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Humorous incidents of the Civil War

McLeary

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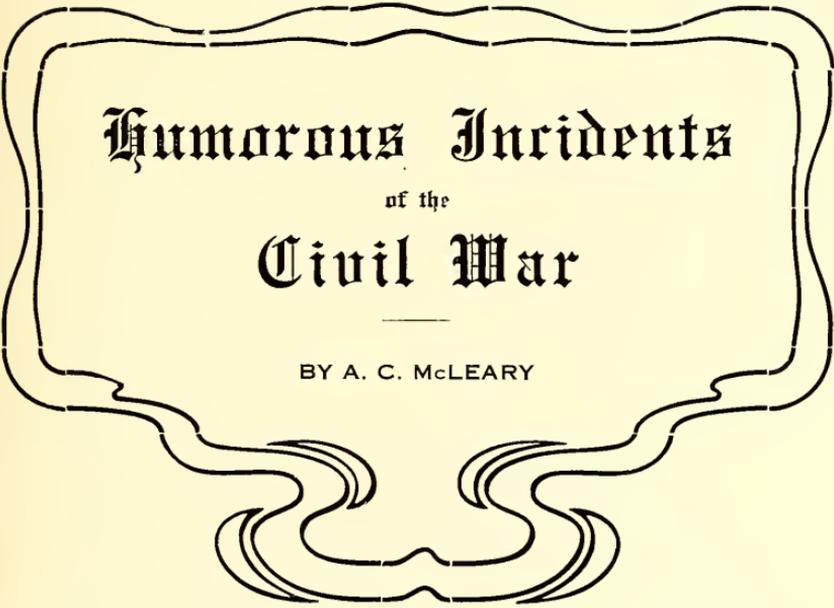


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Humorous Incidents
of the
Civil War

BY A. C. McLEARY

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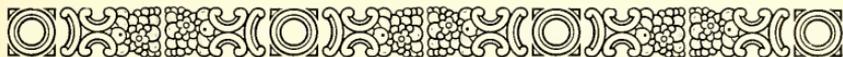


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A. C. M'LEARY AND WIFE IN 1902.





Humorous Incidents of the Civil War

The Experience of a Young Private Confederate Soldier



I AM requested by the Daughters of the Confederacy to write a part of my experience as a Confederate soldier of the Civil War. When the war began I was not old enough to know what to be mad about, hence I did not get into my fighting clothes until the first of July, 1863. I will not try to tell of all the Yankees I killed; but I can safely say, as "Bill Arp" did when he got back home: "Well, I killed as many of them as they did of me."

We lived near town (Humboldt), and while the Yankees were stationed there some of them were at our house almost every day. In fact, we had a guard who stayed with us three or four months. He was a great protection to us. He and I and many others played checks a great deal. I beat all I played with except one, a Captain Young.

After they left Humboldt I joined Bennett's company of cavalry. We soon raised a battalion, and afterwards we were consolidated with the Twelfth Tennessee Regiment, and after Hood's Middle Tennessee raid we were consolidated with Forrest's old regiment, and in May, 1865, we surrendered at Gainesville, Ala., as that regiment.

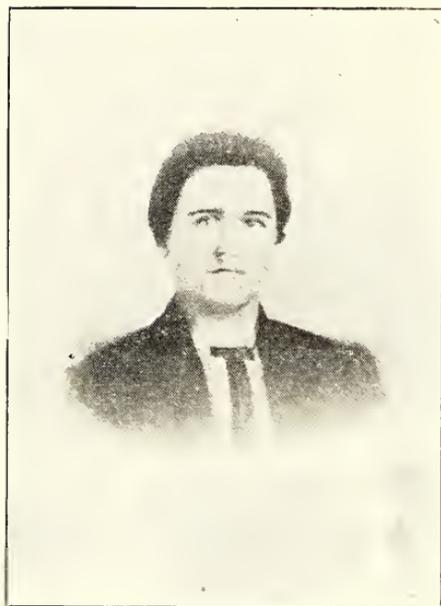
I was eight days on the road coming home. The last night I camped out was at Old Denmark, Tenn. The last "grub" issued to us was some meat at Macon, Miss. Brother Sam left Rock Island (Ill.) Prison at the same time I left Gainesville, Ala. He got home the 19th of May, 1865, and I got home the next day, the 20th. When in sight of home I fired my pistol six times to let them know I was coming.

I shall never forget the joy it gave to see my mother and all the family running to meet me. But O, so sad to think one was missing who had prayed so faithfully that his boys might get back home all right! Father died the 17th of February, 1864. He had been back from Rock Island only a day or so, where he had been to see Brother Sam.

Well, I will not try to tell of the hard times we had, for that is pretty well known by all who have read of the Civil War; but

I will tell of some of the funny things that happened, which kept us in good spirits.

The worst fright I got during the war was on a steamboat which we had just captured on the Cumberland River, five or six miles below Nashville. Our regiment was sent to blockade the river when Hood's army arrived and began to take their places. When we got in sight of the river we saw a transport boat coming down from Nashville. We at once left our horses and ran for the river to stop that boat. We had a fine time capturing all kinds of boats on the Tennessee River



A. C. M'LEARY
As he appeared August 5, 1865.

a month or so before, and we were now very hungry and ready for the good things to eat that those boats carried; but in running over those rocks and vines I sprained my ankle so badly I did not see how I could live much longer. After the boat ran by, Col. D. C. Kelley came back to me, sent for my horse, and they put me on him. I rode to a house near by, got my ankle fixed up, and while I was there another boat ran by; but we had two cannons ready for the third one, and it surrendered. I rode to where it landed. Colonel Kelley was sending the boys back up the river, to be ready for the next boat coming. It was then getting dark, and he told

me as I was crippled to get on the boat and stop the boys from getting on from a willow tree that leaned against the stern wheel, while he and a detail were getting the horses and mules off to land by the gangplank. The boat moved from the tree, so I was not needed to guard there any longer. I then got up the steps on the upper deck to see what I could find that I needed. I soon discovered on a bed in one of the little cabins a bundle as big as a washtub, the outside of which was a new United States blanket. I had it under one arm, on the outside promenade in the dark, and when the fellow got his canteens filled with whiskey he ran in and out of those rooms looking for his bundle. After he left I got back to the wheel and pitched my goods to the bank. Directly another boat came down and surrendered. It, too, was loaded with Yankee stock, and it was brought up by the side of the one I was on. The detail soon got them on the first boat, and then to land. There was a dim light at the end of the boat, but it was as dark as a dungeon down my way. I was watching the proceedings, when one of the men



A. C. M'LEARY AND BETTIE JANE
IN 1876

took a new Yankee' McClellan saddle from a horse and put it by the engine of the boat I was on. Now my old saddle was ruining my horse's back, and I felt I had as much right to that saddle as he had—at least I tried to get my conscience to help me see it that way—so I got that old crippled foot in motion and started for the saddle, using my gun to help me along, keeping one eye on the fellow, with the other trying to locate the saddle, feeling all the time that the old devil might get me if I took the saddle. All at once I struck my toes against the back of a mule that had been shot down as the boat came down the river; but he was still very

much alive, and when my toes struck him I fell across him with my face all mixed up with his feet and legs, and you never heard such a racket as he made kicking the side of the boat. I think I scared him nearly as badly as he did me. I soon caught on that the old boy didn't have me, and crawled over and got the saddle and threw it to land with my big bundle. I thought I had enough plunder, and went to land with the horses. I soon changed the old saddle for the new, put the bundle on the corner of a fence, and managed to get in the saddle from the fence. Then I got my stock of goods up before me and went to our horse holders' camp. I had not been gone from the river ten minutes when three gunboats come down from Nashville and recaptured our two boats and shelled the woods nearly all night. Some of the boys had gotten full of booze, and every time a shell came close to us they would yell as loud as they could, then pile brush on the fire and make a light, so the Yankees knew where to aim their cannons. They kept us prohibition fellows between a shv and a wild all-night.

Well, yes; that bundle in the United States blanket was two oilcloths and a big, hairy cloak, cape, or talma—I never knew exactly what. It was big enough for a three-hundred pounder, had no sleeves, only places for the arms to go through, and it was better suited to fit a sea lion than a man; but it was warm, and I looked more like an Eskimo than a Confederate soldier with it on. Yes, we had a rough old time. General Forrest kept us in the saddle most of the time, day and night, in all kinds of bad weather; but we were a jolly set, and would sometimes joke or play pranks on each other while the fight was going on. We all had sweethearts back at home, and many of us married them after the war was over.

We had all kinds of men in our command—preachers, gamblers, lawyers, doctors, farmers, and also poets. The first day of April, 1864, we had a chance to send letters and April fools back to Tennessee. One young fellow of our company got so carried away he wrote out the following and sent it to "the girl he left behind," but put no name to it.

To My Darling Bettie Jane:

DUCK HILL, MISS., April 1, 1864.

I seat myself to write to you,
And aim to tell what is true.
Ever since this war first started
I felt worse when you and I last parted.
I could not help but cry a while,
Though thought that too much like a child,
So I picked up courage and went away
And tried to appear ever so gay;
But when I got beyond your sight,
I began to think I had not done right
In calling in to part with thee
And not calling on Miss Lizzie B.
War, we know, is hard on all,
Particularly those who play the ball;
And if I live to get home again,
I'll call to see my Bettie Jane.

I sent my girl a paper cut full of hearts and other things, also one of my biscuits. I still have the paper, but nine years after we were married she set her trunk out to sun, and a dog got the biscuit out and ate it. A Confederate in Arkansas wanted to know if it killed the dog. I told him I thought it gave him the hydrophobia, at least he died afterwards.

I was badly wounded, in my new hat, in a fight near Somerville, Tenn., Christmas week of 1863. A new hat was a rarity to a Confederate soldier in those times. In writing to me a Yankee who was in the fight wanted to know why I did not pick up another, as there were plenty lying around when they left there.

When on a march some of us, in passing an old barn or gin, would begin looking and pointing at it as though we saw something wonderful, then every one back behind, in passing, would try to see what was so attractive.

There was one thing that could be said of the private Confederate soldiers that could not be said of any other set of soldiers. While they had great respect for the officer they were under and would fight and obey orders when called on, the officer knew, or would soon learn, that he must not get too bossy, for the privates thought they were as good as Mr. Captain or Lieutenant, and if they got too big and bossy they would be thrown up in blankets or something worse.

They would often throw each other up, and if a negro came

in camp he had to behave very well or up he would go. I remember one Sunday evening we were camped on a big plantation in Alabama and a great many of the negroes came into our camp, and we had some fun throwing them up. We would place two or three United States blankets together and as many hands as could take hold all around, and when our man was put on we would swing up and down, then some one would call out "One, two, three;" and when three was called, up he would go, ten or twelve feet high. One negro grabbed the edge of the blanket as three was called, and he flew to one side and fell on a stump and was hurt pretty badly. It was not long before his old "marster" came over to "cuss out" the whole command. One of the colonels met him and they had some pretty hot words. The colonel told him to keep his d—— negroes out of the camp, and they would not be thrown up. The boys heard the racket and had their blankets ready; and when the old fellow, who was very heavy and fat, started for home, some one gave the signal, and they soon had him making ascensions, and every fellow was yelling as loud as he could.

I believe the meanest thing I did during the war, unless it was taking the bundle and saddle from those fellows on the boat, was the way I treated a negro named George, who had been raised in Weakley County, Tenn., and was sold and sent to Alabama a short while before the war began. We had struck camp near where he lived on one of those big plantations. Our cooking utensils had not arrived, so Isham Wade and I took a sack of meal there to get some bread cooked. The lady of the house told us to make ourselves at home in the office in the yard, and she would put the negro woman to cooking our bread. George found out we were from West Tennessee, and he enjoyed being with us, asking many questions about old Tennessee. I told him that if he could see Bell's brigade passing he might see some of the people he once knew in Weakley County. A few days later, on Sunday, our brigade passed through the big woods lot; but before my company got near I saw George and several other negroes at the gate watching. George was trying hard to find some of his old Tennessee friends, so I told the boys we would have some fun when we got through the gate. I kept my head turned until I got inside

and had the big fence between us, then turned and cried: "Hello, George!" Over the fence he came like a deer, running up the line, wanting to know, "Who dat know me, who dat know me?" Of course every one in the company knew George, and was glad to see him, but no one would stop to shake hands or talk with him; and the last I saw of him he looked bewildered. I afterwards felt sorry for him, and wished I had stopped and explained to him how it was.

While waiting for our paroles to be fixed up, we were into all kinds of mischief, so glad the war was over and we had not been killed, and that we would soon be at home with our loved ones.

We are all proud of the crosses of honor given us by our dear Daughters. I wear mine when traveling among strangers; and while in Memphis some time back, waiting for my train to start for Arkansas, a fine-looking old ex-Federal soldier, whose home was in Baltimore, Md., took hold of my cross and said: "My friend, did you not know that these railroads won't allow a fellow to ride on their train with one of those things on?" I told him that I did not, but I was under General Forrest during the war, and he taught us to go where and when we pleased. An Arkansas man heard my answer, and came up laughing, and we had a jolly good time until I had to leave.

To what I have just written I will add an article of mine that was published in the *Confederate Veteran* in May, 1894, and in connection with it I will explain a little more, as I have been asked to so do many times.

[From the *Confederate Veteran*, "Humor of War Times."]

I was a private in Company G, 12th Tennessee Cavalry, under Forrest. The greater part of our company were boys from sixteen to twenty, and we were a jolly set. German Tucker took a Confederate cracker to show to some ladies living near camp, and they wanted to know how we ever got them to pieces. He told him that we put one corner of the cracker in the mouth, placed the chin on a stump, and got some one to hit us on top of the head with a maul. Bill Combs, when discussing the crackers as an article of food, said: "I can get full of the 'dad gum' things, but can't get enough."

Late one night we were cooking rations for one of our Middle Tennessee raids. Two of the boys, one in the 14th Tennessee

Regiment, on another hill, and one of my company, were "jawing" at each other, when the Fourteenth man yelled out: "You go to h——." Our man answered: "There's no way of getting there now; the Yankees have burned the bridges." Fourteenth answered: "They did a good thing for you then."

While on that raid we marched and fought for days and nights in succession. Late one dark night we were on the march; it was raining, and we were all wet, cold, tired, sleepy, and hungry. We were bunched up in a creek bottom waiting for those in front to cross the stream. Not a word was being spoken. Old sore-backed horses were trying to rub their riders off against some other horse. We knew we would have fighting to do as soon as day broke, and we had the blues. All at once Joe Leggett said: "Boys, I have become reckless; I've got so I don't care for nothing. I had just as soon be at home now as to be here."

The effect was magical. While the skill and bravery of our generals and the fighting qualities of our soldiers could not have been excelled, if it had not been for those jolly spirits to animate others the war would have come to a close much sooner.

I was a good rider, and when at myself could mount a horse as quickly as an Indian. But I had sprained my left ankle so severely I could not stand on it to put the other foot in the stirrup. Six or eight of us were on guard; I was a volunteer. We were at an old brick house on the bank of the Cumberland River five or six miles below Nashville. Our horses were over the hill out of the range of the gunboats three or four hundred yards from us. The first thing we knew our boys were running the Yankees (our boys in front) down the Charlotte Pike, below us. As they passed they sent R. B. Bledsoe, one of our company, to tell us to get away if we could. The rest of the guards left me at once. Bledsoe saw me and ran his horse some two hundred yards to where I was, jumped from the saddle, threw me the reins, and was gone like a flash, hoping to get to my horse and then make his escape.

I must tell of the uneasy ride this same old ankle caused me to take. When we got back to the Tennessee River, our time came to cross the pontoon bridge about midnight, and it was very dark. General Cheatham was there to see that everything started

on the bridge in proper order. Orders were to dismount and lead across, but there was no walking for me, so I kept my seat and was on the bridge when General Cheatham railed out: "Why in the —— don't you dismount?" "I have a sprained ankle, General, and can't walk." "All right, if you've a mind to risk it, I will." When a boy I rode bucking mules, jumping horses, young steers, and a railroad train with wheels jumping the ties, but all this was pleasure compared with that pontoon ride. The river was bank full, the bridge in a swing, jumping up and down. My eyes being up above the rest, the lights on the bank in front blinded me like a bat. It seemed to be the widest river in the world.

Bledsoe gave me his horse, expecting to reach my horse in time to get away; but my horse was two or three hundred yards from where he left me, both horses were badly frightened at the noise of the battle and by their company's leaving them, so we both were in a bad fix. The horses were jumping around in all directions; and had I got a chance at the stirrup, I could not have borne a pound on my sprained ankle nor could I stand on it to raise the other foot from the ground. I saw a short log near by and managed to get on it, and as old Tuck came by I fell across the saddle like a sack of meal, then kicked and pawed the air until I got straight in the saddle. While those circus performances were going on, old Tuck was carrying me in a lope right toward the Yankees, who were about one hundred and fifty yards from me on the Charlotte Pike. I don't think any of them saw me until we were flying through the woods getting away from there, and at that time it was a perfect waste of Uncle Sam's ammunition to try to get their bullets to overtake old Tuck and me. In plunging over the big rocks in a creek at the foot of the big hill we had just passed over, the bits came out of old Tuck's mouth, and I had only the halter rein to guide with; but the woods were open, the ground level, so we made good time for a mile or so down the river. I then turned out to the pike and found our horse holders. As I passed in sight of poor Bob he was cutting some tall capers trying to get to the side of my horse to mount him. But I knew his doom was sealed, for the Yankees were coming to him in a run, and I thought sure they would get him, and my horse too; but Bob knew I would not like it if he let

those Yankees get Charley, so he turned him loose. He ran through the Yankee lines and never stopped until he got with his own people. Colonel Outlaw, of Kentucky, saw him coming from the Yankees and took him in, his old horse having played out on the run. My clothes in the saddlebags proved to him that he was not a Yankee horse, if he did have on a Yankee saddle.

Poor Bob! I was sorry that he got captured in saving me, but the sorrow was most overcome when I found they did not get my dear Charley. Bob was taken to Camp Chase, Ohio, and kept there until the war was over. To pay him back for his kindness I let him have one of my first cousins for a wife.

Well, I could tell of a young private belonging to our company who on Christmas morning, 1863, got an order from General Forrest to do a certain thing. He did not obey, but in an instant he gave the General orders, and he obeyed very nicely. But the people have heard those old infantry fellows tell such "golley whoppers," and not knowing the difference, might think a cavalryman would tell them, too, sometimes.

The marshal at Humboldt some time ago wanted to know of me how to get rid of the little creepers a tramp had left in the calaboose. I told him I did not know anything about such things, that I belonged to the cavalry and we were all gentlemen, and I would advise him to see Bill McCall, Nelse Cresap, Knox Gillespie, R. J. W. Matthews, and several others who belonged to the infantry.

We all had our hard times and fun then, and can joke each other now; but we must not forget that our old comrades have been dropping off fast lately, and we too must soon cross over the river. So let us all try to be ready when the Lord calls us.

I have written this more for the children than the older people. They like to hear the funny part of the war better than the horrors.

I never got my horse from Colonel Outlaw until the army got back into Mississippi. We then got furloughs to come home for a few days, so I brought old Tuck home to Bob's mother. The Colonel said he would give my horse up if I would swap him the new pants I had in the saddlebags for his old pair, and I gladly made the trade. I guess he was the only colonel during

the war that wore knee pants. He was very tall and I was short, but he wore cavalry boots that came above his knees.

I gave his old pants and the Eskimo cloak to Ben, our negro man, who stayed at home and helped my mother take care of the children after father died. He was the father of Jim and Calvin McLeary and an uncle of the well-known Henry McLeary, of Humboldt. My mother gave Ben a horse when the war was over. He lived several years after the war, and we all have a good feeling now for any of Ben's relations.

In November, 1864, when we were capturing all of those boats on the Tennessee River, our regiment was ordered to charge three black, nasty-looking gunboats out in the middle of the river. I never knew why such an order was given unless we were to fill their portholes so full of bullets that they could not use their big guns on us while our artillery was being brought up and put in place; but they had the drop on us, and used it by tearing up the bank and filling the air full of dirt before we got within fifty yards of the river.

In September, 1864, we made a raid into North Alabama and Middle Tennessee, fording the Tennessee River at Colbert Shoals. Before we started on that raid six or eight men were selected from each regiment as the infirmiry corps for that raid, and I was one of the crowd detailed for that business. We captured Athens, Ala., Sulphur Trestle, and chased the Yankees on to Pulaski. When we arrived, our brigade was placed on a hillside east of town in an old field, and we got orders to lie flat on the ground while the Yankee artillery on the edge of the town and the sharpshooters with their long-range guns were picking at us from the windows of the houses. I never wanted to see a hole in the ground so much in my life. The cannon balls and shells would sometimes hit the ground in front of us and bounce over, and maybe the next one would pass over us and hit the ground behind. The bullets were also spitting around us. I placed all the rocks I could reach in front of my head and shoulders, and when I got my little fort made I heard a cannon ball as it struck our line; then the word passed down the line for the infirmiry corps to come at once. I got up and went about one hundred yards up the line and found Captain Shaw, of Haywood County, with a place as big as my hand knocked from

the side of his hip. The same shot also burst an elbow and a knee of another man to pieces, and knocked from another man's hands his gun, which he never saw afterwards.

We had no litters on which to carry the dead and wounded, so we often had a hard job taking them off of the field to where the ambulances could get them.

As I told of the worst fright I got during the war, I will now tell of the most sudden change in my feelings that I experienced. When I went to the big brick house on the Charlotte Pike to get my ankle fixed up, I rode in at the front gate and around to the back porch and called for a chair and something to relieve my suffering. Several negroes were lolling around in the back yard, and there was a Yankee soldier staying there as a guard. The people seemed not to care to do anything for me, but I called for vinegar, brown paper, and strips of cloth, and fixed it up as best I could and pulled my sock over the whole business. Then hearing guns down on the river, I told one of the negroes to bring me my horse quick. He looked at me with a silly grin and did not move. I raised my gun and told him to bring me my horse, or I would throw him flat of his back. He soon got a move on him for the horse; but just then I heard a knocking on a door behind me, and when I looked around the door was partly open and I could see a hand beckoning me to come in. I told the negro to let the horse alone a while, and into the parlor I went. A Confederate soldier told me to take a seat at the center table, and said: "I see you are as mad as h—— at the way my people have treated you, and I can't blame you; but you must take into consideration that we are here for only a short time, and there are those negroes and the Yankee guard ready to report everything they do for the Confederates when we are gone, and it may cause them to be burned out and robbed of everything." I told him I knew how it was around Humboldt when the Yankees were stationed there; the people had to use deception in many ways. He said he had been gone from home three years, and had just got home the night before. His people were expecting him to drop in, and had everything good to eat and drink ready for him. He then went to pulling out bureau drawers and began setting out boiled ham, loaf bread, all kind of cakes, pies, and good drinks. Do

you think I told him: "No, I thank you; I wouldn't choose any?" If you do, you think very wrong. I ate until I felt full up to my chin, and thanked him and bade him good-by. I never saw a man I liked so well on such short acquaintance as I did that fellow.

Had that Yankee guard been as clever and as accommodating as the one that stayed with us, he would have helped me fix up my ankle. Our pet Yankee was a fine workman, and while with us he made me a double-seated sleigh and other things for the family. He and I were hunting wild turkeys below Humboldt when General Forrest captured the place in December, 1862. The magazine was burned, and it sounded like a battle up there. I heard him calling for me to come quick; and thinking he had found the turkeys, I went in a run, and when I asked what was the matter he said: "I saw a flock of coons flying over, and I thought I would call you. Let us get out for home; there is something the matter in town." So we left at once, and learned what was the matter when we got home.

Now, as some want to know about General Forrest's obeying the young private's orders, I will tell. In December, 1863, we made a raid into West Tennessee from Mississippi. We had gathered up a great many recruits and were trying to get South with them where they could be armed; but the Yankees were determined that this time Forrest should not get out of West Tennessee, so they were bringing troops from every direction to cut us off. We had to cross Hatchie River at Estanaula, on a small ferryboat. The river was almost bank full, the water running swiftly, and the boat was pulled across by a rope stretched from bank to bank. The poor, weak horses were put on the boat and the best ones were pushed into the water. Their owners would hold to them from the boat until they passed the middle of the river and then turn them loose, as they could then swim to the landing place without being carried downstream. Our battalion was the last to cross. It was Christmas morning, 1863. I knew my horse would have to take to the water, so I took my saddle and blankets off and put them in a little dugout. The other boys did the same. I paddled across with two loads, threw them out on the bank, and had gone back after another load. Everything was done in a rush.

We could hear the guns of the fight that was going on by those who had crossed before us. General Forrest came to where I stopped the little canoe and asked me if I could carry him across in that thing. I told him I could if it did not turn over, and he then stepped in and squatted down with his back to me. He was a large, heavy man, and when I turned the little craft around it was in a quiver; but we made it all right until we reached the middle of the river. When the ferryboat passed us and all the horses were turned loose, the big waves from the boat I thought would knock us over, and every horse looked like he wanted to get to our dugout. The General said: "Bear downstream; bear downstream." I told him to take up that paddle and knock them in the head. He did as I told him, and we got to land all right. I had to bear upstream with all the power I had to keep from being carried downstream by the swift current. We all got across the river. It was then a fight every day and night until we got back into Mississippi. Instead of any of us being captured in getting out of West Tennessee, we captured several of the Yankees and took them out with us. Our battalion captured twelve near Collierville, we ran through a gap in their lines with them, and never stopped until we got near Como, Miss. It then turned suddenly cold, and we struck camp in negro houses, barns, stables, and any shelter we could get, and it seemed that we and the Yankee prisoners would freeze. The next day was the cold New Year's day of 1864. When it was learned at Washington, D. C., that General Forrest had got back into Mississippi from West Tennessee, the authorities removed General Hulburt from the command of the Federals in that section and put in General Washburn. And when General Forrest made the raid into Memphis, General Washburn, to save himself, had to jump from his bed through a window and escape down a dark alley. But our boys got his uniform and boots.

It was reported that when General Hulburt heard of it he said: "There it is again. They removed me because I couldn't keep Forrest out of West Tennessee, and there is Washburn, who can't keep him out of his bedroom." But General Forrest was kind enough to send his things back to him.

In June, 1864, a few days after the hard-fought battle of Brice's Crossroads, our brigade, or our division, was sent from

Mississippi across Alabama on a rapid march to meet a raid of Yankee cavalry that was coming down into Northern Georgia. I was sick before we started, but I kept with the command until we got to Montevallo, Ala. We stopped one evening and night to rest our horses at Tuscaloosa, and several of the boys made for the Black Warrior River to have a fine time bathing and swimming. W. T. Gleeson, of our company, a little, short, heavy-set fellow, could not swim a lick, but he was flopping around in the edge of the water. He had a great desire to go out in the middle of the river and back like the good swimmers were doing. One fellow on a big black horse rode in to take a swim to the middle of the river and back, and as he passed Bill thought, "Now is my time," and grabbed the horse by the tail. Everything went finely for Bill until the fellow made the turn to come back. The horse then let down three different times trying to reach the bottom with his hind feet, each time taking Bill under like a fishing cork. He knew it would never do to turn loose. They got him out on the bank and rolled and churned him around for quite a while before he could breathe; and when he opened his eyes and they saw he was not going to die, some one said: "Bill's eyes look as red as a terrapin's." From then on he went by the name of "Terrapin."

That night we all had a free invitation to go to the theater, one of the attractions of which was the noted negro musician, Blind Tom. But I was sick and could not take in those pleasures. When we got to Montevallo, I was left there with eight or ten others. Some were sick and the horses of some had played out. We struck our little camp in a cedar thicket near the depot. It rained nearly every day, and our little hog shelters did not keep us dry. I rode out one evening to see the rolling mills, where they were rolling out rods and bars of iron of all sizes.

While out I hitched my horse and went into an old field and picked a few dewberries. Finding a good shade, I lay down on a big flat rock and was soon studying my condition. I could feel that I would soon be down with some hard spell of sickness, and I was a long way from mother, sisters, and other friends; and if I had any kinsfolk in the State of Alabama, I did not know it. My command had gone on and left me in a strange land and among strangers, and O how blue I did feel! I had

been reared by praying parents and taught when in trouble to take it to the Lord in prayer, and I did so there on that rock. Next morning when I awoke I was so deeply impressed to get up from that pallet and go to the depot to meet the train coming from the South that I did as I felt I was commanded to do. I took a seat on a box on the platform, and when the train ran up it was loaded with soldiers and other people. I was not expecting to see any one I had ever seen before, but when it stopped a man from a window asked: "What is the matter with you, Andy?" I told him I did not know; that I had been sick for quite a while, and I believed I would soon be down with a hard spell of something. The command had left nine or ten of us there to do as best we could for ourselves. He said: "You are going to die if you stay here." I told him I supposed so. He then said: "You have some kinsfolk living thirty-five miles below here—your cousin Nannie Dungan, who married Perry McGee, a well-to-do man. They are living near Dixie Station; your cousin Mat Dungan is there waiting on her brother Hall. He was shot through an arm in a battle a short time ago. Get your officer to go to the provost marshal here and get you a pass or ten days' leave of absence—anything to get away from here—and take the first train going South, stop off at Dixie Station, get out at McGee's, and you will be cared for as well as if you were at home." He said he was right from there, so I reported to Jerry Johnson, one of my company, and a neighbor boy, who was also sick, the good news I had received. The sergeant got us the ten days' leave of absence, and we left next day for Dixie Station. I was too sick to walk, so I lay in the shade of the little box depot until Jerry walked one mile and a half and got a horse and buggy and came after me. I went to bed as soon as I got there, and was in bed four or five weeks with typhoid fever.

The man on the train that gave me the delightful information was my old friend W. I. McFarland, of Humboldt, who was a lieutenant in our regiment. I believed then and I believe now that I was guided by the good Lord to meet that train. When I was able to walk a little, our command had gone back into Mississippi. We believed that if we were with it we would get letters from home, so we left sooner than we should, but we

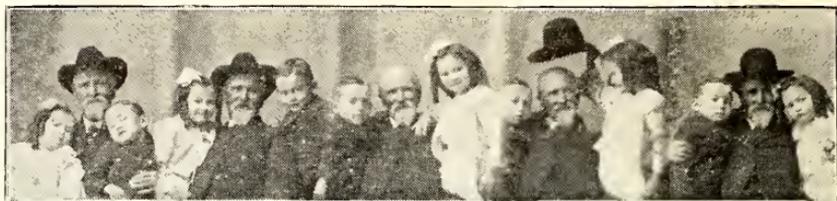
made it all right. I had just got to feel like I could eat up Alabama. We stayed the first night at the Wayside Home in Selma, the next night in Meridian, Miss. When our train stopped at Uniontown, Ala., we saw an old negro with a basketful of boiled corn, which he said was not for sale, but was for the sick soldiers on the train. I told him we were the sickest two he ever saw, so we took two apiece. When we looked around, the car was full of the best-looking ladies I ever saw, and each had a plate, dish, or something good to eat for the soldiers that were on the train. I was told they did that every day. They piled things around Jerry and me as long as there was any place to put them; and when the train whistled to start, one pretty girl ran to our window with a stand of little pear preserves with the stems to them, and asked if we could take them. I told her I thought we could. We were like two old turkeys picking corn out of a pan, and as the train moved off we handed her the empty stand and bade them good-by with many thanks. I may forget other places, but I shall always remember Uniontown, Ala. We still had our haversacks nearly full of good things to eat that Cousin Mat and Cousin Nannie had fixed up for us before we left. Cousin Nannie is dead, but Cousin Mat is now living in Humboldt, the wife of M. B. Permenter.

When we left Meridian we came up the Mobile and Ohio road to Egypt Station, where we found our command ready to start on the Memphis raid. Jerry and I were sent to a farmhouse a few miles out in the country, where there were several pretty girls and plenty of "grub" to eat. I improved rapidly and was able to meet the command at West Point, Miss., after they came back from Memphis.

Jerry was never able for service any more. Of all the pretty girls I saw outside of Tennessee, none of them could shine in my eyes like my little black-eyed girl back at home. While I liked all of the girls then, even now, as old as I am, I have no great hatred toward any of them. She is the only one I ever loved. She was only a few days old when her grandmother told me to look at that girl, she should be my wife some day; and we grew up with that understanding.

With all that I have written, it is only a small part of my

experience in the Civil War. I did not try to keep a diary, as some did, and I have tried to write everything truthfully, though I may have made some mistakes as to dates, etc.; but it is all as I remember. I have written it more to give the young people an insight into what we young private soldiers went through in both good and bad times.



MY TWIN GRANDCHILDREN—NELL AND PERRY WARMATH.

W. H. Harris, Commander of Humboldt Camp, No. 974, U. C. V., writes:

In reading A. C. McLeary's "Experience of a Young Private Confederate Soldier" I find it a sketch of the war in his experience quite a matter of history as far as he went, and also a very interesting sketch mixed in with some quite amusing scenes. I most cheerfully recommend it to the public as a matter of history and amusement.

The war record of Mr. A. C. McLeary has been read before the R. E. Lee Chapter, U. D. C., and the Chapter indorses the work and commends it to all who are in sympathy with the Lost Cause. Mr. McLeary is well known in Gibson County, and has the respect of all who know him. These are the actual experiences of an old Southern soldier as told by himself, and cannot fail to interest the reader.

MRS. G. D. FERRELL, *President*;

MRS. J. W. MCGLATHERY, *Secretary*,
R. E. Lee Chapter, U. D. C.

R. E. LEE CHAPTER, U. D. C.

The R. E. Lee Chapter, U. D. C., met Wednesday at 2:30 P.M. with Mrs. J. W. McGlathery. This was the largest attendance at a meeting since early in the spring, and much work was planned for the winter months. Committees were appointed to arrange for time and place for the bazaar to be held some time in December.

Motion was made and seconded that a rising vote of thanks be given Mr. A. C. McLeary for the typewritten copy of his most excellent war record, presented to the Chapter at this meeting. Mr. McLeary intends having this published in the near future, and the Chapter feels very proud to have received this copy. It contains much humor and is interesting throughout. The program was one of the best that has been given.

Miss Lavenia Ferrell's paper on "Great Heroes of History and Their Influence" was well written and very interesting.

"The Life of Sam Davis," written by Judge W. I. McFarland, was especially enjoyed, as it gave a Confederate soldier's views of his life and his brave acts in service.

The musical numbers added much to the program.

This **BOOK** may be kept out **TWO WEEKS ONLY**, and is subject to a fine of **FIVE CENTS** a day thereafter. It is **DUE** on the **DAY** indicated below:

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