National Tribune.

"To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans."

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BLOODY BALL'S BLUFF.

How that Unfortunate Battle Came to Be Fought.

THE PRELIMINARY STEPS.

Crossing of the Potomac at Harrison's Island.

WHERE BAKER FELL.

The Flight to the River and Subsequent Massacre.

[*By General Geo. H. Gordon.**]

The circumstances that gave rise to the battle of Ball's Bluff, and the main features of that massacre may be told in a few words.

General Charles P. Stone commanded what he called a corps of observation, on the Maryland side of the Potomac River. His pickets extended from the mouth of the Monocacy, on the north, to meet with those of Banks' division on the south. Stone occupied Poolsville as his headquarters. Between the 20th and 22d of October General McCall had advanced from the Army of the Potomac on the right bank of that river as far as Drainsville, his object being to ascertain the number and intentions of the enemy at Leesburg. In co-operating with this movement General Stone sent a large force to Edward's Ferry, and increased the command at Harrison's Island. At Edward's Ferry, three miles from Poolsville, Stone made a feint of crossing the river, on the 20th, at 1 o'clock p. m. Several boat-loads of troops crossed and recrossed, lines of troops were deployed on the Maryland shore, as if preparatory to embarkation, while batteries opened with shells upon a regiment of the enemy's infantry that appeared from the direction of Leesburg.

Between 6 and 7 p. m. of the same day, Lieutenant Church Howe, quartermaster of the Fifteenth Massachusetts regiment, commanded by Colonel Charles Devens, was seen crossing the river from Harrison's Island to the Maryland shore, where, mounting his horse, he galloped rapidly away in the direction of Edward's Ferry. At this time the island was occupied by one company of Colonel Devens' regiment, commanded by Captain Philbrick. From Poolsville to the Potomac opposite Harrison's Island is about five miles. From the Maryland to the Virginia shore at this point it is 4,290 feet, or a little over three-fourths of a mile. In the middle of the river is Harrison's Island; where the troops crossed it, it is about 1,650 feet in width; and this leaves for the river itself, between the Maryland shore and the island, a width of 1,320 feet; to the Virginia shore from the island the width is about the same.

OCCUPYING HARRISON'S ISLAND.

Earlier in the day, at about 2 p. m., Colonel Lee, commanding the Twentieth Massachusetts regiment in camp near Poolsville, received orders from General Stone to proceed with all his command, save a camp-guard, to the tow-path of the canal opposite Harrison's Island, where he would receive further orders. At 6 p. m. Colonel Lee, with 318 men, arrived at the place designated. About one hour (to wit, at 7 p. m.) after Lee's arrival, Colonel Devens, with four companies of his regiment, arrived at the same point, and immediately began throwing them over to the island. This was effected by a scow that carried forty men at a trip, and by a yawl that would hold eight or ten men besides the rowers. The scow was hauled across by a line. Up to this time troops had been moved with a general view of co-operating from Harrison's Island; but General Stone, in his official report, does not claim that any plan of action had been determined on, or that it was his intention to cross from there into Virginia. It probably was not. It is fair to assume that Quartermaster Church Howe initiated the movement. At 10 o'clock at night this officer reappeared at the tow-path opposite Harrison's Island, bearing dispatches from General Stone to Colonel Devens. These dispatches were unsealed, and as they came first by Colonel Lee, that officer read them by the light of a pine torch. Colonel Devens was ordered to cross from Harrison's Island into Virginia in the course of the night. Why and for what purpose appears from General Stone's official report, in which he says: "At 10 p. m. [it was probably a little earlier], Lieutenant Howe, quartermaster of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, reported that scouts under Captain Philbrick had returned to the Island, having been within one mile of Leesburg, and there discovered on the edge of the woods an encampment of thirty tents; that there were no pickets out; and that he (Captain Philbrick) approached to within twenty-five rods without being even challenged."

It is not known by whose orders this movement was made by Captain Philbrick. General Stone does not report that it was made by his. Was it through Church Howe's zeal? So far as it appears, so important a movement, one that involved such serious consequences, is without a responsible father.

OBJECTS OF THE MOVEMENT.

The order then continued: Colonel Devens would march silently under cover of night to the position of the camp referred to, attack and destroy it at daybreak, pursue the enemy lodged there as far as would be prudent, and return immediately to the island. Colonel Devens was further ordered to make close observations of the position, strength, and movements of the enemy; but in the event of there being no enemy there visible, to hold on in a secure position until he could be strengthened sufficiently to make a valuable reconnaissance. To replace the troops on Harrison's Island, thus to be used by Colonel Devens, Colonel Lee was ordered to cross his command over, and further to send 100 men to the Virginia side of the river, where he was to occupy the bluffs on its immediate shore, and cover the retreat of Colonel Devens, should he be obliged to fall back. Colonel Lee's whole command was 318 men. At the same time, apparently in contemplation of turning Devens' movement into a reconnaissance, orders were sent to Colonel Baker, commanding a regiment called the First California, to send that regiment to Conrad's Ferry, to arrive there at sunrise of the 21st, and have the remainder of his brigade ready to move early. The remainder of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel Ward, was also ordered to be on the tow-path of the canal opposite Harrison's Island at daybreak. Two mountain howitzers, in charge of Lieutenant French, of Ripley's battery, were also ordered to be at the same place at the same time. Towards morning of the 21st, Colonel Devens began to cross his five companies into Virginia. All told, his force numbered 350 men. The means available for crossing were two boats, one a metallic life-boat, capable of carrying ten or twelve men at a time; the other a common flat-bottomed boat, used for ducking purposes, and capable of holding from six to eight men if closely stowed.

THE CROSSING.

In two or three hours, Devens with his command had been transferred to the Virginia shore. Then Colonel Lee, with two companies, numbering 101 men, crossed for the duty designated in the order. It was about 5 o'clock in the morning of the 21st of October, and not yet daylight. From the water's edge the bluff rose at an angle of thirty degrees for 100 feet before reaching the plateau above. Climbing the zigzag foot-path, Colonel Lee reported to Devens that his command was in position. Directly in front, and less than two miles and a half away, was Leesburg. An indistinct cart-path, some ten or twelve feet in width, led towards it.

Along this path, through the woods, Devens started at once to execute his orders. Colonel Lee then covered his own front and flanks with small scouting parties, composed of a non-commissioned officer and two men to each. It was 7:30 a. m. when firing was heard on Lee's right rear,—a half dozen discharges—and a sergeant of the party came in wounded. A half an hour later a regular volley was heard in front, succeeded by an irregular fire, the whole being over in a few minutes, after which wounded men from Devens' command made their appearance on the cart-path, emerging from the woods in front. The attack upon Colonel Lee's scouting party and upon Colonel Devens' battalion was by a single company of the Seventeenth regiment Mississippi infantry, commanded by a Captain Duff. On the Saturday previous, this company, which had been on picket duty on the Virginia shore, had been sent to Harper's Ferry, and now, returning to resume its duty and reinstate the pickets, stumbled first upon the unexpected scouts of Lee, and while carefully reconnoitering, then plumped squarely upon Devens with his command in line, and fired, receiving the return volley described.

THE REBEL CAMP A MYTH.

Nothing more happened until about 9 o'clock, when Colonel Devens' battalion appeared, marching by flank. The command halted in the open space occupied by Colonel Lee, and there they remained about twenty minutes, when Devens said to Lee that he intended to return again to the front for the purpose of recovering his dead; saying which, he again at once disappeared, removing to his former position, which was between a half-mile and a mile from the bluff. Very early in the morning, before any firing had taken place, Devens had found that the scouts had been deceived as to an enemy's camp; in the uncertain light they had mistaken openings between trees for tents. Inasmuch, then, as Devens had not found the enemy he expected to find, he seems to have remained where he was, in pursuance of the final part of General Stone's order, "to hold on in a secure position until he could be strengthened sufficiently to make a valuable reconnaissance." Soon after, Quartermaster Church Howe again appeared upon the scene. Crossing from Harrison's Island and climbing the bluff, and saying that he came as one of General Stone's staff officers, he inquired of Colonel Lee about the position. Colonel Lee told him to report to General Stone that the troops ordered by him into Virginia had occupied the river shore; that they numbered about 400 men; that Colonel Devens had about thirty rounds of ammunition for each man, and that he (Lee) had forty rounds; that the troops were without subsistence; and that if the Government designed to fight a battle and occupy the Virginia shore permanently, reenforcements, with commissary and subsistence stores, were necessary. Howe desired Colonel Lee to go with him to see Devens, but that officer replied that his orders required him to hold the bluff to cover Devens' retreat, and that he could not leave; upon which Quartermaster Howe went to the front alone, but soon reappearing with an escort, recrossed the river.

LOOKING FOR THE ENEMY.

Howe reported to Stone, as soon as he could reach him, that Devens had found no enemy—meaning, probably, no tents—as reported, but that he had concealed his force in a piece of woods, and was examining the space between that and Leesburg. Stone at once ordered a non-commissioned officer with ten cavalrymen to report to Devens, "to scour the country." At the same time he ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Ward to cross into Virginia with the remaining companies of the Fifteenth regiment, "move to the right, on to Smart's mills, to protect Devens' flank" when he should return, and "secure a crossing more favorable than the first, and connected by a good road with Leesburg." As ordered, the cavalry,—numbering, however, only six men,—with Captain Candy, assistant adjutant-general on General Lander's staff, in command, came across the river and joined Lee on the bluff. At this time there had been no change in affairs. The cavalry, without performing its designated duty, having proceeded no further than the bluff, went back again to the Maryland side. By 8 o'clock in the morning, Major Revere, of the Twentieth Massachusetts regiment, had succeeded in getting the scow, that Devens had used as a transport from the Maryland shore to Harrison's Island, around the north part of the island, for use in transporting troops to the Virginia shore. This was of material aid in crossing the additional troops. It was now between 11:30 and 12 a. m. Some rations of hard bread and pork and fifty empty boxes had been sent to Colonel Lee. The officer who brought the boxes told the colonel they were to be filled with earth and laid up to form an intrenched position. Colonel Lee ordered the two mountain howitzers, under command of Lieutenant French, of Co. I, First United States artillery, to be sent over; and as they had been ordered to report to him on the 20th, and were then on Harrison's Island, they came immediately. Between 12:30 and 1 o'clock Lieutenant-Colonel Ward, with the remainder of the Fifteenth Massachusetts regiment, appeared on the Virginia bluff, and immediately proceeded to the front to join Devens, instead of executing the orders of General Stone.

COLONEL BAKER ORDERED TO THE FRONT.

We now return to Colonel Baker, who, having accompanied the California regiment to the tow-path off Harrison's Island, proceeded in person to Edward's Ferry, and reported to General Stone that the remainder of his brigade was ready to march. He was ordered to Harrison's Island to assume command. General Stone says in his report that he was "anxious to ascertain the exact position and force of the enemy in our front, and to explore as far as it was safe on the right towards Leesburg, and on the left towards Leesburg and the gum-spring road." Colonel Baker was to judge, so Stone says, of the sufficiency of the mode of crossing the river into Virginia with his command, which might consist, if he desired to use them, of all the troops under Devens and Lee, and in addition the guns of a section each of Vaughn's and Bunting's batteries, and all the troops of his own brigade. And General Stone continues: "I left it to his discretion, after viewing the ground, to retire from the Virginia shore under cover of his guns and the fire of the large infantry force, or to pass over re-enforcements in case he found it practicable, and the position on the other side favorable. If he passed artillery across the river, he was to see it supported by good infantry; and I pointed out to him the position of bluffs on this side the river from which artillery could act with effect on the other; and leaving the matter of crossing more troops or retiring what were already over to his discretion, I gave him entire control of operations on the right. This gallant and energetic officer left me about 9 a. m., or 9:30, and galloped off quickly to his command." And again says Stone: "Messengers from Harrison's Island informed me, soon after the arrival of Colonel Baker, that he was crossing his whole force as rapidly as possible, and that he had caused an additional flat-boat to be rafted from the canal into the river."*

HE ASSUMES COMMAND.

About 1 o'clock p. m., Colonel Baker made his appearance on the bluff, and inquired for Colonel Lee; to whom, as he was pointed out, he introduced himself as "Colonel Baker." "Have you reported to take command?" inquired Colonel Lee. "I have," Colonel Baker replied; and then added: "And I congratulate you, sir, on a battle upon the soil of Virginia." Colonel Baker then asked as to the whereabouts of Colonel Devens, and was told that he was half a mile or more in front of that position. Asking for a volunteer to communicate with him, a sergeant stepped out, and was sent off with a message directing Colonel Devens to fall back to the bluff. About this time one field-piece drawn by six horses (a piece of Rhode Island battery, in charge of Lieutenant Branhall of the Ninth New York battery) came upon the field. The gun was unlimbered, horses and limber passing to the rear, to the edge of the bluff, a distance of forty or fifty feet. Between 12 and 1 o'clock the enemy had appeared in some force in front of Devens, and a sharp skirmish had ensued. Being unsupported, the colonel had fallen back to a piece of woods about half a mile in front of Lee's position on the bluff, and there he remained unmolesed until he fell back, as ordered.

BAKER'S LINE OF BATTLE.

Colonel Baker, dismounting from his horse and hanging his cape-cloak upon a tree, now proceeded to form his line of battle. As the Fifteenth came in, moving by companies, he formed his right center on the north of the cart-path and parallel to it. It consisted of the Fifteenth Massachusetts regiment and one company of the Twentieth Massachusetts. A portion of this line, thrown back on its right at a right angle to the main body, consisting of three companies of the Fifteenth Massachusetts and the company of the Twentieth Massachusetts, was under the command of Major Kimball, of the Fifteenth. The six-pounder gun, with a portion of the Twentieth Massachusetts regiment and two companies of the California regiment, constituted the center; while a little in advance and perpendicular to the cart-path on its southerly side two other companies of the California regiment, two of the Forty-second New York, and one of the Twentieth Massachusetts, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Wistar, of the Californians, made the left wing in the line of battle. Three companies of the Twentieth Massachusetts regiment constituted the reserve; they were opposite the center and close to the edge of the bluff, and seven were in the fight. The mountain howitzers were placed on the right of the main body of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, under Colonel Devens. These dispositions made, Colonel Baker, turning to Lee, asked: "How do you like my line of battle?" "I think it should be made upon our left, on the brink of that ravine," replied Lee. To this suggestion Baker made no reply. A narrow and deep ravine, running diagonally from the direction of the cart-path towards the river, seemed not only to offer an impassable obstacle to the enemy, but somewhat served as a cover in case it became necessary to retire upon Edward's Ferry, where Stone was then operating. As Baker formed his line of battle the enemy could have come in between the brink of the ravine and our left wing. Since morning the enemy had been drawing nearer and nearer, feeling Baker's position and ascertaining his numbers. The skirmish with Devens, and a few shells fired from the heights on the Maryland shore, which reached his columns, did not retard his advance. It was now between half-past one and two p. m. This was the hour when the enemy came in on the front and right, the Eighth Virginia regiment immediately in the front, a battalion of the Thirtieth Mississippi and Cudworth's cavalry dismounted on the right. The cavalry numbered about three hundred. The Eighth Virginia came to the edge of the woods bordering the open space within which was formed the center of Baker's line of battle, and, halting, formed in line about two hundred and fifty feet from the line. The Virginians certainly, as well as the men of the Fifteenth Massachusetts regiment, and perhaps others, were armed with smooth-bore muskets.

THE BALL OPENS.

And so the battle commenced. It will be perceived that our line was in the form of a curtain, running towards the ravine, but not reaching it on the left, and terminating on the right in an angle, the face of which was formed by the Fifteenth Massachusetts, under command of Devens and Kimball. The six-pounder gun opened fire at once upon the Eighth Virginia; so did the supporting force of infantry, while at the same time Major Kimball opened fire on the Mississippians and the dismounted cavalry. The gun in the center was loaded and fired with energy, but being provided with neither grape nor canister it was almost useless. At an expenditure of moments most precious, boats had been used to bring to the field a field-piece and six horses, with a limber filled with James' percussion shells. Not an ounce of grape could be found, though Colonel Lee searched for it, as he was with his own hands conveying these shells to the gun. It was not fifteen minutes from the time the enemy made his appearance before every man at the field-piece, save one sergeant, had been shot down. So withering was the fire that the two companies of Californians supporting the right of the center lay down flat upon the ground. Entreaties, violence, and sword cuts by Colonel Baker and his officers could not prevail upon them; and so early in the action they went to the rear without participating in the fight. When they retreated, two companies of the reserve were ordered up to take their places and support the gun. They came, and in a few moments officers and men were nearly destroyed; they were of the Twentieth Massachusetts. While this contest was going on in the center, Major Kimball on the right had been obliged to fall back. On the left Lieutenant Colonel Wistar had been wounded, and the fight was progressing languidly on our side, being continued by detached companies. Our ammunition was giving out; some men of the Twentieth were supplying themselves from the cartridge-boxes of the slain. The enemy now showed himself in strong numbers on our left. The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Mississippi and a battallion of the Thirteenth Mississippi came into line of battle parallel to the south brink of the ravine and near its edge, and here they opened a destructive fire. At the same time the Eighth Virginia advanced out of the wood, in line of battle, upon Baker's center, and the Mississippians and Cudworth's dismounted cavalry pressed up on his right. The Union troops were in a square, the front, right, and left sides of which were held by the enemy, while directly in their rear was the steep bluff, falling to a swollen and unfordable river. It was now that Colonel Lee said to Colonel Baker: "Sir, the day is going hard with us." To which Colonel Baker replied: "The battle is lost, sir."

HOW BAKER FELL.

Then, as if unwilling to survive it, this brave man moved forward to the front, down the cart-path, or nearly on its line; and there, in the front of the left of his line, he fell riddled with bullets. So near was he to the Eighth Virginia regiment that Colonel Lee saw a tall officer step out to within ten paces and deliver with his pistol his fire at Colonel Baker's head; at the same time, from a squad, a volley of musketry was fired at him, when he fell to rise no more. As some of the Californians carried his body to the rear Colonel Lee saw the place on the side of his head where the pistol shot of the officer had taken effect. He was carried across the river into Maryland. After the death of Colonel Baker Colonel Lee conferred with Devens and Major Revere, and one or two other officers. What was to be done? There seemed to be no answer; so Colonel Lee, as commanding officer, took upon himself the responsibility, and gave orders to fall back upon the river shore, under the bluff. But at this moment Captain Hardy, the assistant adjutant-general of Colonel Baker, appeared with Colonel Cogswell. Colonel Cogswell, commanding a Tammany regiment of Baker's brigade, had managed to cross during the fight, and now, claiming to be the ranking officer among the survivors, directed an attempt to be made to open communication with Edward's Ferry. Colonel Lee instantly acceded, saying it was no time to discuss rank, that he would obey Colonel Cogswell's orders; and orders were then given to move by the left flank. About two hundred men—being portions of the Fifteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts regiments, and of the Forty-second New York—obeyed the order; but when they arrived at the brink of the ravine they received a volley at short range from one of the Mississippi regiments in line on the opposite brink, and they fell back to the place from whence they started. And now the Eighth Virginia regiment slowly advanced. The few Union troops that had preserved their formation were formed in line of battle to oppose them. Colonel Lee, with ten or twelve officers, and between twenty and thirty men, fell back to the riverside, down the bluff. The enemy instantly rushed forward to the edge of the bluff, where, without any obstacle, their fire commanded the passage of the river. The bank was lined with the dead and wounded. Boats filled with wounded were still passing from the Virginia shore to Harrison's Island; and these boats were a scow, the life-boat, and a little ducking boat. The whole of them were capable of carrying at one time from forty-six to fifty men.

THE MASSACRE BEGINS.

Hardly had this scene opened to the enemy, when, with yells of exultation, they piled horror upon horror. They fired volley after volley into the struggling wretches who had leaped into the chilling waters of the Potomac; they riddled the scow, filled as she was with dead and dying,—they riddled it with bullets, and it sank, with its dying and its dead, in the middle of the stream. Crossing the river from the Island, empty and sculled by a single oarsman, the metallic life-boat met their gaze; the oarsman was instantly shot, and the boat drifted idly down the stream. There was nothing left but the little ducking boat, and that was now useless. To swim, surrender, or die, alone remained. "With a devotion worthy the cause they were serving," says General Stone in his official report, "officers and men, while quarter was being offered to such as would lay down their arms, stripped themselves of their swords and muskets, and hurled them out into the river to prevent their falling into the hands of the foe, and saved themselves as they could by swimming, floating on logs, and concealing themselves in the bushes of the forest, to make their way up and down the river-bank to a place of crossing." Devens escaped by swimming. Colonel Lee, in attempting to make his way up the river, was, with Major Revere and some of his other officers, captured in the woods, in the middle of the night, by the enemy's cavalry. Taken to Leesburg, he there found himself in the presence of the rebel commander who had whipped him,—a General N. G. Evans, of South Carolina, a graduate of West Point, familiarly known as Shanks Evans from the peculiar formation of his legs, which were very knock-kneed.

A CURIOUS MEETING.

Colonel Lee says it was hard to tell which of the two, Cogswell or Evans, both having been old friends in the old army, was the more overcome at the meeting. Evans had invited his unwilling guest to join him in a convivial draught of peach brandy, and Cogswell was saying to his conqueror, "I tell ye, Shanks, sha'n't take my parole on any such terms; I'll see you d——d first, Shanks." General Evans had offered to release Colonel Cogswell if he would sign a parole not to fight again during the war, and this the colonel was refusing to do. Owing to the peach brandy, the refusal was given in strong terms. Colonel Lee also, but more politely, rejected Evans' offer. So our prisoners went to Richmond, to be afterwards exchanged. If Colonel Lee could have found anything to float on, or if the raft which he and his officers tried to buckle together with their belts would have floated, they might have escaped without trouble. The loss in killed in this fight has never been accurately ascertained; a large number were shot in the river while trying to swim. The report of the rebel commander gives as their number engaged 3,500 men, being four regiments of infantry and a battalion of cavalry. Colonel Lee's memorandum of the forces engaged on our side, taken as they came up and reported on the bluff for duty, was 1,603 men. Five hundred and twenty, including the wounded, were captured. The battle lasted from two p. m. until ten minutes before six, at which time Colonel Lee ordered his command to retire down the bank.

ALL A BLUNDER.

It does not seem necessary to spend much time in conclusions. The means of transportation from the Maryland shore to the Island, and from thence to the Virginia shore, I have given. With such means not over 300 an hour could have been added to our force under the most favorable circumstances; how much less with the returning wounded and the depression of probable defeat! General Stone says in his comments: "The forwarding of artillery before its supporting force of infantry also impeded the rapid assembling of an imposing force on the Virginia shore. If the infantry had first crossed, a difference of 1,000 men would have been made in the line at the time of attack, probably enough to have given us the victory. If any officers or men were charged with the duty of insuring the regular passage of troops, it was not performed; for the re-enforcements, as they arrived, found no one in command of the boats, and great delays were occasioned."

Colonel Baker expiated his fault with his life. He was a brave and energetic man. As a Senator in the United States Senate from Oregon, he had deemed it necessary to make public speeches upon the conduct of the war. From the Pacific to the Atlantic he had condemned the slowness of McClellan's movements, and criticised what he interpreted to be his disinclination to fight. Full of courage and of vanity, he lost sight of the elements which make success possible in such undertakings as he lent himself to achieve. But just returned from a confidential interview with President Lincoln, where he had expressed himself as in entire sympathy with the President's feelings at the manner in which McClellan was delaying, and held out hopes that should an opportunity offer he would startle the country with what a fighting commander could accomplish, he saw opening before him his opportunity. The large powers intrusted to him by General Stone he never thought of using other than for a fight, and when, too late, he saw his error, he expiated it with his life. Would that some others had done likewise, and that the enemy had captured their commissions as major-general, as Baker's was captured when his cape-overcoat was found hanging on a tree, at the time his body was lying stark and stiff in Maryland!

*From his admirable history, "From Brook Farm to Cedar Mountain in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-'62," just published by James R. Osgood & Co., Boston. General Gordon was the first colonel of the Second Massachusetts volunteer infantry, and he describes in this work the operations in the Valley of the Shenandoah during the first two years of the war in a very graphic style. It is a book that ought to be in every soldier's library.

*To take the place of the one removed by Major Revere to the west side of the island during the night.

HOW RENO FELL.

Shot by Mistake by a Frightened Union Soldier Instead of the Enemy.

To the Editor NATIONAL TRIBUNE:

Palfrey, in his "Antietam and Fredericksburg," quotes General D. H. Hill as saying of General Reno, that he was "a renegade Virginian, killed by a happy shot from the Twenty-third North Carolina." As I was an orderly of Reno's at the time of the battle of South Mountain, I am well acquainted with the circumstances of his death, and am able to state with confidence that General Reno was not killed by a Confederate, but by one of our own men—a terror-stricken member of either the Twentieth Michigan or Ferrero's brigade, which brigade about this time relieved that part of the front line where he fell. The circumstances were these: About dusk, the firing on this portion of the line, which was on the left of the turnpike, having ceased, and the battle apparently being over, General Reno, accompanied by his headquarters surgeon and one orderly, rode to the front, a few rods distant. On coming up to the line, which they found posted along an old fence in the edge of the woods, they turned to the left and rode closely along it, when a soldier suddenly wheeled around, and with an exclamation of "Rebel cavalry!" aimed his musket at them. In vain the orderly cried out: "Don't fire!" The man discharged his piece, and the ball struck Reno in the lower part of the chest. The general immediately dismounted, remarking as he did so, that he was wounded, and, he feared, badly. The orderly immediately ran back after a stretcher, and one being procured, the general was carried a few rods to the rear. By this time it was quite dark, but by the light of a candle it was seen that General Reno was breathing his last. At the time he was shot I was but a few rods to his left, having just returned from a point several rods in advance of our line without finding any of the enemy save their dead and wounded. General Reno's staff were well satisfied at the time that he was killed by one of our own men through mistake, but ordered us orderlies to say nothing about it and keep it quiet. But for meeting a few months ago Orderly Martin Fecken, who was with Reno and witnessed his death, and who is now a prominent bank official in New York, with whom I had a long conversation on the subject, I should probably never have made these facts known; but twenty years, I think, is long enough to keep this secret. The army never knew a braver nor more gallant officer than Major-General Jesse L. Reno.

A. H. WOOD,
Late Sergeant, Co. L, 6th N. Y. Cav.
PAINTED POST, STEUBEN Co., N. Y.

The Maiden Speech of Congressman Flower.

[*Address before Barnes Post, Gouverneur, N. Y.*]

In looking forward we must not forget the past. It was my duty while in Congress to present a claim for a widow whose husband was twice wounded on the field of battle, and who afterwards died of his wounds. Some link in the chain of testimony was wanting, owing to the soldier being taken prisoner after he was wounded. My maiden speech in Congress was made in behalf of that soldier's widow. I told the House that, in the hour of our country's peril, when the old flag was being trampled in the dust and the Union about to be dissevered, the Government had called for volunteers and promised that their widows and children should be the wards of the Nation; that this soldier could no longer remind them of their promise—his voice was hushed in death; that his widow bade me speak for her and ask a pension for herself and his children. It was granted her by a unanimous vote.

THE GRIERSON RAID.

Piercing the Heart of the Southern Confederacy.

THE POOR WHITE TRASH.

An Amusing Interview With Some Conscripts' Wives.

A TIMELY WARNING.

Saved from an Attack by a Scout's Cunning.

[*By R. W. Surby, Battle Creek, Mich.*]

III.

We left camp the next morning—the 9th day—at 8 o'clock a. m., but our progress was impeded by bad roads. The country was thinly settled, the streams were swollen from recent rains, and in some instances we had to swim our horses. Being considerably in advance with a portion of my men, I stopped at a plantation on which was a double log-house. On approaching the stoop, I was met by seven women, who betrayed in their countenances some uneasiness. The cause was soon explained. I inquired if there were any men about, and with one voice they all replied: "No, sir; our husbands are all in the army at Vicksburg." "And so, ladies, you are all married," I exclaimed. "Yes, sir; is there anything strange about that?" "Oh, no;" I replied, laughing, "only it is odd to see so many married ladies at one house, living so far apart." To this they responded that they had met to sympathize with each other. I asked for a drink of milk. They had none, but brought some water, which we accepted with thanks. An old lady wanted to know how soon this cruel war was going to end, and I concluded to utter a few Union sentiments, to see with what effect they would be received. So I told her that I thought it would stop just as soon as the old stars and stripes floated triumphantly over all the South. Looking at me with great surprise pictured in her countenance, she said: "I always did like the old flag, and I think this war is all wrong; and if it had not been for these big larned folks, we'd all be living in peace. There's my husband, he'd no lawsuits in court, and minded his own business, and had nothing to do with starting this war; but they had to come and conscript him and take him off to Vicksburg, and I don't know as I'll see him again. After living together thirty-six years, to be parted in this way." The tears trickled down her cheeks as she continued: "I suppose you are conscripting. Well, you'll find no men around here; you'd better conscript all the women, too; we have no one left to care for us. We are too poor to own blacks." By this time I began to think that some love for the old Union still survived in the South, and finally I asked the old lady what she thought about the "Yanks."

WHAT SHE THOUGHT ABOUT THE YANKS.

"Well," says she, "we've hearn a heap about them that wasn't good, and a heap about them that was right smart in their favor." "Well, now, madam, don't you think we are Yankees?" I had not more than finished the last sentence, when she exclaimed: "Now, young man, just stop that thar kind of talk; I aint going to be fooled in that thar way. You aint no Yanks, and you can't make me believe it; and I aint going to tell you a word about where the men are." By this time the column had come in sight, and I beckoned the old lady to me, and, pointing to it, told her they were all Yankees and that we were Yankees, too! The old lady was really astonished, and the rest of the women were so scared that they did not know what to do. Some commenced praying and some cried, while others wanted to know if they were safe, and if we would protect them. As soon, however, as they found that no harm was intended, they became sociable and communicative, invited us into the house, and placing upon the table an abundance of pies, bread, butter and milk, told us to help ourselves. While doing so, the old lady was pulling out a chest from under the bed, and soon displayed to us a good-sized flag—the dear old flag for which we were fighting. This satisfied me that the old lady was all right on the Union question. One of the other ladies now expressed a wish that "John and William" knew what we were, and declared they would soon come out of the brush, if they did. We left the old lady and her friends in the best of humor. As I journeyed on I thought of these poor white folks of the South—how deficient they were in knowledge of the geography of our country, its population and resources. Lacking free schools in which to educate their children, and the means to send them from home, they allowed the young generation to grow up in ignorance. I remember that a pretty girl of eighteen summers remarked, one day while we were passing: "Why, ma, they all look like we'uns do!"

TAKEN BY SURPRISE.

We passed through Pineville—a small place—at noon and stopped at a plantation. The proprietor was absent—about a mile from the house—with his slaves, cultivating corn. I was sent to ask him to come to the house, and found him seated on a stump, (a large leather-bound whip in his hand,) from which he was overseeing about twenty-five male and female negroes. I approached him and passed the time of day. He did not seem at all suprised to see me, and at once asked what success I had had in "hunting," and how Pemberton was getting along at Vicksburg. I answered that I thought the latter place was safe from the whole Northern army; but, as for "hunting," or conscripting, I was not on that kind of business. I told him there was a large force at the house, and his presence was needed there. He called on an old negro, and, having given him his whip, instructed him what to do, and we started for the house. While on the way, he wanted to know whose command I belonged to and where we were going. I told him we belonged to "Williams'" command, late from Tennessee, but now from Jackson, Miss., and were in quest of commissary stores and picking up deserters. As we came in sight of his barn he was astonished at the spectacle of so many troops; and what worried him the most was that they had all helped themselves, without asking his permission, to his corn and fodder, for he had none to spare, although he thought the Confederate vouchers good enough, and was willing to take his share. He remarked to me how well the men were dressed, how healthy they looked, and what fine arms they had, and I told him that we were the best equipped cavalry in the Confederate service; that we had been in several battles and captured the most of our arms and clothing. I entered the house with him, not letting him have an opportunity to talk with his wife, and ushered him into the room occupied by Colonel Grierson and his officers. I introduced the colonel to him as Colonel Williams, from Jackson, and intimated that our friend could give information of deserters, conscripts, and provisions. As a matter of fact, we did obtain important information from this planter.

PUNISHED FOR TRYING TO RUN AWAY.

During the halt at the plantation some of the boys found a negro imprisoned in a log hut, with manacles fastened about both ankles, and a chain attached, fastened to a ring in the floor. The colonel had the irons cut off, and the negro's ankles, I assure you, presented a sickening sight; the flesh was worn off to the bone. The rings that went around the ankles were one inch in thickness, and, with the chain, weighed about twenty-five pounds. The poor fellow was very grateful, and never once complained about his scars. He accompanied us through to Baton Rouge. The offense for which he was thus punished was that of trying to run away.

Just as the shades of night began to set in we went into camp on the plantation of Dr. D——. Information had been obtained through the scouts that a force of rebs was making its way from Mobile to intercept us. It was necessary that we should know something about their movements, and Colonel Grierson, after a consultation, decided to send out a scout. Samuel Nelson (my right-hand man) was ordered to report at 9 o'clock p. m., when he was instructed to proceed due north thirty miles to Forest Station and cut the telegraph line between Jackson and Meridian, on the Southern Railroad, and, if successful, to bring back a piece of the wire as proof. If he had time to fire the bridge before daylight, he was to do so; but if not, he was to return to the command. After being supplied with a quantity of Confederate money, Samuel started on his perilous journey. When he had proceeded sixteen miles he met a force of rebel cavalry about eighteen hundred strong, and, having been halted, was asked who he was, and what he was doing there. He told them that he had been pressed in by the "Yanks" and compelled to guide them; that they had kept him two days, releasing him the day before on parole, and that he was then on his way to a friend at Forest Grove. He was then asked what force the Yankees had, and where he had left them. He replied that he left them the day before at noon near Garlandville; that their force was about 2,000 men, well mounted and equipped. He was next asked what was the nearest route to Garlandville, and what road the Yankees had taken from there. Sam. told them that they had gone in the direction of the Mobile Railroad, and had left before he did. The rebs appeared satisfied with the information, and allowed him to go his way. When Sam thought they had gone far enough he turned about and retraced his steps about a mile; then, taking a right-hand road, he pressed in a darkey as guide and reached camp about five o'clock a. m. The valuable information which he brought was at once conveyed to Colonel Grierson, who decided on evacuating immediately. "Boots and saddles" was sounded, and the command moved out at once. It was a fortunate thing that this scout was sent out; otherwise, a force would have been upon us by daylight that might have given us a great deal of trouble. As it afterwards turned out they were thrown two days in our rear. The telegraph project was, of course, abandoned.

[*To be continued.*]

CORPS BADGES.

The First Order Directing them to Be Worn by Officers and Men.

The following is the first order issued in the United States Army directing the wearing of corps badges by officers and soldiers:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
March 21, 1863.

CIRCULAR.

For the purpose of ready recognition of corps and divisions of the army, and to prevent injustice by reports of straggling and misconduct through mistake as to their organizations, the chief quartermaster will furnish, without delay, the following badges, to be worn by the officers and enlisted men of all the regiments of the various corps mentioned. They will be securely fastened upon the center of the top of the cap. The inspecting officers will at all inspections see that these badges are worn as designated:

First Corps—a sphere; red for First division; white for Second; blue for Third.
Second Corps—a trefoil; red for First division; white for Second; blue for Third.
Third Corps—a lozenge; red for First division; white for Second; blue for Third.
Fifth Corps—a Maltese cross; red for First division; white for Second; blue for Third.
Sixth Corps—a cross; red for First division; white for Second; blue for Third.
Eleventh Corps—a crescent; red for First division; white for Second; blue for Third.
Twelfth Corps—a star; red for First division; white for Second; blue for Third.

By command of Major-Gen'l HOOKER.
S. WILLIAMS, A. A. G.

The sizes and colors were indicated in the order by paper patterns, pasted on a fly-leaf. The corps badges were not used in the other corps of the army until later. The corps badge of the Twentieth Army Corps, under Hooker, was designed to embrace those of the Eleventh and Twelfth, of which corps it was composed,—a crescent and star,—but the star was finally adopted.

And Still He Kept on Smoking.

[*From the Buffalo Truth.*]

Among the Grand Army men of Buffalo there is none who stumps around with greater persistency or more devotion to business that Jacob Schenkelberger, the genial keeper of the concert hall on Main and Virginia streets. His place will be the headquarters of two hundred singing brethren during the coming week, and to prevent any of them asking how it is that he trots around with a cane, *Truth* will tell a little story about him. Jake went out with Weidrich's Battery, "I," of the First New York artillery, as second lieutenant, in January, 1862, having raised the battery from 100 to 150 men. Having joined the army of the Potomac he went with his battery through eight engagements. At the second battle of Bull Run, while putting in his best licks for the Union, a shell exploded right in front of him and shattered his left leg. While he lay wounded he found a cigar in one of his pockets, and lit it with a piece of fuse. He was smoking it with as much comfort as was possible under the circumstances when Dr. J. B. Green, of Providence, came up with the medical staff, and having obtained a door from the Stone House, placed him upon it and proceeded to take off his leg. Jake laid his cigar on the fence while the operation was being performed, and took it up when it was over. When the army fell back he was placed in an ambulance and taken to Alexandria. There he lay in the hospital, among a host of other wounded, and was reported as dead at Buffalo. His wife went South to look for him, found him, and had him removed to more satisfactory quarters, where, much to the surprise of everybody, he recovered. There were few men as desperately wounded as he was—with a limb removed five inches from the hip joint—who pulled through.