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VOLUME 7. SENECA FALLS, N. Y., WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1892. NUMBER 4[illegible]5

Seneca Co. Journal

PUBLISHED EVERY WEDNESDAY BY

THE JOURNAL PUBLISHING CO.
(LIMITED.)

SENECA FALLS, N. Y.

F. N. STEVENS, MANAGER. | N. B. STEVENS, EDITOR.

TERMS:

County Subscribers, $1.50 when paid in advance; Subscribers outside the county, $2.00 per year, postage prepaid; Subscription for six months, $1.00 in advace.

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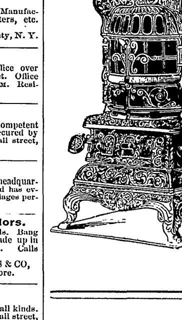

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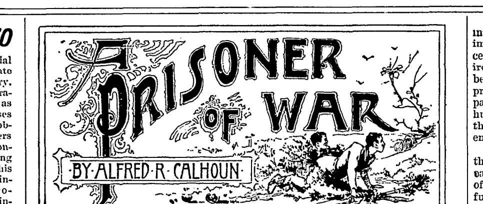


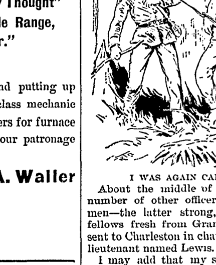
INTRODUCTION.

I was captured near Cleveland, East Tennessee, immediately after the battle of Missionary Ridge, Nov. 30, 1863, and, with thirty-seven of my men, was sent on to Richmond, by way of Atlanta. The enlisted men were taken to Belle Isle, and I, with a number of other unfortunate officers who had joined us at different points on the way, was sent to the famous, or rather infamous, Libby prison.

Some day, if spared, I may write out the story of my six months' residence in Libby, but as my experience after leaving that place is more personal, I think it will be found more interesting to the average reader.

When Grant began his advance on Richmond in May, 1864, there were about 23,000 of our enlisted men in prison on Belle Isle and some 1,200 officers were confined in Libby. All these prisoners were sent down to Andersonville and Macon, Ga., before May 7, excepting a few men who were held back sick in the hospitals, or who had been captured in the battle of the Wilderness.

I was one of those who had escaped through "the great tunnel" from Libby the previous February, but I was recaptured after being out four days and five nights, during which time I had little or no sleep and suffered with the cold and for want of food. On being taken back to Libby I was placed with other recaptured officers in the cells under the prison, and here I contracted a fever that kept me weak till the other prisoners were hurried south.



I WAS AGAIN CAPTURED.

About the middle of May I, with a number of other officers and enlisted men—the latter strong, hearty young fellows fresh from Grant's army—was sent to Charleston in charge of a young lieutenant named Lewis.

I may add that my story is true in every particular, and that though there are a great many "I's" scattered through it, which is inevitable in a personal narrative, that I am not at all eager to figure as a hero. Still I think I can honestly say that, like the tens of thousands of conscientious men who fought on both sides, I tried to do my duty as a soldier, though I was not yet old enough to vote.

It would really take as long to tell of the incidents that occurred between Richmond and Charleston, as it did to make the trip—forty-eight hours.

At Charleston we were confined in the jailyard, where we were under the fire of our own batteries stationed on Morris island, and not an hour of the day, and frequently of the night, passed that we did not hear the whirr and explosion of the shells sent into the city by General Gilmore's famous "Swamp angel."

The tent in which I was quartered in the jailyard was directly in the noonday shadow of a permanent gallows, on which many men had been hanged, but neither the sight nor the dismal creaking at night brought horrible suggestions to my mind. It would have been very difficult to increase, through the imagination, the awful reality of our situation.

After being in the jailyard about ten days, an enlisted man who looked like a living skeleton, for he had been in this wretched place for four months, advised me to "play" sick and get sent to the Roper hospital.

It did not require much ability as an actor to play sick, for if I had been in my own home I should have been in bed with at least two doctors in attendance. But as the Roper hospital was represented by my friend to be a "perfect paradise" in comparison with the jailyard, I determined to exhaust every effort to get sent there.

I asked my comrade if he was sure the hospital was better than the jail, and he replied:

"You bet it is. Why, it's a regular up and down heaven compared with this infernal hole. To be sure it ain't out of the range of shells, but we don't mind them no more, but it gives you a view of green woods to the west and blue water to the east."

"Views are all very fine," I replied, "but they don't appease hunger. What advantages has this hospital in the way of extra grub?"

"Fine!" exclaimed my informant. "It is in charge of the sisters of charity, the noblest lot of women you ever saw, and all the rooms and blankets are clean, and if you play it sharp you can get white bread and meat and milk, and all that till you can't rest. Ah, if I was back there again I wouldn't leave unless they carried me away on a stretcher." And the man shook his head and compressed his lips as if he were chiding himself for neglected opportunities.

There was no resisting this tantalizing picture of abundant food and luxurious surroundings. I had played sick with great success in Libby, and I determined to enact the same role again. Nor did it require acting. If it were not that I kept mad right straight along when I wasn't asleep I should have dropped down from sheer weakness, for the pains and exhaustion of dysentery and incipient scurvy were added to the ever present tortures of hunger.

As a matter of form, for I never saw them administering any medicine, two or three doctors, all in Confederate uniform, came in every morning and made a tour of the yard and the prison. The next morning I waited near the jail door till they came down, and then, with much of the desperation of Oliver Twist when, impelled by the same feeling, he held up his empty bowl and asked for "more," I placed myself in front of the doctors and saluted.

"Well, sir," said an elderly doctor, whose face indicated that the milk of human kindness in his heart had turned sour before or soon after the breaking out of the war, "what do you want?"

"I want to go to the hospital," I said.

"Sick, sir?"

"Yes, doctor."

"Where?"

"All over, I think." And I spoke of the scurvy and dysentery, but out of respect for his feelings, which I was particularly anxious not to offend, I said nothing about the hunger. He felt my pulse and dropped my hand. Another man felt my pulse and looked at his watch—it was a fine gold one—in a professional way that seemed more like business.

"Put out your tongue," commanded the elderly doctor.

I did so in good shape and turned about to the others that they might look at it, and I wondered the while if they could read in it or on it the gnawing hunger that was devouring me.

"When were you captured?" asked the man with the gold watch.

"Last December," I replied.

"Where have you been?"

"Principally in Libby."

"How long have you been feeling bad?"

If I had answered this question truthfully I should have replied, "Ever since the hour of my capture," but prudence led me to reply, "Since coming here."

They questioned me still further, tapped me over the breast of my ragged shirt, then took my name, age and rank, and went away, saying that a sergeant would come to see me after awhile.

I was so delighted with the promised success of this move that I took no interest for the rest of that morning in the messengers from Morris island, but stood in a position from which I could watch the gate by which the sergeant must enter.

In about an hour a young man with a book under his arm, a pencil behind his ear and the green chevron of a hospital steward on his sleeve came in, and, walking to the middle of the yard, he refreshed his memory from the book and called out my name. In an instant I was by his side, and looking me over, he asked:

"Are you sick?"

"I am," I replied.

"Well, I'm to take you to the hospital for awhile."

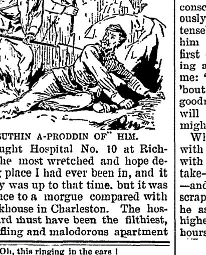
"To the Roper hospital?" I asked.

Without deigning a reply he motioned for me to follow him, and led me in the direction of the workhouse. We entered that forbidding looking building. It was connected with the jail, and was at this time full of prisoners, our boys, even more wretched than myself. The steward conducted me to a room in the southern part of the building on the ground floor. It was covered with dirty cots, on which lay men, every one of whom looked as if he could never rise again.

"The nurse will fix you a place to sleep in this ward," said the steward, with a wave of the hand, "and after a while I'll fetch you in some medicine." He hurried out of the place, as I wished I could have done; and looking about me I realized that I had "jumped out of the frying pan into the fire."

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE CHARLESTON JAIL TO THE WORKHOUSE.



"SUTHIN A-PRODDIN OF' HIM."

I thought Hospital No. 10 at Richmond the most wretched and hope destroying place I had ever been in, and it certainly was up to that time, but it was as a palace to a morgue compared with the workhouse in Charleston. The hospital ward must have been the filthiest, most stifling and malodorous apartment in the building, for it would tax the imagination of Dante himself to conceive of anything worse. There were iron bars to the windows, but had they been thrown wide open and the sick prisoners told that they were free to depart, I doubt if five men out of about a hundred that were lying and dying along the grimy floor would have had strength enough to crawl through.

Outside, the air was intensely hot; there was not a breath moving. A live oak in the distance, with its gray festoon of Spanish moss, looked particularly funereal and as still as death. The guards about the building moved in a heavy, listless way and "toted" their pieces as if they were burdens. Through the windows there was not an inspiring thing in sight but the blue expanse of sky, on which a white cloud rested like an anchored ship. In the ward, everything animate but the flies appeared to be nearing dissolution. Beelzebub, the god of flies, might have made his headquarters in the ward of that workhouse and felt entirely at home. They darkened the air, and their vicious buzzing and more vicious bites were torturing to the nerves.

But what impressed me most forcibly was the fact that the men lying on the floor, except in a few cases where some energy remained, did not seem to heed this insect plague. It was not that they had become apathetic through habit. Familiarity with suffering does not deaden pain; indeed, where sensation remains it is more apt to intensify it, but these men were either powerless to resist or the greater agony of disease and hunger had made them indifferent. The flies swarmed about some of the gaunt faces and rose in little clouds when the head was moved, but only to settle down again.

Here, as at Richmond, the nurses in the prison hospitals were our own men, and the most robust looked little stronger than the poor patients on the floor. One of these men, a young German, with sad blue eyes and an expression of indescribable melancholy on his pinched and rather handsome face, touched me on the shoulder, after the hospital steward had gone out, and asked:

"Are you an officer, sir, or a private?"

"Well, my friend," I replied, "if I was back in our lines I should say 'an officer,' but here there is no rank. We are all soldiers, and good ones, I hope, though a bit poor and helpless at present."

"Ah, sir, if it was only being treated like soldiers," he said with a sigh, "that would not be so bad; that is what we enlisted for; but to be treated like dogs, to die like dogs and to be buried like dogs!"

"Don't lose heart, comrade. Keep a stiff upper lip. Better times are coming. If we can't manage to escape to our people, depend on it they will come for us after a bit. But don' give up. If swearing comforts you at all—I know it has been a great satisfaction to me at times—why swear in all the languages you are master of; or if you think praying is a better hold, and no doubt it is, pray for all you are worth, but don't ask God to forgive your enemies—that would be a little too much—till this war is over, and then we won't have any enemies."

I laid my hands on young Muth's shoulders as I spoke, and to my great delight a smile lit up his face, and he shot out an oath and said:

"I guess you are right; I'll try it!"

We became chummy at once, and he led me down to the farthest end of the ward, and after some care selected two army blankets, and rolling them up, laid them in an unoccupied corner. He told me that every blanket in the place was in an indescribable state of filth, but this did not shock me; it certainly would have surprised me if they were in any other condition. The nurse introduced me to a tall young man, Lieutenant Bell, who slept near where my blankets were placed, but who, though evidently a very sick man, had strength enough to stand up, for he was looking disconsolately out of the window when we approached him.

As Lieutenant Bell and myself were intimately associated from this time on, and particularly in the escape which I shall presently describe, I may be pardoned for giving more than a passing notice to one of the bravest and most original characters I ever met. He was at this time about twenty-five years of age, but a wound in the right breast, which had not healed after seven months, and the hunger and disease gave him the appearance of a man of forty-five or more. He was about six feet in height, lithe, and with a form that denoted great powers of endurance. The hair was long and dark, and the beard, of a warmer shade, was soft as silk. He had steady, bluish gray eyes, and the strong features of men of that cast usually found among the Scotch-Irish.

At first Bell—he said his name was Tom Bell and not Thomas—was inclined to be distant, and he rather repelled my well meant advances, but I was neither angered nor discouraged, for I knew just how he felt. His speech at first seemed painfully slow, and he had the unmistakable accent of the East Tennessee and North Carolina mountaineer, with the same tendency to use words long since obsolete in the outside world, such as the old Saxon form "hit" for it, "yon" for yonder, and to add "uns" to the plural pronouns. He was, I think, the most accomplished and unconscious swearer I ever met, and curiously enough the man's nature was intensely religious; indeed, I never knew him to lie down for the night without first dropping on his knees and muttering a prayer; still, he often confessed to me: "Ef the wah don't turn out jest 'bout right, my faith in the wisdom and goodness of an overruling Providence will be so shook up that hit won't be mighty good fo' much after."

While I was trying to break the ice with Bell the hospital steward returned with four opium pills, which I was to take—one every night for the dysentery—and a battered tin can containing some scraped sweet potato and vinegar, which, he assured me, would "knock scurvy higher'n a kite." A spoonful every three hours was the prescribed dose, and as no

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Fail to do Our Duty.

Everybody has at times failed to do their duty towards themselves. Hundreds of lady readers suffer from sick headache, nervousness, sleeplessness and female troubles. Let them follow the example of Mrs. H. Herbechter, Stevens Point, Wis., who for five years suffered greatly from Nervous Prostration and sleeplessness, tried peysicians and different medicines without success. But one bottle of Dr. Miles' Nervine caused sound sleep every night and she is now feeling like a new person. Mrs. Elizabeth Wheeler, Laramie City, Wyoming, who tried all other remedies, declares that after three week's use of the Nervine for Headache, Nervous Prostration, etc., she was entirely relieved. Sold by Casey & Seaman. Trial bottle free.

First-class place on Johnson street for sale or rent. Inqure of N. B. Stevens.

Oh, this ringing in the ears!
Oh, this humming in the head!
Hawking, blowing, snuffing, gasping,
Watering eyes and throat a-rasping,
Health impaired and comfort fled,
Till I would that I were dead!

What folly to suffer so with catarrhal troubles, when the worst cases of chronic catarrh in the head are relieved and cured by the mild, cleansing and healing properties of Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy. It purifies the foul breath, by removing the cause of offense, heals the sore and inflamed passages, and perfects a lasting cure.

I suffered for more than ten years with that dreadful disease, catarrh, and used every available medicine which was recommended to me. I cannot thank you enough for the relief which Ely's Cream Balm has afforded me.—Emanuel Meyers, Winfield, L. I., N. Y.

Fell Dead.

These words are very familiar to our readers, as not a day passes without the report of the sudden death of some prominent citizen. The explanation is, "Heart Disease." Therefore beware, if you have any of the following symptoms: Short breath, Pain in side, Smothering spells, Swollen ankles, Asthmatic breathing, Weak and hungry spells, Tenderness in shoulder or arm, Fluttering of Heart or Irregular Pulse. These symptoms mean heart disease. The most reliable remedy is Dr. Miles' New Heart Cure, which has saves thousands of lives. Book of testimonials free at Casey & Seaman's, who also sell the New Heart Cure.

Advertise in the JOURNAL.

HIS DREAM CAME TRUE.

A STORY OF STONE RIVER BATTLEFIELD.

A Farm Boy Dreamed of War in Peaceful Times and the Incidents Seen in His Vision Were Afterward Realized on the Field.

A summer's midday.

The warm southern breeze gently smoothes the bearded cheek of the undulating wheat and rustles among the whispering leaves of corn.

An old sorrel farm horse indolently crops the tall timothy in the fence corner. He is attached to an old fashioned shovel plow. But the plow is lying idly on its side among the potato vines that hedge the cornfield round about, and the loosened bridle rein dangles against the sorrel's ears.

Now and then a vigorous stamping of a hoof or swaying of the head attests the animal's disgust as to certain pestiferous yellow flies that alternately attack his legs and throat. Otherwise the swish, swish of the bitten grass and the rythmic swaying of the corn are the only sounds distinguishable upon the summer air. The myriad floating flecks of thistledown noiselessly join the golden spray from the nodding tassels and soar aloft with a million intangible atoms to fall in lanes and furrows, while as many distinct and yet commingling perfumes, the daily delicious output of grass and grain, assail the senses of all animate things.

In a freshly turned furrow between the corn rows near at hand lies a youth at full length. The dirty brown feet and legs protrude ostentatiously from the short and simple blue overalls; the shock head of neutral, sunburned hair rests upon an arm, while the disengaged hand burrows in the soft, warm earth. The soiled cotton shirt is flung open at the throat, the cheap chip hat has rolled away. It is the figure of a boy of twelve: yet the face is that of budding manhood.

A curious mound of earth is in front of him—a miniature fort, with trench, traverse, parapet, redoubt upon redoubt, embrasure above embrasure. Rudely constructed of the recently turned loam, it has already begun to crumble away in the dry, hot atmosphere of midday, while the young engineer lies unconscious beside his work. He dreams. And as he dreams the mannish look comes into his young face, his square jaws are set and his hands now and then are clinched. He mutters in his sleep, and once cries aloud, so that the old sorrel pauses in the process of mastication for a moment and turned his white face toward the corn.

In this vision the youth had grown to manhood. The old, dull, hated farm life had faded into the forgotten past. He was a soldier. He had always longed and hoped to be a soldier. He had read the lives of the great military heroes, pored over the romantic adventures of the soldier of fiction and often sighed when he thought of the peaceful era and unmilitary country in which he lived. Now, here at last he wore a uniform, slept in a tent and cocked at a camp fire. There were thousands of other soldiers around him everywhere. Through his boyish dreams had long floated the unsubstantial shadow of marches and drills and battles, the glistening steel of bayonets, the clang of arms, the roll of drums and the rumble of artillery. Now he was a real soldier. He pinched himself for fear it was only another dream.

This was a glorious life! How little his old schoolmates and playfellows could realize his future! He would carve out a name for himself that they would delight one day to honor. He was not exactly clear just how he had become a soldier or whom he was expected to fight, but this fact didn't bother him. He found himself marching. It was a vast moving army. They marched and marched and marched. He was tired almost to death, but there was no halt. He was terribly thirsty, but there was no water. He thought he would die of thirst, and he remembered his mother's well and the jug of cool water in the shade of the fence corners at home.

Suddenly he was lying in the same kind of a fence corner on the edge of a cornfield, his gun poked through between the rails. The roar of battle was around him, the enemy was in front of him. The latter came steadily on, raining lead and iron as they advanced. In vain he and his comrades struggled; in vain the hurtled shot and shrieking shell. The foe came on and on. The cries of the wounded and groans of the dying rose high and soul piercing above the din of battle. The enemy were now coming on in a run, close, nearer and nearer. Just then he felt a sharp pain in his side. He fell in one of the corn furrows, a bullet through his body, while the foe with one wild yell and crash of musketry plunged through the line of battle and trampled him into unconsciousness.

In the excess of his terror the boy awakes with the cold perspiration starting from every pore. The old sorrel, satiated with fence corner diet, has turned about into the corn, and after smashing down a half dozen hills finally stumbles over the somnolent youth.

* * * * * *

Do you believe in dreams?

If you do not, then s op right here.

For this is no fancy sketch. I was that boyish dreamer.

Now, there are dreams and dreams; those which leave not a wreck behind and those which leave an impression which time cannot easily efface. It was many a long day of twenty-four hours before I forgot that dream I have here briefly set down. Not that I supposed for an instant that it was to be in any way associated with my future life. I was but a farmer's lad. The great rebellion which followed six years later had probably not been even dreamed of by my elders. The idea that I would ever be a soldier had never crossed my youthful imagination. I was gorged with military and naval stories, but that I would ever bear musket and bayonet in battle no more occurred to me than it had occurred to me that I would wear steel corselet and breast plate and wield a battle ax.

Nevertheless, it so happened that war and all its horrors finally came to this land, and that I, in common with a million or so of others, bore arms in the field. My service was that of hundreds of thousands, north and south, that of a private soldier, inconspicuous. My experience was like theirs, not worth individual record. We simply marched and camped and occasionally fought, knowing not where we were going, why we camped, or whom we were fighting. There was no romance about it. Nothing but plain, hard, faithful work; work in which dreams had no part. I had, as I remarked, long forgotten those of boyhood.

One crisp December morning, after several days of desultory fighting under General Rosecrans, my command marched into the memorable battle of Stone River. We were on the extreme right in the first day's engagement, and were part and parcel of that unfortunate wing of the great army that was hurled back upon the center in disastrous confusion. We were reserves, brought forward to strengthen an attenuated and long drawn out line of battle already outflanked by the Confederate hordes. Marching across open ground by the right flank to our position under a galling fire which we could not return, it required all the nerve and discipline of tried soldiers to preserve formation; but we managed to do so, and were quickly advancing in line of battle across the fields, over fences and dead and wounded, to the support of our comrades already engaged. The last field we crossed to reach them was a cornfield, the stalks still standing, and we joined them at the rail fence on the farther side and were soon hotly at work.

To say that the enemy made it warm for us is stating it mildly. A perfect cloud of splinters arose from that line of fence. The range was point blank. Our batteries to the right and left and directly in the rear of us replied effectively with grape and canister so low that some of our own men were killed by these discharges. We were ordered to lie down, but some of the boys would get excited and reckless. We hadn't been there two minutes before half a dozen men in my company were killed outright and two dozen were wounded. The blood and slaughter and shrieks and yells and roar of musketry and artillery were awful! The terrible ring of those double shotted brass pieces behind us will sound in my ears to my dying day.

It was a living, breathing hell!

The gallant foe came steadily on in the face of this sweeping fire. We could see the buttons on their coats. Their officers rode backward and forward between the lines, waving swords on high. One of them was mounted on a snow white charger, a conspicuous mark for our rifles. He seemed to bear a charmed life. In common with many others, perhaps, I tried for him, without success.

It was my last shot. A rifle ball struck me in the left side and hurled me several feet backward, stunned and bleeding, in a furrow of the cornfield.

"My poor boy!" said a kindly voice at my side, "where is it? Are you badly hurt?" It was our major in the next furrow. He stretched his arm over and laid his hand tenderly upon me.

"Give 'm h—!" he hoarsely shouted, with quick repetition. His hand had sought and found mine, and the gentle pressure brought up the sweet memory of home and mother.

"Ammunition! We are out of ammunition!" The cry rose along the fence.

"My box, major—my box," said I, roused in a moment to the occasion. He understood and fumbled nervously at my belt.

"Have you a knife?"

"Reach in my pocket," I feebly replied.

He did so. It was a common pocket knife, with a large, keen blade. He cut at my belt. The sharp steel went through leather, overcoat, jacket, underclothes and skin. No matter. I knew it, felt it; but it seemed painless and unimportant.

The major flung the cartridge box, belt and all into the nearest group. In doing so he never removed his other hand from mine—the brave old soldier! His loud voice of command was one continuous cheer of encouragement. It rose upon my ears between the terrible ringing sound of the brasses behind us and the demoniacal scream of the flying frames of our grape and canister.

I saw my comrades pounce upon my cartridge box like so many terriers upon a rat, shaking and tearing it to pieces. Then I saw no more.

I was lying in the corn furrow on the old farm. The sorrel horse was cropping grass in the fence corner, while I stretched my boyish limbs upon the warm earth. The tall stalks nodded above me, and the rustling of many leaves soothed my senses. The yellow germs fell from the swaying tassels into my face. Here and there the virgin silk came forth like golden curls to stir my ripening imagination. I was terribly thirsty, and the well was across the meadow and over the hill. I could see my dirty face and spiky hair in the cold liquid depths. The brown moss clinging to the curbing was soothing to the eye. My thirst grew upon me, and yet, though I knew that well was only over there, I dared not go home at such an early hour for fear of parental displeasure. What a funny dream that was! To think that I would ever be a soldier! Well, well! Confound that old horse! He is dragging down the corn! He is—why, he will trample on me! And I'm asleep and cannot wake up! This is horrible!

A wild, mad rush, a trembling of the earth, a deafening roar, like that which accompanies the deadly cyclone.

The fence is swept down by the human blast as if it were built of toothpicks.

Those of our command who can run have fled before it.

"Goodby! God help you, my poor boy!" It was the last pressure of the major's hand.

Then the gray columns swept over us and I lay beaten into the corn furrows by a thousand rushing feet.—Charles Theodore Murray in Philadelphia Press.

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