

# THE OLD GREY EAGLE.

## An Interesting Letter Regarding Maj. Gen. R. H. Milroy's Swords.

The \$1000 Blade Presented to the "Patriot and True Soldier."—Other Swords.

OLYMPIA, March 1. At the corner of Main and Twelfth streets is the home of Major General R. H. Milroy, "The Old Grey Eagle of Indiana." Having heard of the beautiful sword presented to him at Winchester, I called one afternoon and asked to see it. Kind Mrs. Milroy, whose affection and admiration for her warrior husband are lovely to behold, readily acceded to my wish and brought forth for my interest, not only the many trophies of war carefully preserved by her loving hands, but such a store of anecdotes, pathetic, laughable and heroic, as would fill a volume. Now let us tell you what memory and space will permit of that delightful visit.

And first, as a foundation, a few facts in regard to the General's life. He was born June 16, 1816, in what was then Indiana territory. At the time of his birth, his father, General Samuel Milroy, was absent as a delegate to the constitutional convention called to form a state constitution. Years afterwards, when that constitution was to be amended, the son, General Robert Milroy, was chosen to take part in the work. He entered college at 22, and afterwards studied law. Three others who became distinguished men were examined with himself for admittance to the supreme court of the state. They were Senator Dan Voorhees, Oliver P. Morton and General Lew Wallace. The General takes much pleasure in telling this story of the famous author of Ben Hur.

"Lew" was not a brilliant scholar, as was evinced by the fact that this was his third trial for admittance to the court. His later intellectual activity is believed to be largely due to the influence and example of his accomplished wife. However, he was determined to get through this time if it took all night, "and it did take nearly that time," adds the General. One after another the applicants finished their work and passed out, but young Wallace still sat poring over his papers. He strung out long and elaborate answers to every question, hoping, he said, that something in them would be pertinent to the subject. Finally, late at night, or in early morning, his task was accomplished and successfully.

With the breaking out of the Mexican war, Mr. Milroy promptly raised a company, of which he was made captain. On the night before their departure, the whole town flocked to the court house to bid farewell to the gallant volunteers. One of the ceremonies was the presentation of a flag made by the ladies of the village. Let Mrs. Milroy tell the story: "It happened that I was selected to present the flag. I was only a little acquainted with the General then, though his sister and I were great friends. The court house was crowded and I had to step out before them all and present the flag with a little speech. 'Wahash! Invincible! I am deputed by the ladies of Delphi to present to you this flag as a testimonial of our regard and admiration for the alacrity with which you have responded to the call of our beloved country. Go, then, and our prayers go with you, for your health and safe and honorable return to dear friends and loved homes. Farewell!' " Fancy what a momentous occasion it must have been to the fair-haired, brown-eyed girl, that after more than forty years she can repeat the exact words of that touching little address!

And so the tall young captain strode away to Mexico, no doubt with tender thoughts of that patriotic maiden tucked away down in the bottom of his manly heart. At any rate, not long after his return from the scorched plains of Mexico, where burning sun and deadly disease reduced his company to a handful and his own body to a skeleton, the two were made one and "lived happy ever after." Of General Milroy's career in the war of the Rebellion, I shall speak only in connection with the swords which were at various times presented to him.

And first of the famous thousand dollar blade which was the object of my visit. The inscription on the scabbard tells the history: "Presented to Major General R. H. Milroy by the Twenty-fifth Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry, as a testimonial of their respect for him as a patriot and true soldier. May, 1863." Below the inscription are ranged the names of various battles in which General Milroy engaged: Chest Mountain, Green River, Alleghany Summit, McDowell, Cross Keys, Cedar Mountain, Rapidan, Rappahannock and Bull Run. The whole scabbard was of silver with gold trimmings, and has the initials R. H. M. set in gold and diamonds on an oval ground of black onyx. In another place is a medallion representing the head of George Washington. The sword encased by this magnificent scabbard is of Damascus steel, with a gold and silver hilt studded with six rubies and wrought in gold figures, the center one winged and represented as crowning a soldier on each side. The hand piece bears the coat of arms of Indiana.

Beside the dress scabbard is a service scabbard, gilt with silver trimmings, bearing three figures, Excelsior, the Goddess of Liberty and the coat of arms of the United States. The scabbard is of heavy, old gold silk and the belt of red leather and gold thread. A little obscure on this belt shows where a shell struck it when, on one occasion, it was being worn by an orderly. The letter accompanying this gift speaks in the highest terms of the General's bravery and patriotism. An example of his enthusiasm and foresight is preserved in the call for volunteers, issued by him two months

before the storming of Fort Sumter. "Folks thought he was crazy," said the old lady, laughing. Another interesting document is a proclamation issued January 5, 1863, in which General Milroy gave notice of the freedom to slaves proclaimed by President Lincoln five days before, and declaring his intention to enforce the edict. On the margin of this paper are a few lines in pencil telling "Dear Mary" what an excitement this publication had created among the "F. V.'s." One paper bore the startling, "Hail to the Chief!" It was a call on the loyal citizens of Indiana to turn out and welcome back the "Old Grey Eagle" to the home of his boyhood, dated November 11, 1863. By the way, this title, which has always clung to him, was first bestowed by a member of his regiment, a distinguished lawyer.

Three other swords are among the relics. One presented by the loyal citizens of Shelbyville and Bedford county, Tennessee, February 22, 1865, bears on its blade the words, "Be just and fear not." Another was presented at Winchester, Va., March, 1863, by the officers of his command. Last is the sword in a huge iron scabbard, presented in April, 1861, by Governor O. P. Morton, which was carried in twenty-one battles.

Like all heroes, the General had his worshippers who showed their devotion by naming their children for him. One couple living in Telahama, Tenn., not only named their baby boy for him, but presented him, in honor thereof, with a pair of handsome silver spurs, each set with four carbuncles. Another gift presented on such an occasion was two nests of mocking birds. Last of these treasures that I will mention was a curious little flag, knit of red, white and blue yarns by the General's only daughter, long since dead. Before leaving the subject, I must speak of the old, iron-gray war horse, Jasper, which carried General Milroy through so many battles. It was presented to him, at the opening of the war, by the citizens of Jasper county, Indiana. In the midst of a great concourse of people at Indianapolis, the presentation speech was delivered by a "big tall Methodist minister," who quoted that stirring passage from Job, "He smelleth the battle from afar," etc. At the battle of Cross Keys, Jasper was wounded, and ever after could not bear the sound of musketry. He died only a short time since at the old home in Indiana. And now that those active and eventful years are over, the hero of two wars and many battles, with his life's companion by his side, is passing through quiet and peaceful years upon our placid shores. A man of unrepachable integrity and undaunted courage, stern but kind, enthusiastic to rashness, and modest to timidity,—all honor to the "Old Grey Eagle of Indiana."—Seattle Budget.

### The Hungry Brigade.

Hon. John B. Allen is paying the penalty of his peculiarity by receiving and attempting to answer a perfectly anonymous mail. A friend of his remarked the other day that the mail budget, consisting of papers containing marked complimentary notices and letters begging for places, was simply terrific. He said: "It seems to me that every republican in the United States is after something, and it is interesting to note the characters of these letters. Some are couched in language very matter-of-fact, naming the office wanted and demanding it as a right and in a no-getting-around-it air, just as if the writer had written it, sealed it, and slipped it down on the desk with a bang, as though that matter was entirely settled. Others are less pompous and deferential. Others, after a recital of their party services, ask if it is possible after all they have done, that their claims will be ignored. Then again come those beseeching and begging for any kind of an office—the appeal being prefaced by the story that the writer is on the verge of starvation on account of money spent in the canvass that, while it ended so victoriously for you, would hardly have been accomplished, in my district at least, had I not given it my entire and assiduous attention."

### Food to be Taken With Fingers.

At an official dinner a few nights ago a distinguished society belle from New York, one of McAllister's four hundred, was observed to handle the wing of a chicken with her fingers, and afterward daintily nibbled a "drumstick" in the same way, without the use of a knife or fork. Some of the cabinet and administration ladies, only one of whom belong to the four hundred, looked marveled at this and thought it showed "lack of breeding." The one authority, Mrs. Whitney, remarked that the action of the lady was in perfect good form. The list of things that may be eaten from the fingers is on the increase. It includes all breads, toasts, tarts and small cakes, celery, and asparagus, when served whole, as it should be, either hot or cold; lettuce, which must be crumpled in the fingers and dipped in salt or sauce; olives, to which a fork should never be put any more than a knife should be used on raw oysters; strawberries, when served with the stems on, as they should be, are touched to pulverized sugar; cheese in all forms, except Brie or Roquefort or Camembert, and fruit of all kinds, except pears and melons. The latter should be eaten with a spoon or fork. In the use of the fingers greater indulgence is being shown, and you cannot, if you are well bred, make any very bad mistake in this direction, especially when the finger bowl stands by you and the napkin is handy.—Washington Post.

### Cause to Feel Unhappy.

Do Bigby—What makes you so down in the mouth, Bigby? Bigby (with a long drawn sigh)—Addition to father's family last night. Do Bigby—Then why the deuce are you so giddy? Was it a boy or a girl? Bigby—Neither. Miss Recusant became my sister. —All styles of job printing at the Herald office.

# STATE OF WASHINGTON.

## A Brief History of its Discovery and Progress.

### A Wonderful Country That Has Made Gigantic Strides and Forced the Notice of the World.

The first white man who probably saw what is now Washington territory was Juan de Fuca, a Greek navigator, who, in the year 1592, sailed in a Spanish vessel from San Blas, Mexico, to fortify the supposed straits of "Anian," an imaginary channel connecting the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, so as to prevent the English from passing through this channel from one ocean to another. The northwest passage having turned out to be a myth, the country ceased to attract further attention, and it was nearly two hundred years before the eye of a white man rested upon these shores. In July, 1776, Captain Cook made Point Flattery, and in June, 1788, Captain Meares of the British navy made a limited reconnaissance of the straits of Fuca, and from that time until 1805 a number of exploring expeditions by sea were made by celebrated navigators, including Vancouver, although nothing was seen of the interior. In the latter year the American exploring expedition followed the Columbia river to its headwaters in the Rocky mountains, arriving at its mouth at Cape Disappointment in November, 1805, after a hazardous journey of 3,000 miles through an unknown hostile Indian country. The country being thus visited and reported on by English and American explorers, both countries claimed sovereignty over the great northwestern domain, the conflict being temporarily adjusted in 1818 by a treaty between the United States and Great Britain permitting a joint occupation by citizens of both nations. Up to 1834, the Hudson Bay Company and Northwest Company, both British corporations, continued practically in possession of the territory. In 1834 the missionary settlements followed the Columbia river to its headwaters in the Rocky mountains, arriving at its mouth at Cape Disappointment in November, 1805, after a hazardous journey of 3,000 miles through an unknown hostile Indian country. 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