hundred men of my regiment with whom I left Potomac Creek, twenty-five with me mounted. The rest are, heaven only knows where, dismounted, killed, wounded, scattered, and not on hand.

At Marion a citizen tells me Fitz-Hugh Lee with two thousand horse is leisurely grazing his horses at Brown's Mills, about one mile to the left. A reconnoissance shows that he is right. Now is the golden opportunity for a surprise. If I had only two hundred men it might do, but with twenty-five it is absurd. An orderly carries the news and asks Gregg to come up and scatter the party. He answers, "Good God! what does the man mean? Let him fall back on me at Fayetteville." While I was waiting for reinforcements four miles away from the main body, and one from Lee, a citizen handed me the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, containing an account of the battle and saying that there was a freshet in the Potomac and the cavalry had utterly routed Lee's retreating army. Alas! had the necessary strength been furnished, I think it could have been done, then and there.

Judging from the immense decrease in the

strength of my own regiment I have no doubt Gregg's force was small comparatively. Neither do I know what his orders were. They may have been to retreat, though not probably. But there are times when a wholesome disobedience, like that of Bernard von Weimer's at Quatre Bras has turned the scale of victory. He may have been afraid of leaving a Rebel force on his flank. But I incline to believe that Gregg judged his strength insufficient to cope with a whole army, and therefore fell back as he did that night on Goldsboro and Chambersburg. Our ammunition was nearly exhausted and the horses sore-backed and exhausted. Still, allowing all that, it seems to me that a vigorous and general charge of Gregg's division on Lee, on the afternoon of the 6th as he lay at ease near Marion, would have routed that demoralized body and driven such consternation throughout the infantry—harassed by a freshet in the rear—as would have given us the Southern Army.

At Chambersburg it was a great luxury to get shaved in the same barber shop where Hill had just been shaved, to walk again on pavements, to talk with women and men, citizens, about the career of the rebels in their town. The court house was quite white with the flour distributed here among the soldiers. The citizens were very angry at the ruffians, for taking their hats off and putting them on their own heads, and robbing their storerooms.

*Wednesday, July 7th.*

Our detour to Chambersburg has made an end of our pursuit of Lee. We march leisurely through Waynesboro to Quincy.

*Thursday, July 8th.*

Pass through Wolfsville, Myerstown to Middletown. Met General Smith's militia.

*Friday, July 9th.*

Camped at Middletown, shoeing horses, cleaning armor, resting, grazing, laying in forage, rations, and ammunition.

WRITTEN AFTER RETURN TO CAMP.

*Saturday, July 11th.*

We marched to Boonesboro, where the rest of the cavalry corps is assembled.

*Sunday, July 12th.*

My regiment receives thirty-five horses and our brigade is joined by Scott's nine hundred cavalry and detachments of the 13th and 14th Pennsylvania Cavalry.

*Monday, July 13th.*

Rested and recruited my command.

*Tuesday, July 14th.*

Gregg's division moves on early and crosses the Potomac over pontoons at Harpers Ferry. We

are going to intercept Lee's passage, but it looks rather late. We should have been at this a week earlier. Camp that night on the heights above Harpers Ferry—Bolivar Heights.

*Wednesday, July 15th.*

At seven marched out on the roads toward Martinsburg and Winchester. The enemy is reported on our left at Charleston. At 2 o'clock we reach Shepherdstown. I am ordered to proceed with my regiment four miles on the Winchester Pike. Advanced as far as Walfert's Cross Roads, where we hear the sound of drums in three directions: on our left going towards Charleston; on the right going towards Martinsburg; in front going to Winchester. Barricaded the crossroads and sent in for reinforcements. Skirmishing with the pickets all night.

*Thursday, July 16th.*

Am relieved during the night, and by eight return to camp. Told Gregg the crossroads were not tenable by one regiment. Sitting down to dinner under an apple tree. The 1st Maine is driven in. It looks very much as if we were in the middle of Lee's Army.

Reinforcements are sent forward. The 1st Maine is driven into the woods about half a mile, the other side of Shepherdstown, when it makes a stand. We have only two pieces of artillery. Our men are dismounted and go into action. They

continue to press our flanks inward. Artillery moves to within two hundred yards of my right. The woods swarm with whole regiments moving into line. Our artillery falls short and is useless. Charge after charge is made but with no effect. There is great slaughter among our men. I never saw these rebels so bold. Gradually sun sets. If we can only hold on until dark, we may escape. The ammunition gives out and our mule-train is captured. Finally comes night. We are in a small circle hemmed in by a heavy force, most of our dead and wounded in their hands. The men stay on post. Every half hour or so, the line starts firing and blazes from end to end. At 11 P.M. orders come to withdraw quietly. In the darkness some of the men could not be found and were left. We retire through ravines in a pitch-dark night, until by the light of an occasional fire we reach the Harpers Ferry road, and by daylight are again on Bolivar Heights.

*Thursday, July 17th.*

*Harpers Ferry.*

We are all glad of our escape, but sorry we came too late to intercept. We even so nearly intercepted ourselves.

*Friday, July 18th.*

*Harpers Ferry*

The Army of the Potomac is crossing the river at Berlin.

*Saturday, July 19th to Aug. 1st.*

We march by Leesburg, Manassas Junction, Bristow Station, Bealton, to Amissville, picketing and patrolling as far as Mt. Washington and Thornton's Gap. Lee is again on the Rapidan, Meade on the line of the Rappahannock, and the Gettysburg Campaign is over.

In this campaign, which occupied, starting with June 17th at Aldie to July 18th at Harpers Ferry, one month, or ending at Amissville, when the armies were again at rest, Aug. 1st, six weeks, the cavalry of our division marched two hundred miles *via* Thoroughfare Gap, Ashby's Gap, Leesburg, and Frederick, before it reached Gettysburg.

After it left Gettysburg and until it returned to Harpers Ferry, it marched twelve miles per day *via* Chambersburg, Marion, Middletown, Boonsboro, and Shepherdstown. After it left Harpers Ferry and until it returned to the line of the army of Amissville, it marched *via* Manassas, Leesburg, and Bristow, one hundred miles. Its whole march then in a direct line was 420 miles. Counting now its marches on picket and in action as eighty more, the miles marched are five hundred.

The march from the Potomac to Gettysburg occupied from Saturday evening, 9 P. M., June 27th, to Thursday, July 2d, 11 A. M. Before it crossed the Potomac it had been four entire days in action, alternated by picket, and had before it a march of eighty miles which it accomplished in four days and a half, being at the rate of a little less than



twenty miles a day. Twelve miles a day is a good cavalry march.

Our condition then at Gettysburg was as follows: We had been fighting and picketing without interruption for a week; we had marched interruptedly about two weeks three hundred miles—the last eighty by forced marches. Supposing now the condition of the rest of the corps to have been the same as ours, let us see what was done with the cavalry and what could have been done with it at Gettysburg. I mean during and after the engagement.

On the 29th of June Kilpatrick's Division encountered Stuart at Hanover but did not prevent his making his way by our right flank to Carlisle. On the 30th he occupied the enemy at Emmitsburg Road. On the 29th of June and 1st of July Buford held the enemy in check on the Cashtown road. On the 2d, he was sent to Westminster to refit; afterwards to Williamsport. On the 2d and 3d, Gregg encountered the enemy on his left wing; on the 4th, found he had withdrawn his left; on the 5th and 6th pursued him to Marion; on the 6th halted; on the 14th, marched to Harpers Ferry. Meade says in his report: "On the morning of the 14th, it was discovered that the enemy had retired the night previous by a bridge at Falling Waters and a ford at Williamsport. . . . Previous to the retreat of the enemy, Gregg's Division had crossed at Harpers Ferry."

Meade is in error. Gregg did not leave Boons-

boro until the morning of the 14th, after the enemy was across and when Meade knew he was across. We crossed just one night later than Lee.

That part of cavalry duty which was assigned the cavalry, discovering where the enemy was, was well performed by Buford and Kilpatrick. It was also assigned them to harass the enemy on the right and left flanks, which was done. Gregg was instructed to head off Stuart's advance on our right. This could not be done on account of the trains in the way. The cavalry was also ordered to harass the enemy's retreat. This was also done.

By keeping Stuart engaged in rear of our infantry advance, it prevented his junction with Lee on the first day. That was of immense value.

What more could have been done during the action,—or after it—to make the victory decisive by the timely use of cavalry?

I answer, during the engagement the cavalry did all that was possible, acting as detached divisions, several miles apart and on different wings. But why use them separately?

Cavalry in all wars has been most effective by being hurled *en masse* on the enemy's weakest point and at the decisive moment. It is essentially *l'arm du moment* to be held in reserve as such and only used in great actions as such. Mere compliance with the elements of the art of war should have caused Meade to concentrate his cavalry for use at the right moment, when the enemy

showed signs of wavering. Besides that, what the cavalry needed to be effective was a day's rest.

Suppose now that Kilpatrick, Buford, and Gregg had been massed in the clover fields of the Hanover road on the morning of the 2d and held in reserve. There was no immediate need of the arm whatever as against infantry and artillery. These arms practically relieved the cavalry.

The two armies occupy the slopes of parallel hills with a level valley between, where obstacles are already removed by the tread of the infantry. At three o'clock on the afternoon of the 3d, the artillery of the enemy ceased firing, and his masses are seen forming for an assault on our left and left center. The attack is made and met. The enemy retires, leaving the field strewn with his killed and wounded.

Now was the glorious opportunity for a Ney, a Ziethen, Murat, or Kellerman to have formed his host in column of squadrons, to have hurled them down the valley from their right, to have descended like an avalanche on Hill's and Ewell's retreating flank and rear, and to have ended the day with peace to our arms.

It was not to be. Pleasanton was at headquarters and his division generals vainly essaying to do separately what was only feasible united.

Now, the union of these cavalry divisions acting in concert at the critical moment of battle, under three division generals of reputation, requires a leader, who is made of the stuff that loves the

mêlée of a charge as Ney did, at Waterloo, or who is anxious to go with his command far enough to show it its direction as did Lord Lucan at Balaklava. I have never heard that Pleasanton was ordered to stay at headquarters, or that he was directed to cut up his force into fragments, and wear them out in fruitless charges on infantry. It may have been that he was so ordered. If he was, from his previous habit, I have no doubt the orders were agreeable to him,—throwing the execution on his subordinates and directing them afar off.

But my impression is that if Kilpatrick or Buford or Gregg had been in chief command of the corps, such orders would not have been given. The corps would have been concentrated as soon as the contest was taken out of cavalry hands by the arrival of Meade, rested, grazed, shod, supplied and held in reserve for use at the decisive moment.

Allowing, however, that the use of cavalry had been a mistake during the engagement, was not the mistake reparable afterwards?

We have seen that the retreat of the Rebel Army was discovered on the morning of the 5th. They retreated by the Fairfield and Cashtown roads. Gregg had his division in hand. Why not at eight o'clock hurl them forwards with directions to ride down remorselessly the retreating columns? McIntosh's Brigade was sent over the Fairfield road; ours on the Cashtown. But I received at eight, orders to take hospitals, at ten, to move

through the town and wait for the rest of our brigade, and it was not until one o'clock that the head of our column moved out of Gettysburg. Here was a loss of five hours—enough for the purposes of Lee. This is the first error in the pursuit.

We have seen that we caught up to the rear-guard on the evening of the 6th at Brown's Mills, under circumstances most favorable for the attack of a moderately strong force, and that Gregg turned aside to Chambersburg and abandoned the pursuit. That he was not perhaps adequately supported was owing to the absence of the two other divisions. Why were not they supporting one another's advance? Pleasanton did not so order them.

But I cannot esteem this absence as an excuse for not attacking Fitz-Hugh Lee. The force that entered Chambersburg was still large and effective and in good fighting trim, as much encouraged to fight and pursue as the enemy was disheartened and demoralized. When I rejoined the main body, I was asked whether I had destroyed the caissons and cannon. I answered "no," and a detachment was ordered up to spike the guns. I judged from that, that Gregg still believed there was great danger of the enemy's returning. If so, his turning aside is sufficiently explained. This is the second error of the pursuit.

Again Lee crossed on the night of the 13th-14th of July. On the 11th, Saturday, we were at Boonsboro refitted and reinforced.

Capable of crossing at Harpers Ferry to intercept Lee's advance, across a swollen river by a bridge at Falling Waters and a ford at Williamsport, we were not ordered to cross until the evening of the 14th and then it was too late. But the 9th was sufficient to have rested, and had we been pushed forward it was possible to have crossed on the 10th, in time to have prevented even the erection of a bridge. This is the third error of the pursuit.

It is possible that if these errors had not been committed, and the lost opportunity been taken advantage of, Lee's generalship would have invented a way out; still, when it is considered that on the proper handling of the cavalry after this action depended the close or continuance of the war, with its attendant miseries, for another year and a half, it is mournful to think of the force of a magnificent cavalry corps being frittered away and checked just long enough to enable the prize to escape; that possibility was never tested.

## CHAPTER X

### THE CAPITAL IN 1864—A DIARY

*Washington, D. C., June 30, 1864.* The astute Secretary of the Treasury, whom the *Herald* calls "Mephistopheles," Gurowski, "a pompous and passive patriot," and Wall Street, "the father of greenbacks," has resigned. *The Stars* says from some dispute between him and the President last night Chase wanted Field and Lincoln some one else to be Sub-Treasurer at New York. The story on the street runs that Chase offered with great dignity to resign, since he was so treated, and the President answered, "Well, Mr. Secretary, then I must get along without you." This morning Chase was placed before the Senate Committee and testified concerning his past conduct and future plans. All this while the name of Governor Todd of Ohio was in the committee's hands. That when he reached home he was dismayed and confounded to find the acceptance of his resignation on the table.

I am puzzled how much to believe of this story about quarrelling over appointments. It may be the pretext, but it is not the cause. Men do not dismiss important officers on such grounds, neither

do ambitious men jump from the top round of the ladder on account of a petty quarrel. I incline to the opinion: (1) that Chase's opinion of Lincoln has never been very high, and he has let that escape him; (2) Seward and Blair have been undermining him; (3) Chase is disappointed at Lincoln's nomination. These things have made bad blood. (4) the depreciation of the currency, whether owing to the speculators' or Chase's policy, has hurt him in public esteem.

The *Tribune* says: "We would support General Fremont quite as willingly as Mr. Lincoln, if he stood at the head of the anti-slavery host, which he does not." The *Times* is now the only administration paper in New York.

*Evening*. Gold is quoted at 2.48. Colonel H. raves about Chase's bad treatment and declares him the only living financier. Robert J. Walker next best. Boutwell thinks the dispute only personal and believes Congress will not delay adjourning. Rumors of Stanton's resignation. The *Star* is a great advocate of the War Secretary. People are beginning to understand that Stanton does not care for his office, sacrifices money by staying in, and is far too independent to care how many enemies he makes.

*II P. M.* Rumor that Chase will be restored. Met Blair taking his children walking on the avenue as unconcerned as if his name were not mentioned by a thousand tongues in connection with the resignation of Chase.



*Washington, July 1, 1864.* Anniversary of Reynolds's death and opening of Gettysburg under Buford. The affairs of the Republic are less critical, not more prosperous than a year ago.

*The Chronicle* declares the non-acceptance of Governor Todd. Sensible man. There is no glory in patching up finance. The paper deprecates quarrels between men in high places and veers around to the restoration of Chase. Order of Stanton forbidding information in the Department to outsiders.

Senate confirmed appointments in Invalid Corps. Captain Todd has justice done him, and made Major of 69th New York. Better late than never. More badly wounded officers than ever coming in. It is nothing now to have four balls lodged in the body. Grant evidently conceals his losses. Officers tell me complimentary orders have been published by Meade and Sheridan to brigades and regiments, but no mention of them in the newspapers. Lee has his match in reticence, at least.

Heard a lady say Grant meets the same obstacles as McClellan, with no more success, but greater determination. Thought the observation just.

I am glad to see the New Yorkers appreciate the real wants of the army and are going to send a cargo of onions as a 4th of July present. Fresh vegetables in warm weather are better than the Surgeon-General's Department. I remember how the cavalry used to envy the horses the grass they

cropped, last July 1st. Received a letter from a corporal who served with me last summer and enlisted in the Pennsylvania Volunteers, in the front, complaining of their want of organization. The officers remain uncommissioned because there is a disagreement between Stanton and Curtin. Consequently, no quartermaster or commissary and no supplies. The trouble is an old one. This power should be in Grant or Stanton who cannot make a corporal or lieutenant except among the regulars.

Grant should be able to reward as well as punish. Vallandigham's connection with Morgan's raid appears fully believed by Governor Bramlette, in his correspondence with Governor Morton of Ohio.

Yesterday Stevens upheld the dignity of the House by offering a resolution that the action of the Senate in returning the Enrollment Act, with amendment, imposing a tax on imports, was a violation of the privileges of the house, which resolution was sent to the Senate.

*Washington, July 2, 1864.* All quiet at Petersburg. Grant's headquarters are at City Point. He seems to be certain of his base and determines to stay where he is, which is the vital difference between him and McClellan. General Dix and staff were arrested yesterday and brought before Judge Russell, charged with suppression of *The World and Journal of Commerce*. I presume they will plead the Indemnity Act and the constitutionality of the law will be settled.

10 A. M. Fessenden has not yet made up his mind. Gold closed yesterday at 2.25, a decline of fifty-seven from the highest point. I hear many speculations concerning Chase's future. About his going to run for Senator—from Ohio, and about his going into business with Jay Cooke & Co. The *Herald* is enthusiastic over his fall and says, "The happy family is broken up."

July 2d. Fessenden was offered the portfolio of the Treasury and declines. He says his vacation is barely sufficient to enable him to recover from the fatigues of the sessions. He would be obliged to give up in a month. Still an immense pressure is brought on the Senator from Maine. In New York, gold went down from 2.50 to 2.20. On hearing of his appointment Ashman stopped the President's carriage at the head of Colonel Taylor's funeral cortège and talked Fessenden. The claims of Boutwell are urged, but President objects. Fessenden slept on the matter. I trust he will decline, though he has been ten years Chairman of Finance.

Much talk and little work in Congress. Brown's amendment providing for return of States in insurrection carried by 17 to 16. It provides for the recognition of these States as soon as they have returned to allegiance by the President's proclamation. The gold bill is quietly repealed.

July 2d. The military authorities beginning to clean out the Augean stables of this city. The Military Governor issues orders to remove all filth

from streets and tenements. It is easy to see that the city should be cleaned but not so easy to comprehend that the Military Governor command or punish citizens for neglect. The weather is exceedingly warm and sultry, and the Government ambulance and trains roll up an unbroken cloud of dust.

A notable feature on the streets of the capital is the female Government employees; especially the Treasury girls. They are generally young and of good families—for it takes some influence to get into a department. There are many black sheep among them, however. They get \$600 a year which is little when board is hard to get at \$30 per month, and an ordinary room costs \$20 per month.

6 P. M. July 2d. Fessenden is tacitly the new secretary. I hope he will meet the issues of finance with more decision and directness than he has his appointment. The greatness of events appears to dwarf our men and power, for they display personal weaknesses which the quiet stupefaction of former administrations had not brought out. The New York papers still adrift on the great *reason* of Chase's resignation. The *Times* holds that Lincoln found it time to get rid of insubordinate subordinates. The *Herald* naturally inclines to an explanation which presumes an intrigue and cuts the Blairs. The *Tribune* denies the theory of the *Times* but sets up none of its own. The Truth is a Commissioner—says

“Chase has always had the most contemptible opinion of Lincoln and been fearless in expressing it.” It was long ago desired to be rid of him. The renomination of Lincoln gave the opportunity, and the quarrel about Cisco, the pretext.

Chase is right at last. He has long eaten humble pie. He has had to fight the bitter fight of having more responsibility than authority. It is all right. The record of the minister is clear.

*Sunday, July 3d.* Last night a final session. Rumors of a general assault on Petersburg. It is supposed that true to the superstitions of the army and the national feeling Grant will not allow the 4th to go by without an effort.

*Monday.* No news from Grant. Excitement in Washington. Sigel is driven to Harpers Ferry. Raids and the capture of Washington talked about.

*July 4th.* A great carnival. The colored people celebrate a picnic in the President's grounds. A stranger would imagine himself in the palace gardens of Souldouque of Hayti. Negroes in hacks, with standards on gayly-caparisoned horses, and generally in the costume of the Southern aristocracy. Their new freedom is naturally driven to excess. In time they will take their proper position as humble citizens—at present they are extravagant freedmen.

I hear that Forney is steering for the Senate, while he pretends to support Cameron, who keeps canvassing the State against Curtin. Mr. Ket-

chum declares that the Republican party in Pennsylvania is discouraged by the squabble between Curtin and Cameron, and the young men, seeing no hope, refuse to work. He is doubtful about Pennsylvania next fall. We will see.

Why cannot the young blood drive the fossils out of office? Because young blood only rules in resolutions, not in managing.

*Chronicle* compares the situation of Grant with his situation before Richmond and finds many analogies.

Josiah Quincy, the Nestor of American politics, is dead.

There has been an affair of honor. Miss B—— is engaged to Captain M—— regular infantry, and goes walking in street with her sister in the evening. She flirts with an officer and he desires to walk with her. She declines the honor and calls papa. Papa arrives and threatens lieutenant. Next day lieutenant and captain meet at Willard's and captain demands apology. Lieutenant refuses. Captain calls him coward. Lieutenant draws pistols and captain snaps lieutenant, cowhides lieutenant, kicks him out doors, and lieutenant is dismissed from the service. Captain reports to Miss B—— and is the hero of town.

Every one seems to have a great disposition to enjoy the day, yet to be doubtful of the propriety. There is no enthusiasm or abandonment. The critical position of the army, the last day of Congress, the multitude of hearses and wounded seem

to throw a restraint around the pleasure, although the weather is superb.

Truly there is not much to rejoice over that is associated with the day. On this fatal day one year ago, Meade suffered the Phœnix Lee to arise from his ashes and fired not a gun, made not a reconnoissance. But Grant and Vicksburg shed a new glory on the date last year. I trust we shall hear to-morrow.

The blacks are right. They and they alone, freed by accident, have lost nothing and gained everything.

I read the report of the committee—Wade and Gooch—on the Fort Pillow Massacre and the treatment of prisoners at Belle Isle. It is horrible, atrocious. History records no instances of such deliberate ferocity. They kill wounded negroes in bed because they are Yankee property and therefore to be destroyed. They freeze and starve prisoners as a joke. Let Lincoln send a copy of this book to every home. It is better than the draft, or his greenbacks. These men were once our brethren.

The lobbyists are counting up their gains. I know a gentleman who got \$2500 for the whiskey bill. A judge who came here from New York got \$100,000. *Quære*—Which is worst, to sell one's influence or to sell one's vote? There are plenty uncensured who do the last. These fellows are really dexterous. They get men in possession of the floor, have bills offered to committees,—get

them reported on,—manage the whole assembly by pressure at the proper moment on the right spot.

It is a most interesting phenomenon to notice the dignity assumed by these freedmen. They address one another as Mr. and Miss, though only servants. The women carry parasols and lean on one another's arms and kiss one another as Court dames. The barbers and waiters sport ivory-headed canes. White people laugh, some swear, and most think we are in a revolution and every miracle is natural. Amidst the fun I saw groups of contrabands in butternut sitting in melancholy mood along the curbstone, as if they thought themselves an inferior order of negro.

*July 5th.* Grant has not taken Petersburg, or we should have the news.

Ewell is reported in Pennsylvania, in three columns, as last year. The weather is magnificent for a hurried ride into the rich meadows and grain fields of the Cumberland valley; and if Sigel remains at Harpers Ferry there is nothing in his way or in his rear.

The *Alabama* sunk off Cherbourg by the *Kearsarge*. A magnificent fight. And a good name Winslow for the victor. Welles did one sensible act by making him a commodore at once. What will the *Herald* have to say now against the old man of the sea? Much regret is expressed in true, extravagant, unsatisfied American style, that the *Deerhound* was allowed to pick up the survivors.



Little life lost for a naval action. I presume Semmes is the lion of Paris. He would be of Washington if he were here.

*July 6th.* Mrs. General Wadsworth in town. She and her son Craig, who has just come from the army, after doing brave things, are off for home this morning. She is much broken by the shock of the General's death, but calmer than expected. The Wadsworth family at least have made their sacrifice. It is too much to ask that the widow of the General, while mourning for him, should be farther distressed by grieving about her son.

They are stopping at "Wormleys," the rich negro on I Street. How much the negroes of this city owe to him.

Lincoln issues a proclamation proclaiming martial law in Kentucky. The paper recites the whole history of the rebellion and looks too apologetic to be dignified. Why specially in Kentucky?

Curtin also calls for 12,000 one-hundred-day men to defend Washington and vicinity. He says he calls pursuant to a requisition from Lincoln, and at the same time remarks that the enemy is taking advantage of Grant's uncovering Washington to invade Pennsylvania. Fessenden is finally sworn in and Chase silences slanderous tongues by introducing him in person to the auditors, etc. He, Chase, is the first American who voluntarily retired from great power. No one in America has yet stepped from such a height. All presidents

and secretaries have been of feeble influence in comparison with this President and Cabinet.

*July 6th.* The report of John Winslow, Captain of the *Kearsarge* published. Three men badly wounded. The report is modest as if he was unconscious of being a hero.

The Paris Correspondent, "Americus," says that Semmes was ordered out by Dayton (through the French authorities) and that the *Alabama* was known to be lost if she engaged the *Kearsarge*. Therefore Semmes wished to get out of the scrape with a good grace and sent the challenge. I had rather it were otherwise. The English seem much galled by the sinking of their craft. The absence of Government and their followers is plainly visible in the greater stillness of the avenue and hotels.

Read a speech of Senator Foot on the state of the country. It is an adaptation of one of Pat. Henry's speeches to the crises. These are some fine contracts, "Negotiate? With whom? Compromise? What? Etc." It is eloquent and will do good to upset the maudlin cry about expense and loss of life.

*July 7th.* Some enthusiasts at Philadelphia are holding a conference to introduce an amendment to the Constitution, acknowledging "Almighty God as the source of all authority and power in Civil Government, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Governor among the nations, and his revealed will as the supreme Law of the Land." Jefferson and

the lawyers who framed the instrument understood codes and constitutions. We are not a Theocracy. I trust they will let this poor Magna Charta first get safe over the rebellion.

Smothering, murky weather. Curtin issues another proclamation for 12,000. The papers filled with rumors of the Rebel advance. Some place them at Middletown. The operator leaves Frederick. No news from Grant. No excitement about the Rebel raid here. It has got to be an oft told tale of incursions, depredations, and retreat. Reports of the *Alabama* fight from the English and French newspapers coming in. France is much fairer than England. I think the French hatred for *perfidie Albion* and exultation over her naval discomfiture is visible in the *Moniteur*. The *Times* (London) asks "Why did Semmes fight against unfair odds?" and dwells with ludicrous pathos (to us war-used Americans) upon the honor of a fight on Sunday when London was at church. The *Star* (London) is always exultant at the Federal success against a cowardly craft. The *Manchester Examiner* declares the *Alabama* has "sown a legacy of distrust and of future apprehensions on both sides of the Atlantic." Probably, England has fatally committed herself to the South. Her chastisement is a mere matter of time. All our papers are aglow. If Grant had whipped Lee on the Bois de Boulogne the speculations could not be greater.

*Saturday, July 9th.* The President issues pro-

clamation for prayer on the first Thursday in August. Another, stating that he is unwilling to commit himself to any form of reconstruction under the act passed by Congress last session. This afternoon news that the Rebels have Frederick. Howe succeeded Sigel yesterday. Wallace seems to be beaten back. There has been much contemptuous indifference to this raid. Certainly the force must be large if they are the advance guard. If the main body is scattered as this force appears, it is not dangerous. A body of Army of Potomac Cavalry (the dismounted men of Torbet's Division who were mounted to-day) pass through as I am writing. No news from Grant except that he is encroaching and getting his heavy guns in position for an assault. The *Herald* wants the Government to make an instant demand for Semmes on the British Government. I hear Stanton says the reason of our falling back and not knowing the exact force of the Rebels is the personal cowardice of Sigel. I presume he was made timid by his large wagon train. Shall we repeat Antietam and Gettysburg?

*Tuesday, July 10th.* The raid culminates in an invasion. Wallace is driven back from Monocacy. Baltimore is frightened as Richmond during the Kilpatrick raid, and Washington is at last waking up from the apathy which is become the fashion and which is an affectation of coolness very different from the genuine sentiment. From the million rumors the following may be selected as

more credible than the rest. Wallace announces the number of Rebels at 20,000. A proclamation issued by Governor Bradford of Maryland saying, "come in your leagues or come in militia companies—but come in crowds and come quickly."

The War Department is sending troops toward the north,—cavalry, infantry, artillery. None of the Army of the Potomac has yet passed through this city. The veteran reserves are passing out of town. The latest rumor was that the enemy's cavalry was at Rockville and Poolesville in all directions about town.

Washington certainly appears more closely harassed than ever before. Yesterday many ex-officers offered their services to Stanton. He sends them to Augur and Augur says he doesn't know. It reminds me of Orestes Brownson's remark, "If you want to get your enthusiasm knocked out of you, go to Washington and talk to the President or to the members of his Cabinet." Routine gives en husiasm the cramps.

*July 11th.* The army is reported nearer, and the excitement is growing. This morning a woman came in and reports skirmishing at "Chrystal Springs," about two miles north of the city. At nine o'clock a few distant cannon shots were heard. The mail-carrier to Rockville is positive that a strong force of cavalry is at that town. Members of cavalry report that Grant knew of the intended raid, twenty thousand having disappeared from his front, and notified old Abe to look out for them.

Curtin issues another proclamation upbraiding the citizens of Pennsylvania for not coming forward. There are more teams and soldiers about than I have seen since the second battle of Bull Run. The veterans are going into the forts and the quartermaster clerks take their places. We have generals enough here now: Augur, Doubleday, and Gillmore.

What a pity Congress has adjourned. It would be pleasant to note the blustering of the opposition cast down. No business. All suspended. It is now certain that Ricketts's Division of the Army of the Potomac is in Maryland and about Frederick. The Rebels have never been sent back except by the Army of the Potomac—neither will these be.

11 A. M. More excitement, and a shower as an antidote. It appears that the defenses of Washington, on the north, are commanded by McCork, and that our rifle-pits are manned. The President passed here this morning, escorted by a detachment of 8th Illinois Cavalry, on his way north to inspect the situation. The *Florida* appears in Chesapeake Bay, and to finish the confusion we have a fire in town.

4 P. M., July 11th. "Hextry Staar. Second Edition. Great Battle at Seventh Street" is the newsboys' cry. The paper says our troops have been attacked at Fort Massachusetts, with what truth it is impossible to say. I have seen some of the quartermaster's employees under arms. They take it moderately. The only visible sign,

except the newspaper boys, of excitement, is the rapid gait at which men gallop through the streets. This is an affectation of business which I noticed many officers assume after the second battle of Bull Run. It is not exactly hypocrisy but a feeling that in an emergency one ought to seem to be doing great things, even if accomplishing nothing whatever. News is scarce, rumors abundant.

10 P. M. Light out of darkness. The greater part of Lee's Army is in front of Washington and have attacked us at Tennallytown and Fort Massachusetts beyond Seventh Street. The signal officers of our army state that the troops of the Rebels stretch as far as the eye and glass can reach, until where they are hidden by the dust they raise. Men of the cavalry, New York and Massachusetts, have been killed. I saw about twenty Rebel prisoners taken down the avenue. Some were dressed in butternut, some as *enfants perdus*, but all had some United States clothing. All railroad and telegraph communication is cut off. General Blair's and Governor Bradford's mansions burned. An attack in force is expected during the night. They would be fools if they waited.

Senator Sumner stood talking a long time to my neighbor Hodge, evidently not quite easy. Surely the conflict commenced on his skull, he ought not to mind a siege. Grover's Theater in blast *vive la joie!* Everybody wonders why the citizens are not called out in force. An ordnance officer

tells me the reason is, there are no arms here. Distant cannonading at intervals.

The city still survives and men feel relieved. The weather is intensely hot. There appears to be continual skirmishing, however. I met a clerk who just came in from the front this morning who said he saw eleven dead carried back on Seventh Street. Last night about twelve a messenger came and said the Sixth Corps was lying stretched across Seventh Street; that the camp-fires of the Rebels were distinctly visible, that a few shells fell inside of our lines, and all citizens were ordered back. Took a walk down the avenue this morning. There are few people on the pavement, but more than usual on the street. No butter in market but plenty of cattle driven in to escape the raid and offered for sale. Noticed this morning in *The Chronicle* that Major-General George Thomas calls out the militia and Brigadier-General Grocer Bacon is to command them! Went into the grocery, but no headquarters visible. Asked Bacon's brother where headquarters were; answered, "Damned if I know."

Augur don't know. Nobody knows. Bacon more intent on weighing out sugar than shells. Things seem to go on as usual. Met Colonel Higgins of the 86th N. Y., just mustered out with a crooked leg and ball through his breast. He is one of the few I have met who refuses to accept a pension in the Invalid Corps, as long as he can make a living by his own exertions. It seems



Major-General Franklin was captured on the cars on his way to Washington.

*July 12th, 1.30 P. M.* Heavy cannonading to the north of the city is heard here with great distinctness. The newsboys coining money over the excitement. The firing seems to be veering from northeast to northwest. Rumor has the engagement at Fort Lincoln, which is near Bladensburg and commands the northern chain of forts. The city shows no signs of alarm, except being subdued as children in a thunderstorm, listening and waiting for the issue. It seems funny to hear the rumbling of street cars mixed with the rumbling of hostile cannon, the one of pleasure and business, the other of death and agony. But America is getting French and shouts "*laissez-faire.*" This is the second time the people of Washington have heard the enemy's guns,—the first being at Centerville during the Bull Run battle. The firing is one shot every two seconds.

Rumor that Lincoln has been wounded.

*July 12th, 4 P. M.* At 2.30, a division of the Sixth Corps marched up the avenue, evidently just from Petersburg. Oh, how delighted these fellows were. How well I could understand their joy at again seeing houses and citizens, shops and women. The Treasury employees cheered them enthusiastically. The cannonading has ceased. At three we had a fine rain which has cooled the earth. The result of the action I have not yet heard.

Saw Dr. M—, the Secessionist whom I once

arrested for cruelty to Federal wounded during McClellan's campaign, drive by Willard's with his negro, looking very happy. It is amusing to see shoemakers hammering, clerks copying, lawyers pleading, and ladies shopping while the shells are flying over our northern forts. *Sang-froid* is getting fashionable. The prevalent theory now is that Early is closely harassing the city while the main body is plundering undisturbed.

*July 13th.* Early has gone—the Sixth Corps had no chance to drive him—taking with him droves of cattle. The city breathes free again. The siege is over.

The underwriters breathe safe and the navy is vindicated. Pennsylvania is truly alarmed, for Couch reports six thousand cavalry on the banks of the Potomac, opposite Williamsport. The Gettysburg celebration was spoiled by it. But Sigel is safe at Harpers Ferry. Poor Sigel! A treble failure would ruin Alexander.

Governor Reeder of Easton, who might have been the ranking general of the army if he had accepted Cameron's offer, is dead. How different the whole face of affairs might be had he taken McClellan's place.

The peace Democracy held a meeting at the West Capitol grounds, and wanted us to "Meet the South afar off, and kill the fatted calf." Cox said the adjournment was "the only wise thing Congress had yet done. The rest was all for the blacks." A poem was delivered on "The Old Capitol."

## CHAPTER XI

### CONSPIRACY TRIAL, 1865

A FULL report of this trial may be found in a work called *The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln*, compiled by Benn Pitman (official stenographer of the court, published at Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1865. This work included the charges against the prisoners, the testimony of witnesses, and the documents introduced in the case. The charges summarized are against Jefferson Davis and other prominent persons in the Confederate cause, together with the prisoners, to kill Abraham Lincoln, Seward, Johnson, *et al.*, the conspiracy being made in the military district of Washington in March 1865. The court was composed of Union officers, comprising three major-generals, four brigadier-generals, and two colonels. The judge advocate general was Joseph Holt, assisted by Messrs. Bingham and Burnett of Ohio. The counsel for the prisoners was as follows:

Dr. Samuel Mudd was defended by Frederick Stone of Maryland; Mary E. Surratt by Aikin & Clampitt and Reverdy Johnson of Washington; Herold by Stone; Arnold by Ewing of Ohio; McLaughlin by Coxe of Washington; Spangler by

Ewing, and Payne and Atzerodt by the writer, of Pennsylvania.

The proceedings covered four hundred and twenty-one printed pages. The trial began May 12, 1865, and lasted until June 30th, when the court met and decided the case. The court sat at Washington in the arsenal, which was also used as a penitentiary. The sentence of the court was that Payne, Atzerodt, Herold, and Mrs. Surratt be hanged; McLaughlin, Mudd, and Arnold be imprisoned for life; Spangler undergo six years' solitary confinement.

On July 5th, the sentences were ordered by the President to be carried out. On July 6th, an application for clemency was made in the forenoon to President Johnson but he declined to see the applicants. The same day, Mrs. Surratt and other prisoners applied to Judge Wiley, sitting in the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia for a writ of *habeas corpus*. The writ was issued to the marshal of the District of Columbia, with directions to bring the prisoners before the court. General Hancock and Attorney-General Speed appeared without the prisoners, and declined to give them up, on the ground that they had the orders of the President to execute the prisoners. Judge Wiley held that this was no good return, but that he was unable to compel the production of the prisoners held by a major-general with the division of infantry. The prisoners were then executed.

An account of this trial can also be found in two volumes published in Boston by Benn Perly Poore and again, in one volume by Peterson, of Philadelphia—both 1865.

On May 12, 1865, being at that time engaged in the trial of causes before military courts at Washington, I was retained for the defense of Atzerodt, by his brother, a detective on the force of Marshal McPhail of Baltimore. The prisoner Payne being without counsel, the Assistant Judge-Advocate, General Burnett, requested me to take his case, also, as he had about as much of a chance to get off, as the other, that is—none at all. This I, at first, refused to do, on the ground that I had my hands more than full with one, considering the excited state of public feeling, and that, in fact, this was a contest in which a few lawyers were on one side, and the whole United States on the other—a case in which, of course, the verdict was known beforehand. I finally allowed my name to go down for Payne temporarily, but with the understanding that as soon as he could secure counsel for himself, I might and would withdraw. He never secured other counsel and I had to do the best I could for both clients.

The circumstances under which, and the place where, the trial began, were not of a character to cheer counsel in their task. The charge in general was assassination—a crime against which modern civilization revolts and a charge unknown to our law books—upon a President and Secretary of

State, the first of whom by the downfall of the rebellion stood at the very pinnacle of public idolatry—the last of whom, by the same cause, and by a recent accidental fall from a carriage, enlisted the respectful sympathy of the public heart. The funeral of the President with its million illuminations, its crowds of mourners, its solemn catafalque and processions had just passed. The armies of the Republic were about to be assembled for a triumphal march through the Capitol. These things and the feelings they inspired bore hard against the accused, in the minds of the loyal North, and could not help dispiriting counsel as much as they encouraged the ardor of the judge advocate, and tended to inflame the minds of the soldiers who composed the court.

Even among the enemies of the Republic, the prisoners had no friends. The rebels, surprised at the sudden fall of the Confederacy, eager to think with the triumphing side in a cordial way, the necessity among all disaffected people of now showing hands, found, in the appearance of a forlorn lot of conspirators, a most timely subject of common reprobation—a most agreeable means of being identified with the loyal side—as if to abuse them or their counsel was to be put on the level of men who had been loyal throughout the war.

Even the new President, the man most benefited by the offense charged, was interested in refuting, by a severe course, any suspicions of complicity,

and already showed a pet pride in being esteemed of unshaken firmness—a pride which his Cabinet, being under a new master and liable to his inclinations, was scarcely likely to oppose.

More than all, it was the period proper for punishment of the rebellion, and somebody must be hanged for example's sake.

Thus avoided, like the pestilence, by all classes, the accused had no reliance except in such little as counsel could do. That could not in the nature of things be much. Before military courts prisoners are practically situated in a direction directly opposite from what they are in civil courts. They are presumed to be guilty and are called on to prove their innocence. In this case most of the evidence taken at the Bureau of Military Justice had been daily published as it was taken. The court had doubtless read it. The members could not help feeling that the country expected them, on the evidence already known, to find the prisoners guilty. Their business was chiefly to discover the degrees of guilt and impose the sentences in regular form. They knew that one of the party had been shot without any trial, and the country applauded. Was it likely they apprehended trouble for or during the execution of the rest, with all the paraphernalia of a military trial and after six weeks' hearing? The brutal nature of a military court appears in this. After the argument in behalf of Payne was submitted the court adjourned for lunch. During lunch one of

the members of the commission remarked, " Well, Payne seems to want to be hung, so I guess we might as well hang him."

There were minor circumstances against the defense. The prosecution had had a month assisted by the whole war power of the Government, its railroads, telegraphs, detectives, and military bureau to get its evidence into shape. The prisoners did not receive their charges until the day the trial opened and then they could only communicate sitting in chains, with a soldier on each side, a great crowd surrounding them, and whisper through the bars of the dock to their counsel. Had counsel been closeted with the prisoners for weeks, with the charges in their hands and the war power of the Government at their disposal, the odds might have been more even.

Counsel were not independent. In all military courts they are only tolerated. Here they were surrounded by bayonets and seated in a penitentiary. Every paper they read abused them. The judges could not be challenged. They were not peers, but high military officers. The names of witnesses were not given the prisoners. Tendencies, not facts, were admitted. The court, not knowing anything about the rules of evidence, ruled out practically everything the judge advocates objected to and admitted everything the counsel objected to.

The witnesses were many of them detectives in the government pay. The judges were dependent



on the Executive. The punishment was not fixed, but discretionary. The crimes were not defined by any known rules of law but were vaguely called offenses against the "common law of war." In brief, the situation was as it has been admirably anticipated by Dr. Lieber in his essay on *Civil Liberty*.

"The dire idea of a *crimen exceptum* gains ground. The reasoning, or rather unreasoning, is, that the crime is so enormous that the criminal ought not to have the same chance of escape, thus assuming that the accused, yet to be proved a criminal, is in fact a criminal, and forgetting that the graver the accusation is, and the severer therefore the punishment in case of established guilt may be, the safer and more guarded ought to be the trial."

Under these distressing circumstances there was nothing to do except what lawyers have often tried before, but which no one to my knowledge has done successfully during the war—plead to the jurisdiction—that is to say, in language not technical, to demonstrate to the court that the prisoners, being citizens, had a right to be tried by a civil court, before a jury of citizens, which in this case would have been the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia. Judge Carter of Ohio, a personal friend of Lincoln's, was the president judge, and Olin, one of the associates, was a late Republican Representative from New York of a court created during the war, and which was in session at the very time these officers were assem-

bled as a military court in the penitentiary. To prove to a military court that they have no right to try citizens should be no great task in a republic. Every schoolboy who has read the Constitution knows that it cannot lawfully be done in time of peace. Was this a time of peace? Certainly the war was over; the armies had surrendered in May, 1865. The whole North had rejoiced over peace. And the doors of the civil courts were open, ready to take charge of the prisoners. There was no danger to any one by sending them before Carter; nothing to be gained by a military court except certainty of death, and shooting them as Booth was shot would have accomplished that with far less expense. There was no difficulty in getting a jury as was seen in the subsequent trial of John Surratt.

Reverdy Johnson, one of the counsel for Mrs. Surratt, saw this very clearly. He said at the outset: "The only hope of these people lies in a successful plea to the jurisdiction and a civil trial," and he as well as most of the other counsel laid their greatest strength on that. Of course, the success of one would be the success of all. I had had experience with that plea before, and never for a moment imagined these officers would dispute the sense of Stanton's orders, or doubt the law of Attorney-General Speed, who assured them they were all right. I did hope, however, that the people and the press would support it. Accordingly, I also plead to the jurisdiction as a matter of

form. Mr. Johnson wrote out his long argument, and Mr. Aikin, one of his colleagues, read it to the court, although it was meant for the President and the people. It was very able and exhausted the subject. From what members of the court have since told me, it had no effect on them whatever. They had Stanton's orders, and that was enough for them who were in the service of the United States.

They retired, deliberated in secret, returned, and overruled the plea, that is, they decided they had a right to try them, and Judge Carter had none. This was about as sensible as taking the opinion of Chief Justice Chase on a disputed question of strategy.

This was practically the end of my case, as far as any show of legal defense was concerned. The rest was firing pistol shots against siege guns—two men in irons against a dozen major-generals, with a swarm of detectives within the penitentiary and a division of infantry outside.

Besides pleading to the jurisdiction, Reverdy Johnson once and once only took part in person in the defense, probably to avoid the odium. This was when the witness Weichmann gave his damaging testimony against Mrs. Surratt. As he was about to take the witness in hand, General Harris arose and objected to him as a person who could not take the prescribed oath, as he had advised the people of Maryland that a certain oath was not binding.

This attack brought out Mr. Johnson, and I have always considered his reply as a magnificent exhibition of moral courage against physical force. The walls were lined with soldiers and bayonets; he stood inside of the penitentiary and before an excited military commission of generals, with a determined and excitable president at its head. He calmly recounted the facts about his advice to the people of Maryland, and every one felt when he said: "But let me ask who constituted you the arbiters of the morals of the bar? Let me tell you that I have taken the oath you speak of before the Senate of the United States, of which I am a member,—the body which creates armies and navies and makes major-generals," that his adversary was prostrate. The court retired and admitted Johnson, without the oath.

I cannot help believing that Johnson's absence during the rest of the trial had a bad effect on his client's cause, on account of the conclusion drawn by many, that he had given up her case.

During the first two weeks of the trial I could get nothing out of Payne either as to his previous history, or as to anything he might have to say in his own defense, or as to whether he wished to be defended at all. During all this time I knew very little more of him than the public generally, and not near as much as the prosecution, and was in great doubt whether to explain his conduct by lunacy, unparalleled stupidity or fear of prejudicing his cause by communications with his counsel.

He would sit bolt upright with the back of his head against the wall; his two manacled hands spread out on his knees, staring straight forward at the crowd behind the president of the court. The curiosity to see the prisoners was wonderful and the crowd sometimes so great as to prevent counsel from seeing what the court was doing. The heat too began to be excessive and, as the ventilation was poor, the situation was extremely uncomfortable.

By the time the prosecution had got to the middle of their evidence concerning Payne, and when he had been identified, standing up with his hat and coat on, by Seward's negro boy, the approaching danger seemed to thaw him out. One Saturday afternoon he asked me what next day was. I answered, "Sunday." He then said if I could get down to the arsenal and could procure a private interview with him he would like to tell me something. I saw him next day in the court room alone, although sentinels were at each door, outside. He then gave me the history of his life disconnectedly, but kept very still about his share in the transaction, at first. He inquired how Mr. Fred. Seward was getting along and, when he was told, said he was sorry he had hurt the young man and owed him an apology. This he said often afterwards. His mind seemed of the lowest order, very little above the brute, and his moral faculties equally low. On hearing the narrative, I immediately concluded that the only thing possible to be done on his behalf was to let the court know all

that I knew about his mental and moral nature and his previous education. This, by the rules of evidence which were strictly enforced against the prisoners, but relaxed in favor of the prosecution, could only be done under the plea of insanity, which was accordingly adopted. Under the plea of not guilty, I had no recourse except to show that he was not the man Seward's negro took him to be, and I could not show that. Even under the plea of insanity I could not let the court talk to the prisoner, and find out for itself what a phenomenon he was. That was to be done by experts. He could not remember for a long time what State or County he was born in or how old he was. Dr. Nichols was called, examined him, and gave me to understand that he had grave doubts of the prisoner's sanity. Just as he was about to testify on that point a messenger arrived stating that his wife was on the point of death. She died, and his testimony could not be had. This was a great blow.

Dr. Hall, another eminent physician of Washington, who was the first doctor called in to see Mr. Lincoln after he was shot, also examined him. He also testified that he had doubts about the soundness of his mind. All agreed that his physical system was greatly deranged. It is singular, however, that all the army surgeons who were examined swore the other way, and the prosecution knew better than to call civilians who made insanity a specialty. I have never entertained a doubt myself, that the man was not what is termed

*compos mentis*, i. e., a person of average understanding but in that respect a dwarf. Either this or he played his part very well to the end. Neither have I any doubt that before a civil tribunal where the court would have waited until I received my witnesses from Florida (which this court would not do) and could have inquired into his previous conduct the physicians would have declared him not an accountable being, on account of his utter dullness, and inability to decide between right and wrong.

General Harris, a physician, one of the members of the commission, before I thought of this plea, suggested to me that a person constipated as Payne was well known to be, must be entirely out of order, and that this was a general accompanying symptom of the early stages of insanity. After the plea was made public Miss Anna Surratt (the daughter of the prisoner, Mrs. Surratt) assured me that Payne's conduct at their house was that of a perfect fool, and her belief was that he had not his five senses. She grew hysterical, however, every time I brought her to the stand and I am not sure but her acquaintance with him would have only injured his case—as far as it was injurable.

When I first offered my testimony of insanity, Bingham, in a violent manner, as was his custom, would have it that I must lay the foundation of insanity first. I claimed that the prosecution had done that already in showing the circumstances of

his arrest, when he appeared, flimsily disguised, saying, "I'm mad! I'm mad!" and the like.

Governor Andrew of Massachusetts, who was sitting by my side at the time, remarked that Bingham's position was wrong, and it would be a shame if the commission ruled me out. But they did. In addition to the physicians I had early summoned Mrs. and Miss Bronson of Baltimore, at whose house he had stayed, in the hope of learning something about him. They were so frightened that nothing could be got from them except that he had nearly beaten the servant to death, because she did not clear out his room. Otherwise they said he had behaved himself with extreme quietness, scarcely ever saying anything.

In this way the commission heard everything that I knew that could be of advantage to him,—some things not so favorable. One of the detectives in charge of Payne told me I should call him,—he could swear he was crazy. I did so, and he swore Payne said "they were tracking him pretty close." I dispensed with further detective testimony.

The history of the prisoner as he gave it to me was arranged and given to the commission as it appeared at the time. (See Argument in Benn Pitman's Report.) Some things should be added. He said he was a member of Mosby's Gang, and on deserting, changed his name from Powell to Payne in Alexandria, where he took the oath of allegiance. The plan about medicines, and



the pretext that he was a messenger from Dr. Verdi, Seward's physician, he got from Herold, who was an apothecary's boy. - After abandoning his horse he took to the woods north of Fort Lincoln and stayed there three days, in the top of a cedar tree. The skirmishers passed right below him—backwards and forwards. The blood on his sleeve came from his own finger which was hurt in the struggle with Frederick Seward. He wiped the blood there after leaving. He threw away his coat, disguised himself with his drawers, and pick, and came to town because he could not stand hunger any longer. Came to Mrs. Surratt's, because she was the only person he knew in Washington, to get something to eat. Booth never told him what his plans were until 8 o'clock of the evening of the assassination. Mrs. Surratt was innocent. Near the end of the trial a report spread that Mr. Seward, in pursuance of a sagacious and generous policy, would in case Payne was sentenced to death, ask for his pardon, on the ground that it was not right that he should outlive his own murderer—and some pretended to predict this with certainty. The prisoner when he heard of it failed to put the slightest confidence in it. He had made up his mind that death was the only door through which he would ever leave the penitentiary. The sudden death of Mrs. Seward at the very time quenched all hopes on that score. Still the fact remains that the prisoner was never connected directly with a conspiracy to kill Mr. Lincoln and

legally could be found guilty only of an assault and battery on Mr. Seward, with intent to kill—a penitentiary offense.

Between the end of the trial and the publication of the sentence on the 6th of July, at a time when the newspapers were full of descriptions of the prisoners and their defenses, I was startled one evening by the appearance in my office of a tall, muscular, and well-dressed gentleman, who said he was from the eastern shore of Maryland, and who asserted with great emphasis that Payne was his younger brother, an insane man, who had escaped from a private lunatic asylum the year before, and of whom his family had lost all traces, until reading a description of Payne in the newspapers, they felt sure that he was their fugitive brother. The family physician had already visited the commission and identified him beyond mistake. I scrutinized him closely and there certainly appeared to be in the height of the two, complexion, and general air a resemblance. I told him he could see the prisoner in the morning, when the court opened, but his anxiety of mind was so great that he must have an interview with him that very night. I must jump into his cab and see the Secretary of War about a pass. Having to do with a member of an insane family, I yielded. The Secretary of course refused. Not baffled, the stranger drove to the arsenal, and tried to prevail on General Hartmanft to admit him, but without success. Next morning, long before the hour of opening, the

stranger was on hand, sitting before the dock. When Payne entered he at least did not recognize the other staring him in the face. After an attentive examination he came to the conclusion that everything was his brother except the shape of the nose, and left greatly disappointed.

When I saw Payne last in his cell even his fortitude seemed to be shaken by the hurried way in which he was to be executed. The sentence was read to him on the afternoon of July 6th and he was to be executed next day at 1 P. M. I visited him just before the execution. He had been removed from his old cell to the ground floor. He had heard the noise of the hammers on the scaffolding. He was crouched like a tiger at bay, in the farthest corner of his cell, his eyes red and glaring. The corridor was at this time full of friends of the prisoners, but his own were in Florida. He thanked me heartily for the trouble he had given me, and offered me his jack-knife, as the only earthly thing he had to give, which I declined. On his way to the scaffold as he walked between two soldiers I saw for the first time what a splendid carriage, height, and physical development he had. Coming next after Mrs. Surratt, who was half carried and half supported by the soldiers, he was obliged to stop occasionally and as he did so would look around on the spectators with a calm but haughty expression.

When he was seated on the scaffold a gentle wind from the bay sprung up and blew off the little

round sailor hat some one had bought for him and stuck jauntily on his head. He instantly turned to recover it, as if it were the most important thing that the sun should not dazzle the eyes that a few moments later were closed forever. During the trial I wrote repeatedly to his father, but it was not until long after the trial and execution that I received the following:

#### THE FATHER'S LETTER

LIVE OAK, EAST FLORIDA, Sept. 30, 1865.

DEAR SIR: On my return home some days since, I found your very welcome letter, which brought me some interesting items in reference to my unfortunate and lamented son. Be assured, sir, that your kindness both to him and myself are highly appreciated. At the time your first letter reached me I was confined to my bed, and it was received only the day before the execution. I did not answer it, for I intended to come to Washington as soon as possible, and started as soon as I could travel. At Jacksonville I met the sad intelligence of his execution and returned home in sorrow, such as is not common for human hearts to bear.

As to his early history, he was born in the State of Alabama, April 22, 1844 (I see by a statement of his that he was mistaken by one year in his age). In the twelfth year of his age he made a profession of religion, and from that time he lived a pious life up to the time of his enlistment. He was soon ordered to Virginia. From that time forward I know nothing of him only by letter. He was always kind and tender-hearted, yet determined in all his undertakings. He

was much esteemed by all who knew him, and bid fair for usefulness in Church and State. Please accept the warmest thanks of myself and family for the services rendered the unfortunate youth.

Very truly and sincerely yours,

GEORGE C. POWELL.

ATZERODT

As before stated I was retained for this prisoner by his brother. It is a remarkable instance of the discord of civil war that this same brother, who was a detective on the force of Provost Marshal McPhail of Baltimore, had both given the information which lead to his brother's arrest and paid for his defense after he was arrested. Atzerodt's brother-in-law was one of McPhail's deputies and was placed in the same double character of helping to denounce and helping to defend his relative. It appears that George, the accused, had visited Baltimore a short time before the assassination and talked so largely about his probable speedy wealth that they suspected him and gave McPhail an account of his strange conduct. This lead to nothing. But after it was over they knew that he had gone to another brother-in-law Hartman, in Maryland, and themselves piloted the detachment of Baker to the house. The whole family were Germans, and were much troubled, between the desire to prevent being complicated with the guilt of George, and the desire to help him out of his scrape.

They all appeared to be constitutionally of a vacillating and irresolute frame of mind. The effect of this situation and temper of his relatives made his defense more difficult still. I scarcely knew whether they wanted him acquitted or convicted. In the subpoenaing of witnesses they were afraid, if they got him off, to lose their places in the United States employ. Consequently, his witnesses seldom came to time.

Atzerodt from the time I first saw him until he was executed told the same story which he afterwards told in his confession—that he knew nothing of the assassination plot, until two hours before it was carried out, and that then he refused to have anything to do with it. Being in, as far as he was, he had to keep up appearances. His part was to kill Mr. Johnson, he said. He had ample opportunity but did not intend to do it. His defense lay mainly in showing this—that he had abundant occasion to carry out such an intention had it existed, that the President was in his room all night, with the door open. The only witness who could have shown this was the President himself. I subpoenaed him to appear and testify, but he did not come. I issued another subpoena. He then sent me word through his private Secretary that he did not intend to come. That I should subpoena Governor Fairchild who had come to his room to inform him of the assassination. I did subpoena him, but his evidence was of course not sufficient to prove the condition of a room for the

previous two hours. I pressed Mr. Johnson no further, for I did not care to irritate the very man who could pardon the prisoner, and also must have known that to Atzerodt's unwillingness he was indebted for his life. The sequel showed, however, that he did not consider this. There was nothing about this prisoner's appearance to win favor with a court of military men. He looked demoralized and low. During the period that elapsed between his sentence and execution, he oscillated between a condition of moaning stupor, kneeling, and crying, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" and again begging in piteous accents to know whether there was no hope at all. It was heart-rending to see.

He appeared to think that his confession to Marshal McPhail and to Captain Monroe had secured his pardon, at least. Besides, he placed great reliance on the efforts of his family and McPhail to get him pardoned. I was at the President's on the morning of the execution, but saw none of his friends, although since Miss Surratt failed to get any mercy, I suppose their efforts would have been fruitless. His family made many attempts to get his body but, at that time, without avail.<sup>1</sup>

The actor Booth had been subpoenaed on behalf of these prisoners to show the influence his brother exerted over weaker minds. He came but said he knew less of his brother, probably, than any one—that he had had nothing to do with him for years.

<sup>1</sup> General Muzzey told us the President would not see us.

Booth's mistress, Ella Turner, a rather pretty, light-haired, little woman was also on hand. But that sort of evidence was not very much to the point and they were dismissed without examination.

Mrs. Surratt was sick during a great part of this trial. Her dress and manner were certainly eminently respectable. There was an air of undeniable matronly, or rather motherly, innocence in her face that went a great way. I judged that in her youth she was the belle they claimed she had been. Her sickness was change of life, which weakened her greatly. Her cell by reason of her sickness, was scarcely habitable. I doubt whether she knew much of her execution. She behaved as one that was three-fourths dead. To me the most harrowing part of her execution was to see her bonnet removed by two soldiers and the rope put around her neck. It was the meeting of the extremes of what is esteemed sacred and what is deemed infamous. During her execution, her daughter Anna was present in a room on the second floor of the arsenal. She sat at one window and I at another, which windows commanded the yard. She stood by one of the windows until the rope was fixed. Then she fell down in a swoon.

#### HEROLD

The prisoner Herold was the most reckless and boyish of the party and seemed considerably pleased by the attention he attracted. He was



frequently calling one or the other of the counsel to him to make suggestions that were puerile. When the defense of Mrs. Surratt appeared to be making out a tolerable case in her behalf, by showing the real character of the witnesses against her, he appeared jealous of her good luck and said: "That old lady is as deep in as any of us." This, however, was stoutly denied by Payne and Atzerodt, who constantly and repeatedly stated that Mrs. Surratt was entirely innocent of the conspiracy. This was said by Payne a very few minutes before his execution. After the execution I hurried out of the arsenal in front of which a big crowd was standing and shouting "Judicial murder!"

During the last days of the trial the triumphant army came to Washington. Having heard all the bitterness of citizens, who had never exposed their lives in the field, pressing for the execution of the prisoners, and having read the vindictive notices of counsel in the newspapers for daring to do their professional duty when there was some little merit in it, it was refreshing as the morning dew to hear, as I did, from many battle-stained veterans, that while they abhorred the crime as much as any one, they despised the cowardly commission process, by which the Government, which they had just made so gloriously triumphant, was slowly crushing a few stragglers from the rebel camp which itself was just magnanimously paroled; they had no sympathy with a contest wherein a few prosecuting advocates in uniform, who never

smelt powder, sought to divide the honors of the triumph with their comrades in the field; they thought the laurels of no soldier would be the greener for being sprinkled with a woman's blood. I have thought since then, that they felt intuitively that an Administration which was capable of carrying on this trial might also turn its back on the discharged volunteers. Had Johnson's intuitions been equally keen he might have foreseen that an advocate who was willing to harangue Mrs. Surratt to death might try afterwards to harangue him out of office.

Considering that at this late day the guilt of Mrs. Surratt is still an open question, the innocence of Atzerodt most probable, I am forced to the conclusion that this trial before a military commission overshot its mark and was a great mistake.

This trial settled nothing. It led to four executions but a lynching would have done that. The certainty of guilt upon well-defined and known crimes on which our notions of justice rest was never had. That entire ventilation of the transaction which is essential in a free country is still unmade. The license with which the Government dragged into this trial a thousand details of yellow-fever plots, steamboat burnings, and other things that were utterly foreign to the issue and which had no other effect than to inflame the public against the prisoners, showed a barbarous disregard or rather contempt for the settled barriers of legal inquiry. And the haste with which the con-

demned prisoners were dispatched, while all the leaders of the rebellion were allowed to go free, shows an unfair discrimination and a heat of passion utterly unlike the calm and fair features of eternal justice.

The character of Mr. Johnson, as afterwards revealed, shows more clearly why these people were so summarily hanged. His obstinacy and self-will when opposed by appeals for mercy or magnanimity of sentiment carried him to the opposite extreme of rigor. The suspicion that he might have been one of them made him hasten to show by severity that his hands were clean.

It was not the dangerous legal precedent as it was by some feared of becoming, there being only one notable military trial afterwards; but strange to say, and yet it seems simple enough now, it became a political precedent, in other words, it taught the President, from the outset, that no matter what fantastic freak of arbitrary power he might be disposed to play, and no matter whom he might begin a controversy with, whether with Sumner, Stevens, the Volunteers, the Republican party itself, or finally with Grant, Congress, and Stanton, he would never want, if not a party, at least a ring of sycophants, ready to prove that he was right, and all the rest of the world were in the wrong.

See comments on this trial in a work called *The Constitution of the United States*, by John Randolph Tucker, vol. ii., page 650, published at Chicago, 1899:

“Another case well calculated to shock the public sentiment of the country in respect to the danger of the military power has occurred. In violation of the fifth amendment to the Constitution, to be hereafter referred to, Mrs. Surratt, a woman, not a soldier in the army of the United States or subject to militia duty, was arrested and tried by a court-martial for the deplorable assassination of President Lincoln, which tribunal, by the fifth amendment, had no jurisdiction in such cases. She was condemned to death. She sued out a petition for the writ of *habeas corpus* to bring under the jurisdiction of the civil courts in the capital of the country the power of the court-martial to condemn her to death. The writ was issued by Mr. Justice Wiley, one of the judges of the District of Columbia. With the precedent of General Cadwalader’s defiance of the order of Chief Justice Taney before them, the military disobeyed the order of Mr. Justice Wiley, and this woman, in the shadow of the Capitol, under a jurisdiction utterly unconstitutional, and by a military power in defiance of the jurisdiction of the civil courts, was hung. It will be perceived, therefore, that the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* screened the unconstitutional jurisdiction of the court-martial from the scrutiny of the civil courts, and under cover of this the military power was left without restraint to work the death of its victim in defiance of the Constitution of the country. This construction, therefore, is not only fatal to the liberty but to the life of the citizen, and puts his liberty and life in the hand of the executive.”

As regards the conduct of the judge advocates, that of Mr. Holt was courteous and moderate

throughout, so was that of Colonel Burnett. This, however, cannot be said for Mr. Bingham. His mind seemed to be frenzied and his conduct violent. It must always be deplored that Mr. Holt's last days were embittered by a controversy between him and Mr. Johnson on the question whether Mr. Holt had delivered to the President the recommendation of a majority of the court asking mercy for Mrs. Surratt.

As regards counsel for the defense, General Ewing, after the trial, settled in New York and acquired eminence in his profession. Mr. Coxe became judge of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia and by a curious irony of fate was obliged to try Guiteau for the assassination of Garfield. In the light of the result of that trial we can form a tolerably clear idea as to what would have happened to these prisoners if they had been tried before Judge Carter, on the charge of murder. Payne would either have been acquitted, on the ground of insanity, or, if convicted, would have been sentenced to a long term in the penitentiary. Atzerodt would probably have been convicted, but would have received a light sentence. Herold would have been convicted and sent to the penitentiary for a long term. Arnold, Spangler, and Mudd would have been acquitted. Mrs. Surratt would have been confronted again with the testimony of her tenant Lloyd and her boarder Weichmann, who turned State's evidence to save their necks, and the court would have

been obliged to charge that they could believe these witnesses only as accomplices if they were corroborated.

With the previous good character of defendant, the jury would probably have regarded Mrs. Surratt's declarations as those of an embittered Southern woman, and nothing more, and acquitted her.











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