Narrative of a Private Soldier in the Volunteer Army of the United States During a portion of the period covered by the Great War of the Rebellion of 1861

Charles Lewis Francis

1879

Preface

In writing the following narrative of my experiences during the troublous period embracing the years 1861 to 1864 I disclaim any intention of setting myself up as a historian.

The sphere in which I moved was not at any time so elevated as to enable me to form views of men and things of so extended a character as that they could have any general bearing or interest. It is extemely seldom that a person in the ranks of an army or in the mass of a political machine becomes acquainted with the springs of a movement until its object has been accomplished or defeated. As for the army movements by Geographical Divisions, momentous crises in Congress, the probable effect of defeat in the field upon the finances of the country, and the like, we never discussed nor, for my part, thought of them. So that if any one chance in the future to pick up this book in anticipation of receiving any valuable or important information from it having any bearing on either of these great questions he may in all probability be disappointed. That the regular historian will have to deal with those matter I have no doubt.

In my narrative it will be found that I seldom travel very far beyond my actual and personal experience, it is my object to keep within the line strictly, and if now, after having made my disclaimer, I am asked for my object in writing the book at all, I will be compelled to admit that I can give none that is is to my mind a useful or practical one. It may, indeed, turn out that my story will partially corroborate some one who may hereafter venture an extended opinion as to the general character of the experiences of the private soldiers in our Civil War; it may be of some interest to the children of those who took part in the struggle, in showing the facts as they were, stripped of the inevitable romance with which such narratives have been clothed by writers who have shown a lack of power to resist the tempation. Whether or no, one thing occurs to me and that is this, if my account is preserved until he is grown, my son will not be confined to mere tradition for his information, as is the fact with the children of so many soldiers of former wars, and as will no doubt be the case with those of many of my comrades as well.

CHARLES LEWIS FRANCIS

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

From the outbreak of the war until about June, 1862, and while, although I was not yet a soldier, I was much with the army, and in the field.

Riots in Baltimore

When the war broke out, say in the month of April, 1861, I was residing with my uncle in Baltimore and Washington[1]; that is to say, business was done in the former city, while the residence was at the capital. On the 19th of that month occurred the bloody riot in Baltimore[2], during which six or seven men of the Sixth Regiment of Massachusets Infantry were killed or wounded.[3] The next two days (Saturday and Sunday) were days of terror. No one knew what was to come next. Regiments were hastily formed out of workmen from the various shopes. "Ross Winan Guards" was the name of a battalion formed by the enlistment of men in the employ of the great inventor.[4] That, and other regiments and companies paraded the streets in hastily manufactured uniforms of various colors and materials, and armed with a great variety of weapons.

On Friday night a company of the 6th Maryland State Guard proceeded to the President street depot, and after compelling the men of an unarmed

[1]Charles Lewis Francis (1843-?) arrived in New York City from Liverpool, England on September 10th, 1860 at the age of 17. Born in Wales, he was coming to live with his aunt and uncle in Washington D.C.

[2]After the action at Fort Sumter on April 12th, Virginia voted for secession on April 17th. Following President Lincoln's subsequent call for troops, the Sixth Massachusetts Regiment was passing through Baltimore. Due to a city ordinance prohibiting steam locomotives in the city, the troops rode in horse-drawn train cars between the two stations serving the city. A secessionist mob developed and blocked the passage of the cars. After the soldiers disembarked and marched in formation toward Camden Station, the mob began throwing stones and bricks. Panicked soldiers responded with gun shot, and violence erupted. This riot resulted in the first bloodshed of the Civil War.

[3]Historical records report that of the 6th Massachusetts, four men were killed.

[4]Ross Winans (1796-1877) developed a number of improvements to railroad wheels and axles, in the employ of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and later as a manufacturer of railroad machinery. During the occupation of Baltimore, Winans was twice arrested under suspicion of treason, as there were reports that his factories were manufacturing arms for the Confederacy.

regiment (the Twenty-sixth Pennsylvania Colonel Stone) to retrace their steps to Philadelphia, the soliders of the Sixth Maryland Guard, accompanied by a large but well organized mob, proceeded to the Gunpowder river, where they set fire to and destroyed a railroad bridge,[5] and I believe they also at the same time scuttled and sunk the great railroad ferry-boat "Maryland," on the Susquehanna river at Havre-degrace. Besides this, all communication by telegraph between the city and the outside work was cut off, excepting a line to Harper's Ferry, but that wire was kept open solely in the interest of those whose sympathies were against the Federal Govenment and in favor of the Southern people.

Saturday the city was altogether in the hands of the mob. Stores, especially such as contained arms and those holding provisions, were broken open and ruthlessly rifled of their contents. All kinds and descriptions were seized in the general levy. It was not unusual to meet a band of rag-a-muffins armed with single and double-barrled shotgus, rifles, long and short, and a variety of swords, sabres, and cutlasses all in one company. Few persons slept that night. Owners of houses, stocks of goods, jewellers, bankers, and all were alike in great fear for the safety of the valuables they were possessed of or had under their control.

Sunday morning broke into a beautiful spring day. The sun shone warm and genial. Still there was no abatement of the excitement. The church bells rang incessantly, but not for the purpose of calling worshippers. All stated Divine services were suspended, and the wild clanging of the bells were but signals for all persons capable of bearing arms to assemble at the various places of rendezvous, and there be sworn in and armed as citizen soldiery. One Kane – he was styled "Marshal Kane" – seemed to be to be in the chief control, and, when I went to the police station, or other public building on Holiday street, I think, he was actively engaged in superintending the mustering of men and the issuing of arms to them afterward.

All the forenoon, the city was rife with rumors, "Troops from the hated North were at Cockeysville," a town on the Central Railroad; "Regulars were advancing from Carlisle"; "The Yankees of the city were secretly congregating among the hills and valley of Druid Hill Park," near the town, and all sorts of such exciting rumors were mouthed around by one crowd to another. About noon more soldiers came. These were from the adjacent counties and composed of the ancient militia, rejuvenated in flesh, but not at all in make-up or appearance. They were, each company, dressed in different costumes, but all held close to the original continental style, and I would not demand much for venturing the assertion that many of the uniforms worn had been preserved from that period.

It was said that the Governor had secreted his person, and therein he acted the part of prudence if he was in the city at all. One crowd were very desirous of hanging him for a "Union man"; another wanted him to issue a proclamation calling the militia into active service "to protect the soil of Maryland from the Northern invader," while still another motley gang, composed of the "Anne Arundel Militia," went to the Fountain Hotel, where the State Executive was

[5]George William Brown, the Mayor of Baltimore, after consultation with the Governor of Maryland, ordered the burning of several railroad bridges. The fear was that more Federal troops would be arriving, which would increase the tension and disorder in the city.

supposed to be in hiding, and there clamored with drunken vehemence for authority to go and demand the evacuation by the United States forces of the neighboring Fort McHenry. Not succeeding in getting any such authority, the gallant troopers proceeded to the Entaw House, and from thence, having first got more gloriously drunk, they went on their self-imposed mission without a mandate. The expedition ended in a disgraceful retreat or a ludicrous farse – I do not know how to properly designate it. I saw the best of it, and have attempted to describe it in another place.

Suppression of the Riots

On Monday the city was calm. The hot blood had run itself down. Orders had been sent to the North from Washington, the country at large had got over the first scare, and in a day or two after[6], an Ohio regiment of infantry and some regular troops entered the city, partially in secret, but with loaded cannons and muskets and fixed bayonets – indeed, in full fighting trim. They marched down from the Central Railroad depot to the Washington depot on Camden street. It was an impresssive sight. Dread determination was on each and every man's face. There were closed ranks and generally true soldierly bearing and carriage. Every eye was fixed. Not a smiling countenance nor an answering cheer from the populace greeted them, and no handkerchiefs of fair ladies waved in welcome. The crowds on the sidewalks were dense, and kept a sullen silence. The silence was almost painful. I remember that I heard the ominous, heavy, regular tread of the soldiers as they marched to the defiant rolling of the drums. There was no music save that, and, if it may be so called, an occasional dramatic blast of the bugle as changes in the direction of the column were announced. Then indeed the people begin to breathe free. The city had been controlled, troops *had* safely passed through, and the "seccessionists" and their allies, the mob, had alike been awed into submission.

The first regiment of loyal troops that I saw venture on the bloody route of the Sixth Massachusetts was, I think, from Vermont or Maine. They were uniformly tall, full-bearded, healthy looking men, and a jauntily attired vivandiere was with them. They did not ride in the cars from the President street depot to the Camden depot, as the gallant Sixth attempted, but, having formed near the depot, with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets, they wisely marched along Pratt street through the great crowds to the cars. Soon after that New York city sent some regiments, composed in part of what were then called toughs. They were firemen and of that class. It was expected by the Southerners that these troops would fraternize with them, but they did not, and that was the last of Baltimore's prospects of ruin. She settled down to terrible hard times[7] and the mortification of seeing United States enginineers surveying old Federal

[6] April 22nd, 1861

[7] On April 27th, President Lincoln suspended the writ of habeas corpus between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. – the military occupation of the area was to continue through the end of the war.

Hill, as a preliminary to the erection of a strong fort right in the city itself.

After the Battle of Bull Run

Early in May I left Baltimore entirely, and remained in Washington and its neighborhood. Until July my time was divided between visiting camps and forts, attending the sessions of Congress, and generally, in taking in the events occurring around and about me. The battle of Bull Run[8]was fought, and I witnessed the wonderfull extremes. A few days before, I saw the fine looking troops from the North: they were well fed, well dressed, full of fight, and they moved from the various camps in the city, over the Long Bridge and on to Arlington Heights, in time with the music of many gorgeously uniformed and well appointed bands. With virgin banners flying, and speeches from the Preisdent and the eminent Senators and Representatives from their several States, the various regiments and brigades marched gayly on to finish the war in sixty days.

I saw the retreat, and when the troops filed into the city I mingled my feelings with those who feared that the existence of the nation was in its greatest peril. To render it worse, that direful day was dark and gloomy, and it rained in torrents. The returning soldiers were dirty, and begrimed with the historic clay of Virginia; some were shoeless, many hatless – all minus something, and all but very few with any but drooping and dejected spirits. All will hurry-scurry, and to all appearances without any definite aim other than that of arriving at comfortable camping grounds. Then we were afraid that the rebels would follow up their victory and enter Washington. It was said by many that the Government were wholly prepared to flee, that the President had gone, and it was fully a week before the people were reassured of their immediate safety. The best conditioned of our troops had been left on the southern side of the Potomac, but what did we know of that? Besides, our Provost Marshal's office had not yet been completely organized, our spies were not so diligent or numerous as those on the other side, and the city contained within its limits a vast number of those who thought the enemy would soon be at our doors, and with whom a wish was father to the thought. However, the feeling of despair in time gave way to that of hope and confidence, General McDowell was superseded, and by and by General McClellan, the "great soldier," the "young Napoleon," the "savior of his country," took command of our armies. Troops poured into the city by thousands, daily and hourly: fortifications rose as if by magic, and upon all the hills around the city were bristling cannon, while at the feet of those hills and all around them was a vast camp of armed men. From the Insane Asylum beyond the eastern branch of the Potomac river to Tennalytown on the Rockville Pike road, and around in a circle, were camps of infantry, cavalry, and batteries of artillery.

[8]Battle: First Manassas (First Bull Run) July 21, 1861
Forces Engaged: 60,680 total (US 28,450; CS 32,230)
Estimated Casualties: 4,700 total (US 2,950; CS 1,750)

Battle of Ball's Bluff

After General McClellan assumed command, and had reorganized the army, there was a grand review of the troops held at Ball's Cross Roads. In order to get there we first had to procure a formidable pass from the Headquarters of the Army, and this pass was made no less formidable by the oath attached to it then by the terrible looking signature placed at the bottom. It was that of "Drake De Kay," who was an aide-de-camp at headquarters. I am sorry I have lost that pass, because it would now be a real curiosity, and I would have liked very much to have been able to give a copy of it in this place. However, armed with this formidable pass, I went with the rest of the sightseers, crossed the river at Georgetown, thence to Munson's Hill in Virginia, where our people had a signal station communicating with another situated on the top of the dome of the Capitol.

From there we went to Ball's Cross Roads, but I saw no Ball's or other notable crossroads. I simply saw from a favorable position immense masses of troops of all arms: long lines of infantry, now in echelon, now in masses, and again formed into line of battle extending for miles, and at times two or three deep. Squadrons and regiments of cavalry galloped through openings in the woods, crossed the depressions, and quickly disappeared into other openings in the forests; then whole parks of artillery dashed into the fields, and in and out through the woods, meanwhile performing the most intricate and mysterious of manouevers.

One time I thought that the hill we were standing upon was to be carried by storm, but a division of New York troopers flanked us and passed on. It was an awfully grand sight, and fascinated me. I could not help fixing my gaze upon the scene before and on both sides of me. There was everything of real battle except smoke, noise, and suffering. The generals and their staff officers were gayly dressed, and the horses they rode reared and pranced as if they were conscious of the fact that the eyes of the civilized world were upon then, and that the great majority of men trusted and expected that their riders would be carried upon their backs to victory and triumph. It was a beautiful day, clear and cold, and the sun shining upon the well burnished arms and accoutrments of the men, withal, made a picture with which the finest I ever saw on canvas was not to be compared for beauty.

I saw the youthful commander twice on that day. He was surrounded by a hundred staff officers, while scores more were flying hither and thither with orders to the different division commanders. His escort consisted of about five hundred picked troopers, and this body guard prevented us from getting too near their chief. He himself stood up with a glass almost continually at his eye, and, if he thought to making a striking picture of himself, I must say that he succeeded in impressing me by his attitude and reminding me of a famous picture of his alleged prototype.

First California Regiment

It might have been a little before that that I went with some couriers who delivered at Poolesville certain despatches for General Stone. It was rather late one afternoon that we left Washington by the Rockville road, and it was almost dark when we galloped through Rockville, the county seat of Montgomery county, Maryland. The town bore an appearance of old age and decrepitude, and there were no attractions for us to stop, even if our orders had not been imperative not to do so. Later, we arrived at Muddy Branch, or Darnstown. Darnstown was no town at all at that time, but I remember that Muddy Branch was very muddy.

There were only two or three houses in the town, but they were "on the Pike," and there was a cross-road leading to a ferry on the Potomac river a few miles to the south. There were ten or twelve regiments of infantry encamped thereabouts, and shortly after our arrival nearly all of them took up the line of march for Poolesville, a few miles further on. It was late fall or early winter, and the night was very cold. About midnight we arrived at Poolesville, and the General received his despatches.

We did not know, at least I did not know, the contents of our papers, but early that morning Colonel Baker, of the First California Regiment, was across the Potomac river, and the battle of Ball's Bluff was fought and lost. I went over after the battle, and penetrated nearly to Leesburg. I was, at times, inside the enemy's lines, but did not know that until I had got out again. That was the first time that I had actually seen men killed and wounded on a battlefield, and, it may seem strange, but I do not remember that I experienced the peculiar feelings to be expected. It was not until Winchester that I did so. But of that as I get on with my story.

Soon after the repulse and defeat the body of Colonel Baker was recovered, and I returned to Washington with its escort, having been absent about three days. There was deep feeling manifested upon the death of Colonel Baker. He was extremely well liked by the men under him, and their lamentations were loud. Although this regiment was called the "First California," it is not to be concluded therefrom that it was composed of Californians. It was not so to any great extent. Colonel Baker had been a Senator from Oregon, or California, I forget which, and I believe represented one or the other in the Senate of the United States at the outbreak of the war.

I saw the regiment when it was being organized. It was encamped on the Bladensburg road, just outside of the corporate limits of Washington. Its organization was different from that most other regiments in this, that there were seventeen or eighteen companies, four of which at least had been recruited in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and more in various other cities in unequal proportions – this I know, because I witnessed scenes of emulation, to designate it lightly, between the men of different States. Besides his regiment, he had several others at Ball's Bluff. There were, I think, the Nineteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts, and I have an impression that I recognized the Fifteenth regiment from the same State.

Colonel Baker was an Englishman by birth, but had been brought to this country at a very early age. In person and appearance he was large and heavy; he had a full face, florid complexion, and he wore a full beard and whiskers, with this he had a kind, benevolent, and fatherly expression of countenance. It was generally remarked that he was *too good* a man to be recklessly exposed to danger, and there was manifested a strong disposition toward having an investigation to ascertain whether the Colonel's next superior officer was not to be blamed for the disaster.

Pennsylvania Buck-Tails

Again I went on a expedition to Virginia with a column of troops. We did not know where we were going to what we were going for, but at a miserable place called Drainsville, it was a question whether, in the skirmish that took place, we got beaten or were victorious. At any rate we came back without having accomplished any specific object that I know of. I believe this was undertaken by the troops of General McCall's Pennsylvania Reserve Corps.

During the rest of the winter of 1861–2 I was engaged in going from camp to camp, and in the habit of staying away from home for days and weeks together. Of course it was very wrong and all that, and I invariably got lectured upon my return, but after all, I had many interesting experiences during that time, and besides, amid such scenes it would be hard to control a youth of eighteen, especially as a wide and treacherous ocean existed between him and direct parental authority. So I had very much my own way.

I encamped at Tennalytown – a little beyond Georgetown – with the celebrated "Buck Tails" of Pennsylvania, and made many acquaintances among the men of the various regiments. I was in a position to return services for entertainment, because, military discipline being rigidly enforced, few of the officers or men were allowed to go beyond the grand lines of their respective brigades or divisions, whereas I was not so amenable to arbitrary orders, and could go and return nearly as it suited me, and thus was enabled to perform many little commissions for those with whom I associated. There were four or five regiments in the brigade of "Buck Tails," and these, with several others, and a battery, commanded, if I remember well, by a Captain McClure, formed what was known as the "Pennsylvania Reserve Corps." The whole was commanded by General McCall.

I became very intimate with several men in the Forty-sixth Pennsylvania regiment. Indeed, I think it was that regiment that had whole companies of Welshmen in it. One of the men of this regiment was sadly homesick, and, as he had a sister who was a domestic in the family of Galusha A. Grow, the then Speaker of the House of Representatives, I was duly commissioned to interview her and lay his case before her in such a way as, that she should duly communicate the same to her august employer, for relief.

Whether my mission or her labors were ever successful I never learned, but I do know that then I reached home and told where it had been, I received the

severest correction short of a thrashing I had ever had, from my aristocratic great aunt for communing with a "servant." It was very shocking to her when she saw how quickly I had blossomed into so democratic a flower.

Dear, high-minded old aunt! If she had but recalled history then, or was alive now to know as much as we do about the inside springs that move great men, she would have realized that "servants" had before controlled, did then, and no doubt would thereafter wield no small influence in shaping the policies of those whom they serve – all the way between presented a good or bad dinner, guarding secrets well, and the other extreme, allowing themselves to be courted by newspaper correspondents or other – spies. But that is not a narrative, and ought, if printed at all, to be placed in parentheses, and it would have been, if I had not been advised by very respectable authority to entirely discard the use of them in the kind of writing described in my title-page.

I visited the camps and fortifications on both sides of the river. I was very much interested in the organization of the Sixth (or Fifth) United States Cavalry. The regiment was encamped on the great plain east of the capitol and not far from the Congressional burying ground. General Hunter was the Colonel and General Emory was the Lieutenant Colonel. As a matter of fact, there were few officers of the regiment between generals and second lieutenants. I had very lively times as I scampered over the plain with the regiment, engaged as it was in "breaking in" both men and horses.

After half a dozen lucky falls and a score of other mishaps, I became quite expert as a rider, and I do not know but that I might have been a sub-altern in the regiment had I not been dissuaded from making an application by the highest domestic authority, who declared that in all her experience of sixty to eighty years, "none but scapegraces ever went into the army." That was equal to a lawful veto, and bad as I was, I determined, although two generations removed, and a recent importation of the blood at that, not to voluntarily make of myself the traditional scapegrace of the family. Like arguments caused me to desist a short time after, when at Camp Carroll, just outside of Baltimore, I was found dressed in a blouse, wearing a jaunty cap, and drilling a squad of men of the Fifth Maryland Volunteers, over whom I hourly expected to be placed in command.

Frederick City, Maryland

I remember that I had not been back to the capital long when I started to go to Frederick City. I travelled on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to a point within three miles of the city, and there left the cars on perceiving the signs of an army being near by. Then I advanced, with military prudence, until I entered regular lines. The camp proved to be that of a brigade commanded by General Abercrombie.

The camp was situated on high ground and in thick, wild woods, the whole overlooking the Monacacy river and the city beyond. I proceeded through the various regimental grounds, and saw, among other celebrities, Colonel Fletcher

Webster, of the Twelfth Massachusetts Infantry, who was pointed out to me as a son of the great Expounder of the Constitution, of which I made due note, and have remembered it to this day.

Proceeding on to the west, I came in sight of the city, but before reaching it I had to pass over the old stone bridge which spans the Monocacy river, a short distance from Frederick. I might have crossed by the railroad bridge nearer, but the sight of the old stone structure took my fancy. I was an old-fashioned affair – no one could inform me as to its age; in solidity and plainness it reminded me of some of the old bridges I had seen in Wales, say that over the Usk river at Abergavenny. On either end there were two large urn-shaped ornaments of stone, and I was gravely told by a "Pennsylvania Dutchman," who was my guide, that enclosed in each was a large package of whiskey that had been placed there at the time the bridge was built.

The Monacacy river was more rapid than deep, but the signs on the banks were that during a rainy season the stream might swell to large proportions. The road I was on led directly to the main street of town, and I walked up that thoroughfare until I arrived at headquarters. I think General Banks, of Massachusetts was in command. At any rate, I received a pass which enabled me to move pretty much as I pleased. Frederick is situated in a delightful country. Rich and well cultivated fields surround the town, especially on the north and west sides. The people who inhabited it were largely made up of the descendants of the Germans who long ago settled in Pennsylvania, and who are vulgarly called "Pennsylvania Dutch." They all hail from Adams County, and if one could say, and prevail upon the rest to believe, that his name was "Schmidt," or any one of its German variations, he had almost a sure pass to the aristocratic portion of the town. This is the place where Barbara Fritchie made herself immortal; or at least the poet says she did.

On to Winchester

About March, 1862, I took a longer flight, this time with the intention of sharing with General Sheilds and his army whatever glory was to be found in the Shenandoah valley. I reached near Harper's Ferry safely, but there the bridge had been destroyed, and we were compelled to remain on the northern side of the the Potomac river, at a station called Sandy Hook until our turn came at the ferry. The Potomac river here was very rapid and its bed filled with jagged rocks against which the water beat and foamed and frothed again. There are three distinct mountains there, one on the Maryland side, called the Maryland Heights, another upon which Harper's Ferry is built, and another divided from the last by the Shenandoah river, which empties itself into the Potomac at this point.

I finally got across in a flat boat, which was propelled by means of a rope fastened at either side of the river, and which was pulled upon by the occupants of the boat. It was rather a dangerous piece of business, because, if by chance we should lose our hold upon the rope, there would have been no help for it,

but we should all have been dashed to pieces up on the rocks below. Several persons were so dashed and killed there on the same day that we passed over.

In Harper's Ferry I saw the engine house in which John Brown was besieged and captured, and I paid due reverence to it and its associations. The place was treated as a spot for pilgrimage. Every one desired to see it, and at this time it has not been torn to pieces for relics, as the soldiers of General Sickles's brigade did with a celebrated tree on Jackson Square in Washington.

Pursuing our way, we reached Martinsburg and rested. Late on an afternoon I started for Winchester, and although I soon got very tired, I could procure no conveyance, so I let the army go ahead and followed as best I could. To make it worse yet, it appeared that the enemy had utterly spoiled the macadamized road, as it was said, by dragging locomotives over it, and of the whole width of the road there was scarcely a piece left whole that was large enough to stand upon. There men must had had a hard time of it as they marched ahead of me. On my way I came up to the camp of a detachment of the Fifth (?) Mounted Rifles of New York. I was very hungry, and did not hesitate in accepting an invitation to dine with them. Up to this time I had seen but little of a soldier's real life after all. I had now to put up with the "hard tack," and it was very hard at that, and "sow belly" – that is what the men called it, but we know it by the name of "clear sides." It was a bivouac, and I had no blanket – nothing but a huge cloak that I had worn all the winter before. My hunger assisted me in submitting to the table fare, but as to sleeping with them, I could not bring myself to entertain the idea of it. I thought there would certainly be houses near by, and in one of them I might at least obtain shelter. The boys were a jolly set. They laughed and told stories. The biggest and most improbable were laughed at the most. But I went on.

Night before the Battle

By and by, as I trudged along, I overtook a genius who, if he be alive now and has not reformed his life, is either a millionaire or an inmate of State's prison. He was a bright looking fellow of about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age, dressed comparatively neatly, and he carried a bundle under his arm. He lost no time in making my acquaintance, and, without any solicitation on my part, declared he would bear me company.

Had I been older I would probably have been suspicious; but in truth I had hastened my steps in order to overtake him, for the benefit of his companionship. The moon was shining somewhat, and I was well armed, but as it turned out, he was not be feared at all so far as my bodily safety was concerned.

We walked on for an hour or so, and talked about everybody and everything except ourselves, and then he ventured to inform me that he belonged to the First Virginia Cavalry of loyal troops, and was then going to join his regiment if he could find it. I am afraid that I did not eat much at my last opportunity, or else that the walking and talking had given me an extraordinary appetite, for I got hungry again, and I told my companion of my condition, and wished that

we would soon get to a house. He appeared to know something of the country, for he told me confidently that very soon we would reach one that he knew of and further, that we would have but little difficulty in faring well enough.

Presently we reached a place near Bunker Hill, and having waded two or three brooks that ran across the road, we were startled by the barking of a whole pack of dogs. At the same time each of us drew his revolver, and when the cloud that had obscured the moon had lifted we saw that house near by. It was one of those great square structures inside of which and presiding over it we naturally expect to find a stout, jolly-faced owner, and, as it happened, there he was.

My companion, in a commanding tone of voice, ordered the party appearing to "down" his dogs, and the order was obeyed in good time. Then we advanced, and, hailing the gentleman, demanded if we could get fare there. At the same time my friend went up to the old fellow and whispered in his ear. The old man made no answer that I heard, and I believe it would have made but little different if he had denied us, so we went in.

People on the borders during that time, whether classed as loyal or disloyal, had to be very careful of strangers who called. They might be "angels unawares" that they were entertaining, or foes indeed. But our welcome appeared to be a hearty one. We were conducted along the spacious hall, and from thence into a sort of sitting room and dining room combined, and while we sat warming ourselves before a lively log fire a fine looking and youthful negro was engaged in arranging the table.

We ate a very hearty supper of fresh rolls, bacon, "snitz" pie, milk, and coffee. When we had concluded our meal we wanted to pay for it, but our host would not hear of such a thing. We could "stop all night, and go on in the morning." This we were under the necessity of doing anyway, because the fighting had already commenced, and our soldiers were not yet in the city; but we thanked him all the same. During the conversation that now ensued I found to my horror that I had been travelling with a "rebel" in disguise, and at the moment I felt like doing something. My companion saw the expression of my feelings as it was on my face, and while pretending to topple over, he bade me in a whisper not to be "a damned fool." Light was thus shed upon the matter, and I saw it instantly, but could not reach any satisfactory conclusion in my mind as to his object.

He could certainly not have been one of our spies, for if he was, he would not conduct himself in that way, so I thought. When we had got into bed he let me into the secret. "I know how to travel," said he – "when you are in Rome, do as Romans do," etc. Next morning, he succeeded in exchanging counterfeit Southern bills for New York and other Northern States paper money which the farmer had and considered worthless. My companion had upon his person an enormous quantity of the counterfeit stuff, and he acknowledged to me that he had made considerable money, and expected to make much more in his practice upon the dupes of a Southern Confederacy.

As we were leaving early in the morning, he handed the poor old man a few ancient newspapers out of the bundle he had, and directed him to deliver them

to a person giving such a sign and such a password. "They were for a blockade-runner," he remarked to me as we left. He afterward explained to me that he always did so, and after a day or two he would send his partner in the deception to the poor old man to whom he gave the sign and the password agreed upon. This ensured good treatment, and perhaps the host was again deceived as to money matters.

The Battle of Kernstown

[9] Amid the booming of not far distant cannon and the rattling sound of musketry we began our journey, and had not travelled far before we fell in with the rear of the army. The various regiments were ranged in battle array on several rising grounds lying between Bunker Hill and the town of winchester. Later, as we advanced along the high road, we were challenged by a guard of the One Hundred and Fourth Pennsylvania regiment of Infantry, but, upon the arrival of the officer of the guard, we succeeded in showing him that we were proper persons, and as to the danger we were in of being shot by General Jackson's troops – that was our own look-out. Thus we went on.

Right in front of us, and, as it seemed, in the rear too, there was rapid firing by the skirmishers for an hour or so; but, about seven o'clock in the morning, we were nearly run over and trampled upon by the troops who were advancing upon the "double quick." The colonel of the One Hundred and Fourth Pennsylvania regiment nearly knocked me down with his horse, and I barely protected my precious body by taking to the shelter of the stout butt of a tree.

Now the fighting became fast and furious. I saw the enemy to the north-east [hand-corrected to read south-east – tew] and east of the city, and they were quickly moving from place to place, as if performing a manoeuvre, or preparing for a retreat. At eleven o'clock our troops continued to advance, so that I could get on, and when I stopped I found myself on the summit of a hill, with the town in full view.

Far away to the north-east I saw the broad Shenandoah just coming out from between two hills, and again on my right hand I could see it placidly lying for eight or ten miles to the south. Here my companion left me, and as unceremoniously as we had come together. In between my prospect the battle raged for two or three hours more, when I saw that our flag was being borne far on the other side of the houses. As I advanced I soon found myself within the precincts of the ill-fated town.

I did not go by the road, and if I had wished to go that way I could not have found it. Jumping fences and crossing fields, I made my entry from the south side of the town. Here I met with desolation and misery in its direst aspect. A

[9] CLF's edition entitles this section as 'The Battle of Winchester'. Current historians refer to the battle as the First Battle of Kernstown.
Battle: First Kernstown – March 23, 1862
Forces Engaged: 12,300 total (US 8,500; CS 3,800)
Estimated Casualties: 1,308 total (US 590; CS 718)

fine house, presented many evidences of having been an abode of wealth, had been struck more than one by shot and shell from our batteries, and it was no broken and ruined. No one was to be seen on the premises, except in the adjacent outhouses there were a few negro women. These were weeping and wailing, but for what in particular they seemed not to know. When I inquired of one of them as to who her master was, she set up the cry, "Tis two miles; 'fore God, it's two miles." That was all I could get out of any of them. Thus I entered the town; but the battle was nearly over. Far away I could hear the firing of guns, as if our gallant little army was pursuing the enemy to the south.

After the Battle

During the remainder of the day the town was being filled with the wounded of both sides; for the defeat had been so complete that the enemy left all their dead and wounded on the field. Along the sidewalk were ranged, in different places in the crooked main street, the bodies of those who had been wounded, and then died subsequent to their removal from the field.

Many surgeons were in their first experiences in field service, and on the bare sidewalk in front of the hotel they were cutting off a leg here, and an arm there, and all the time the poor wounded subjects were howling and crying as their life's blood ran down the declivity to the gutter of the street. Many failed to survive the performance of the necessary operations, and expired as they were left by the surgeons. Those that died were simply covered with blankets and left there.

Across the street was a church, and I went to see what there was within. I cannot conceive what it was that attracted me. I know I felt heart-sick on viewing the scenes on the street. I felt as if I was in a dream; that all I saw was unreal; and I realized the terrible feeling of one who is in a nightmare. I know I gasped and held my breath. In the church I found at least two hundred wounded and dying men. The majority were Northerners, but they were all receiving equal care and attention.

Here, too, many poor fellows died while under the surgeon's hand. Some expired while the knife and saw were being used. There was one whom I met, a tall, stout, and strongly built young fellow, about twenty-five years of age, and, as he turned his agonized countenance toward me, I recognized him as one of the guards of the One Hundred and Fourth Regiment of Pennsylvania, who had challenged me in the morning. Poor fellow! He had been shot with a musket ball through the right lung, and had had a part of his face torn off by a fragment of shell. He did not appear to know me, although I did what I could for his comfort, and he expired while I looked at him. The doctors had probed for the ball, and had done what the enemy left undone of their intended work.

While in the church, I noticed that no matter what the nature of the soldier's wound was, the sufferer was invariably consulted as to the application of chloroform, and a sort of pride made a great majority of them decline the benefit of it. There were some who even laughed and otherwise made light of

their misfortunes.

I could not stand it long, and, as I was very tired, sought a place where I could sleep. In a deserted house I went with a few officers who had been assigned by General Shields to take formal possession of the city. Here I laid myself down upon a bed that showed signs of having been vacated in considerable haste. A man's coat and vest were on a chair near by, and a nice pair of slippers were under the bedstead. I was not very particular, and did not undress, except as to my hat, cloak, and boots; and I laid there during the remainder of the night in a dreadful sleep.

Next morning the scene was more terrible than it had been on the preceding night. Scores of dead bodies had been gathered into an empty lot on the east side of town, and when I arrived there, parties of men were engaged in interring the bodies. There was an officer who kept a record of those that were identified, and a rough wooden peg, with a number on it, was driven into the ground at the head of each grave. Many of those I saw buried had belonged to the One Hundred and Fourth Pennsylvania regiment, but there were also a number belonging to an Ohio regiment. During the morning I was shown the place where the battle raged most fiercely. There was a stone wall or fence on the brow of a wooded hill to the east or southeast of the town, where, it was said, the rebels had made a desperate stand, and many dead bodies of Southern soldiers lay behind and not far from it. It is claimed that because of this incident of the battle, the great Southern commander was accorded his sobriquet of "Stonewall."

On a Transport

In a few days I was again in Washington, and I heard that a grand movement was about to be inaugurated. The whole Army of the Potomac was to be shipped to the peninsula in front of Richmond. Determined to see that also if I could, I tendered my services, and was immediately placed upon one of the numerous transports. At that time the Government was dreadfully hard up for ships in which to transport the immense army and stores, and all varieties of old tubs were enlisted in the service. Even all the way from the Bay of Fundy they came, to earn five hundred dollars and upward a day.

After having made two trips to Hampton village, I got on board the steamship "Emperor," belonging to St. Johns, N.B., and owned by the Hathaways of that place. She, or he, was a very old tube, but I reflected that if the "Emperor" could stand the weather in the Bay of Fundy, she could probably get along without much trouble in the Chesapeake. Accordingly we went to Alexandria, Virginia, and there assisted in the transportation of General Heintzelman's corps. We took Berdan's regiment of New York sharp-shooters to Fortress Monroe, and on another occasion we transported General Emory and his staff and escort besides a couple of batteries. We had a terrible trip with the General on board. It stormed all night, and the horses and men and guns and carriages went pell-mell together. General Emory swore terrible. I can now remember that I then thought him a very bad man.

Monitor and Merrimac

In the morning the storm itself was over, but we were still suffering the disagreeable effects of it as we steamed rapidly toward Old Point Comfort. Few noticed that there was remarkable trimness about the shipping. Our pilot apparently noticed nothing, for he kept going under a full head of steam so as to round the point and get to the wharf. Presently, a fast-going little tug-board darted out from the fleet and hailed us. An officer on board of here swore a succession of oaths, and desired to know "where in hell we wanted to go." From him we received the cheering information that the dreaded "Merrimac" was coming down the river, and that all craft near and far were in imminent danger of being blown up. We then saw the men-of-war ships in full fighting trim, decks cleared and ports open. All the fleet of transports had steam up and anchors weighed, with prows turned for flight. It was too late for us. We were now around the point, and congratulated one another that if there should be any fun, we would be in a good position to see it.

Passing the "rip-raps," we drew near to the the little Monitor as she lay squat in the water of Hampton Roads, with nothing above a foot higher than the surface but the round turret, on the top of which a solitary officer was nervously pacing, and a flag staff on one end of her, from which the stars and stripes fitfully rustled in the fresh morning breeze. At a more respectful distance were the larger wooden frigates, two or three of them, and, inside the roads, were the ruins of the ill-fated "Congress" and "Cumberland." Far beyond, and a long way up the James river, there was a heavy black cloud of smoke and a dark object underneath. That was the Merrimac, and she seemed bent on making us realize all of our worst fears. But she did not venture within fighting distance, and we waited through the agonizing suspense until evening, when we were permitted to land.

I soon found myself in the fortress, not withstanding the fact that General Wool had prohibited all citizens from entering. I visited the quarters, casemates, magazines, and headquarters. General Wool looked and acted as if he believed that it had been fear of him alone that had deterred the commander of the enemy's iron-clad from coming out and destroying us all.

Next day I put my head into the muzzle of the "Lincoln" gun, and also into that of the "Seward" gun. These were two monster pieces of ordnance, planted down on the sand near the water and formed a sort of shore battery. I also visited the ancient town of Hampton. The houses had nearly all been destroyed by fire some time before, but there still remained not far away a very fine building that had formerly been used as a seminary or college. Hampton is situated on the low, flat shore of the bay, and was approached by water through a long and crooked channel. From Fortress Monroe we could plainly see Newport News and the rebel flag at an outpost of theirs on Sewell's Point, some distance south. Then we took a regiment or two to Sullivan's Landing, on the York river. As soon or before we were fastened to the short, nearly all the men were in the shallow water, diligently engaged in picking up and eating the oysters that abounded there. Thence I went on toward Yorktown. I met with

Berdan's sharp-shooters, and saw a great deal of life at the front.

In the Shenandoah Valley again

On my return to Washington I merely rested a while and then went off to the Shenandoah valley again. I met Banks and his army, but I pursued an independent course, and found myself at last with General Shields far down the valley. At Port Republic we had a desperate fight[10], and our army was beaten. I was not present at the fighting, having the day before gone over the mountains for about ten miles to Cross Keys[11], where General Fremont had an army and was engaging the enemy. Next day, when I had nearly got back to where I started from, I found our camps empty, and the rebel cavalry far in my rear. In this most unpleasant predicament there was nothing left for me to do but to ascend one of the high hills near by, and his myself for a time, or descend into the valley and take a risk of capture.

Hidden within a clump of stunted pine trees, I remained all of that day and the next night. From where I was concealed I plainly saw and heard the rapid movements of the enemy's cavalry, and it was all to the *north* of me. I was thus virtually a prisoner.

Next morning I arose from the green turf on which I had lain all night, and stealthily peered around and below to see what my prospects were. I found not a single soldier in sight. Our men had retreated, and the enemy had also gone on their way. On this I ventured to a road, and proceeding some distance along that, it brought me to a highway at the bottom of the valley. I stopped at the first house, for I was nearly fainting with hunger, but the place was deserted. The furniture had been removed, and there was no sign of life about it, except the presence of a large dog, whom, to save myself, I despatched by a couple of shots from my revolver.

I was not until I had trudged along for a couple of miles further that I was encouraged as a drew near to a substantial house by seeing several persons about it, and when I entered I found all was astir. The people that lived in the house were Quakers. In the wide hall that ran through the centre of the house were five soldiers reclining on extemporized bedsteads. Three of them were Northern men and two Southrons. The Quaker, a venerable looking man, and apparently purely orthodox, and his family of young men and women, were administering what comforts there were within reach of the sufferers, who had been wounded in the fighting of the day before.

My condition was taking in at a glance, and without being asked as to which side I belonged, or in relation to any other personal matter, the old gentleman simply said, "Walk in, my son," which invitation I quickly accepted. One of

[10]Battle of Port Republic,; June 9, 1862
Forces Engaged: 9,500 total (US 3,500; CS 6,000)
Estimated Casualties: 1,818 total (US 1,002; CS 816)
[11]Battle of Cross Keys; June 8, 1862
Forces Engaged: 17,300 total (US 11,500; CS 5,800)
Estimated Casualties: 951 total (US 664; CS 287)

the daughters helped me to a splendid breakfast, and meanwhile told me how "our horsemen" had chased the "Yankees" the day before, and that a sort of battle had taken place near where we were. "Over yonder." she said, pointing to a house in the distance, "were twenty or thirty more wounded men of both sides."

I told her of my adventures, and she seemed to be interested in my recital. She said she was older than I, and advised me to go back to Washington and stay there until the war was over. Meanwhile a surgeon of one of General Shield's regiments had arrived. and with medicines and bandages and sticks, attended to the wants of the wounded. Here I took my first dose of quinine. The doctor told me I looked sick, and declared that I "would surely get an attack of the ague," after my exposure. This was almost too good a place to leave, but in the afternoon I did so, and after a great march, sometimes riding and sometimes walking, I reached Washington again.

Up to this time it will be seen that I was not yet a soldier, and I have thought that what I have written is somewhat out of place here, but, as it is done. I cannot forbear giving it a place, if for nothing else but by way of introduction.

CHAPTER II

From about the middle of June, 1862, when I left Washington for the West, until the latter part of October in the same year, when I was at Crab Orchard, Kentucky, as a private soldier of Company "B," of the eighty-eighth regiment, Illinois Infantry Volunteers.

Going to the West

During one of my many journeys to and from Washington in the spring of 1862, I chanced to be upon the railroad train from that city to Baltimore. In the cars were many convalescent soldiers; some had been wounded, and were discharged and being sent home, to recruit that great army of cripples already appearing in the various States of the North; others, not so badly off, were on furlough and leave of absence, and going to their homes for a season, in the full uniform of the army, and this without being under any of the restraints or inconveniences of army discipline.

Among others on the train I met and became acquainted with Mr. Henry Weaver, whose home was at Loda, in Iroquois county, in the State of Illinois. He had been a private in Colonel Farnsworth's celebrated Eighth Regiment of Illinois Cavalry, and had just received his discharge from the service at one of the general hospitals situated in or near to Alexandria, Virginia, where he had been for a long time previously, suffering from typhoid fever.

By him I was told of the beautiful country he lived in, and how easy it was to get along there, especially for a young man such as I then was. By the time we reached Baltimore we were well acquainted, and on leaving him at the depot of the Northern Central railroad, I received and promised to accept from him a cordial invitation to visit him in his prairie home, so far away to the west.

For some time after this I continued to be engaged in going from camp to camp, as I have before related. My relatives and friends persisted in their refusal to sanction my going into the army, and at last I concluded myself that after all it would perhaps be better for me to abandon the idea. For a little while I tried to settle down to hard study, but, with fifty thousand or more of armed men around me, and the continual hurly-burly of almost a state of siege, I made but little progress and realized less satisfaction. After making up and tearing

to pieces many different plans, I suddenly recalled to my mind the heartiness of the invitation I had received from Mr. Henry Weaver, and I though I would very much like to see his beautiful home and country.

Eager at the thought, I determined to immediately banish myself from the stirring and demoralizing scenes by which I was so completely surrounded; go to Illinois, pursue my interrupted course of studies, and finally settle down to live there. All those of my friends to whom I mentioned my project applauded my resolution. My uncle jokingly warned me to to return to the East again unless with my credentials as a member of Congress in my pocket. Even my elderly great-aunt thought I was on the right track at last, and soon after my last sad experience in the Shenandoah valley, with God-speed and good wishes from all of my friends, I started auspiciously for the great West. But alas for the strength or weakness of human resolution! The next time my friends heard of me I was a soldier indeed; but of that hereafter.

My objective point was Loda, of course, but I went direct to Chicago, so as to make of it a sort of base, as military men would say. I travelled on the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, through a rough country and over great mountains, to the Ohio river at Bel-air. On our way we passed through several military stations, and I suffered from as many different attacks of depression of spirits. At Cumberland, in Maryland, I even went so far as to want to desert the train and go with the "boys" again.

From Bel-air, where I saw and crossed the Ohio river for the first time in my life, we went on to Columbus, the capital of the State of Ohio, and from thence on to Chicago. It had taken up nearly forty-eight hours to get there. I arrived in the wonderful city of Chicago late in the evening, and in a very tired, dusty, and hungry condition; but after a good bath and a tolerable supper, which I obtained at a hotel nearly opposite to the Union depot, I set out to view the city. I had travelled a long distance – two hundred miles longer than the whole of Great Britain; I had crossed high mountains and a great river, and I thought, as, I went over the Alleheny mountains and the Ohio river, that I had at last seen some things of sufficient importance to entitle them to places on the map of the world. I esteemed myself as very nearly equal to him who had climbed Mont Blanc, or to the other one who had passed over the Andes.

Now I was in Chicago, eight hundred miles from tidewater, and I acknowledge to have felt some surprise on finding that the people were very much like the inhabitants of other cities I had visited, and although I had travelled so far, I was not after all in a foreign country. Having made my arrangements so that I could afford to stay but one day, I had to devise some means of seeing as much as posible of the city in that time. The streetcars seemed to be the best suited to my purpose, and upon one of them that passed the hotel, I got, and as I stood on the front platform, I engaged in conversation with the driver of it.

Talking with him (and he was a very enthusiastic talker, even for a Chicagoan), and viewing the city, I went to the end of the route. We passed by many hundreds of houses that had not yet been raised to the new grade of the streets, and that part of the city presented a curious aspect. Some years before it has been discovered that the grade of the city was in many places below the level

of Lake Michigan, and the work of raising the streets and the buildings to the new level had been going on. But once past the business centre, and where we got to where the residences of the poorer people were, the houses had not been raised, but the streets had. Many blocks has stores built on the corners, but between these corners the dwelling-houses seemed to be in a hole. Entrance from the street by means of the roofs appeared to be the easiest mode but in places where the distance was too great to be jumped, long stairs had been built from the street down to the front doors below.

After arriving at the end of the railroad line, I found myself on a large tract of land as flat as a mill-pond. I took another route on my return to the city, but the scenes were very much the same.

On the Prairies

Next day I took the train on the Chicago branch of the Illinois Central railroad. and ran south on that for ninety-nine miles to Loda. It was during this journey that I first realized the nature and extent of the grand Prairies. For miles upon each side of the road, and extending as far as the eye could reach, to. the east, and to the west, there was nothing but flat, or very little rolling, prairie. Sometimes the horizon would seem to be broken by small, dark green objects of irregular shapes. These were groves of trees, oases in the blank prairie. The land itself was clothed in verdure, already thick and high. and all over were in bloom many kinds of plants and flowers growing in wild profusion that take great care and attention to be cultivated at all in other countries I had visited. While stopping at a small station on the open prairie I witnessed a phenomenon which I believe is peculiar to that country. It was an optical illusion. Although we were in the midst of a blank space, yet there ap-peared in the distance houses, churches, trees, and other objects, all of a grossly exaggerated size and turned upside down. There were many veritable castles in the air. It. was quite a study while it lasted, which was not long, and we watched the beautiful picture as it gradually faded, fainter and fainter, until the prospect became as it was before, one plain blank sea of green. In all that distance of ninety-nine miles, I do not remember that our train crossed a single river worthy of the name, and none at all with a name, that I had heard of, except that at Kankakee, and comparatively speaking, the dimensions of tthis one were insignificant.

On my arrival at Loda I soon found my acquaintance of the trip to Baltimore, and before night were were all together, he and his three brothers, Volney, Abram, and William. We were telling stories of the war. Of course, by politeness, I took my place as a simple corrorborator of what was said and related by the brother. He was near to them, and besides so recently from the seat of war. Henry Weaver must have ben about the first veteran to return to that neighborhood: at least I thought so, from the way he was gazed at and listened to. I soon ascertained that Loda was not a place likely to prove suitable for me. It would have been just the place if I could have taken a hand at farming. If I could have arisen at five o'clock in the morning, and milked two or three cows,

cleaned the horses and the stable, besides doing a great many other "chores" before breakfast, then plough or plant all dat, and repeat the "chores" at night – I might have been suited if I had been able to do all these, but I could not. Even the ten and twelve-year-old girls did more than I could.

The town itself was a small flimsy affair of about fifty houses. The people who inhabited it were chiefly those who bought grain from the farmers at twelve and a half cents a bushel, and made high wines of it, and a few others who sold to the same farmers calico for their wives' dresses at a quarter of a dollar a yard. Everybody retired to bed on ordinary occasions at eight o'clock in the evening and arose again at five o'clock in the morning, or even earlier.

For awhile I had a magnificent time of it. I had almost forgottn that the war was going on, in my enjoyment of the task of helping to plough and to plant and in attending the little social gatherings in the neighborhood. Sometimes parties were held in the "Grove," some ten miles away to the east. When we went to the "Grove" the large farm wagons were put into shape, and pell-mell we were crammed into them, boys and girls together. Once out onto the broad prarie, the horses were made to go at a round gait, and as we rushed along we inhaled the bracing, invigorating air of the fresh country, and by the time we reached the pic-nic grounds we held each within ourselves more fun and devilment than may perhaps be found in a dozen of city boys, lively as *they* are sometimes.

On the "glorious Fourth of July" we had a grand time at Ash Grove. There were reading, praying, eating, dancing, flirting, but not a bit of drinking. There was neither whiskey nor beer. A full description of that day's frolic would be out of place here; besides that I have written it in another book.

Although I had almost forgotten the way, I had not ceased to wear my semi-military dress on all proper occasions. I liked to wear my blouse, and sometimes added a belt around my waist and a jaunty McClellen cap on my head, and so, when about the 4th of July, 1862, the President's call for "300,000 more" reached us, and the country got ablaze with patriotism, I was ready. I had already thought of going away in search of some place more suitable for my projects of settlement, but had arrived at no determination. When the proclamation came to Loda I first learned what patriotism was really like. Young and old became intensely excited. None but patriotic hymns were sung. The village lawyer was threatened with "lynching" because he was suspected of being a "Copperhead." The end was that I went to Chicago to spy out the land, as it were. The Board of Trade of that city had undertaken to organize three regiments and a battery to be patronized by the members, and I soon returned with my pockets full of transportation tickets and authority to recruit. Finally, about the end of July, Abram Weaver, Volney, his brother, and several others, with myself, went to Chicago, and on the 1st of August we were enrolled and became part of the "Nelson Guards," a company to be in the second regiment of the Board of Trade brigade. Then the boys each got sixty dollars as a bounty, supplied, I believe, by Cook County.

Mustered In

CHAPTER VI

COVERS THE TIME DURING WHICH I REMAINED AT THE POST OF BENTON BARRACKS, NEAR ST. LOUIS, MO., AND EMBRACES FROM APRIL 10, 1863, TO DECEMBER 29, 1863, THE LATEST DATE BEING THAT OF MY DISCHARGE FROM THE SERVICE OF THE: UNITED :STATES AS PRIVATE OF COMPANY "B" EIGHTY-EIGHTH REGIMENT OF INFANTRY ILLINOLS VOLUNTEERS.

At the first thought I concluded that an account of my life at Benton Barracks would necessarily in clud a lengthy dissertation upon the "technique". of army life – the peculiar arrangemeuts existing there, treating of the various officers and their separate duties, and methods of performing them.; but I have since amended my plan so that I will only give in this place a general account of my experiences at the post, and when I am bound to mention anything beyond the legitimate Iimits of such a project I will endeavor to be as brief as possible. My nominal office, as I have already stated at the conclusion of the preceding chapter, was that of "Post Bugler," but upon POST BUGLER. 153 the day of my arrival I was set to work in the office of the Post Adjutant, and assisted in the preparation and making out of what was called a "Tri-Monthly Post Return

He was a short, fit old gentleman of French-Canadian extraction. He had been in the military service of the United States for forty or fifty years, and had al- ready been retired, and was now restored to the active List,and doing duty as Chief Commissary of Musters for the Department of the Missouri besides being Commander of the post. The Colonel had seen ser- vice in all of the various Wars the country had been engaged in during the many years of .his career, but what he appeared to be most particularly proud of was the fact that when comparatively a youth, and only a Captain in the army, he had explored the Rocky mountains and gone through ever so many adventures and hair-breadth escapes, and had been given up as lost for a time; his account of which had been edited or written by no less a personage in literature than Washington Irving. I saw the book. It was about the size of this of mine; and although it would be presumptuous in me to criticise so august a writer, still I cannot forbear saying that I have seen many works of the Prince of American authors in which he displayed his genius to a degree immeasurably beyond that which he appears to have employed in editing or writing the Colonel's narrative. The

Post Commander had for his Acting Assistant Adjutant General a handsome, dashing, and young Lieutenant, A. J. Newby; who belonged