

Reminiscences of the Civil War

By T.J. Walker

Dedicated to my two children

*What as a Southern boy I saw and thought about the great (W)ar of the (R)ebellion:*

I was born in Haywood County the only child of a poor widow; my father having died heavily involved by having to pay a security debt...(and)... refusing to take the bankrupt'(s) land. The first thing I can recollect being the sale of 30 negroes to pay the last installment on (the) land debt, which left my mother with very little to keep the wolf from her door. With what little was left she put me in school and eventually in college; during that time having to deny herself many comforts that her boy might acquire a classical education, that he might be prepared for the duties and trials of life.

In my senior year at college the distant rumbling of the great war commenced to be heard and as the sound of the approaching storm grew louder we boys caught the sound... (I)nspite of the protests of our Professors we formed ourselves into a military company and instead of our athletics took our exercise in daily drills, but when Fort Sumter fell it was more than we could stand. We immediately broke ranks, bade one another good-bye (many of us never to meet again), and went to our respective homes.

Never will I forget the evening I reached home. I was fearful of my dear mother's disapproval of the course I had taken in leaving college without her approval, she having set her heart on my graduating that year. She was sitting sewing when I came into the room. She arose from her seat, folded me to her bosom and said,"(M)y dear boy, I have been expecting you so confidently that I have been making you a uniform (every mother made their boys their uniforms the first years of the war) for I knewed you would come". But I said,"(M)other I am all that you have left and the thought has been troubling me a great deal of late and that is why I have come home." I can never forget the expression of her noble face as she stood erect, her beautiful eyes ablaze with fur(ious) emotion as she said,"(M)y dear boy, I would not be worthy to be the mother of such a noble son if I did not give you to my beloved Southland for its defense." Mothers, you no doubt wonder when you read these lines, as you look on

your 17 year old boys, how that poor widowed mother left alone in the world could give up her only child to go to the war, but you can not at this distant day, after peace for the last 40 years, with all the animosities of the Sixties...(now)... past, realize what intense patriotism and hatred swelled within the breasts of our mothers when the armies of the North were threatening to invade their dear Southland.

Thousands, just as patriotic as my dear mother, did just as she did all over this beautiful Southland of ours. Is it any wonder that they have imparted that intense patriotism to their daughters of the Confederacy that has made them renowned the world over as being the grandest specimens of pure womanhood the world has ever seen and that their soldier boys have been unsurpassed for fortitude and heroic deeds by any other soldiery that has ever moved upon the stage of the world's history in the past or present?

So anxious was I, together with 4 other neighbor boys, to get to enlist that we joined a company in Tipton County, as there was not at that time a company forming in our part of the country. The morning I left home my mother followed me to the gate and, as she kissed me and folded me to her heart, she said, "(M)y son, I would rather hear that you had been killed than to hear that you had acted the coward". (N)ot the words, but the sentiment of the Spartan mother when she sent her boy to the war; "Return my boy with your shield or upon it. " We found Capt. Wood's Tipton Co. Confederate a grand co(mpany) 110 strong, one third of whom were college boys; I have thought and still think one of the grandest companys in the Confederate service.

Never will I forget the day Miss Thompson presented that beautiful silk flag;(s)tanding there before me with her beautiful animated face as she said, " Soldiers, I present this beautiful flag to you and place it in you keeping. (G)uard it as sacred as you would your life. (N)ever surrender it to the foe for it represents principles to be defended that heroes would rather die than see trailing in the dust". Did we guard that sacred flag? (A)sk the unmarked graves on every battlefield that dots the s (S)outhern land from Corinth Miss. to Golsborough N.C., for not over 20 out of 110 noble band returned at the conclusion of the war. (M)ost all the rest have mutilated limbs or fill unknown graves.

We left our camp at Clapton in Tipton County and moved on to Jackson Farm and there...(were)... organized into the 9th Tennessee Infantry and became Co. C of that regiment. (A)fter going through Co. and Reg. drills for several weeks, we moved on from place to place until we reached Union City and then to Tiptonville and to New Madrid Mo.

Let me relate an incident that occurred during this march to show you how intense the hatred was to every one who did not embrace the Southern cause. A young man came into the Regiment who was a relative of Emerson Ethridge ...(and)... had his picture ... (B)ecause it was found in his shirt pocket the boys, without asking any explanations, put a rope around his neck and had him strung up to a limb and would have hung him, if Gen. Cheatam hadn't rushed up,... cut him down, and carried him to his headquarters.

Hearing that Grant was concentrating his army at Cairo, Gen. Polk moved his command to Columbus Ky. and for that move the army called him "Granny Polk" because they believed he, being a preacher, was afraid to fight. Here we remained several month(s) and built enormous forts and planted batteries.

(D)uring our stay here was fought the battle of Belmont Mo. across the river from Columbus. Our regiment(the 9th) was ordered down to the river to be taken over, but the battle was over before we got across. It was a complete victory for the Confederate cause and when the boys of the regiments returned, who had participated in the fight, how we envied them of their glory, for we poor silly souls thought the war would be over before we would have a chance to be in a battle.

When Grant moved on Fort Dondleson General Polk retreated from Columbus to Shiloh. (F)rom this time our campaigning really commenced. I recollect how discouraged we were, as we marched along in the heat and mud (our first really hard march) when we heard of the fall of Fort Dondleson. As we passed through Purdy on our way to Shiloh I recollect how the boys wanted to burn Col. Hensses residence as we passed it for he had even at that early stage of the war commenced his guerilla warfare.

The idea of retreating and giving up Tennessee was a great blow to all true Tennesseans and on that ground we were very bitter against Generals Polk & Johnston. But on that memorable Sunday morning I will never forget ...(how)... I for the first & last time saw Gen.

Johnston. He had just had his first orders read to the army stating after so long a time he was in a position to strike the enemy with a reasonable hope of success, if we would do our duty as brave soldiers. (F)ollowing immediately on the reading of this order I saw a very tall and superb horseman riding down in front of our lines with his hat off and his long hair waving in the morning breeze. (As) he passed in front of our command I heard him say, "(F)orward! (E)very man do his duty and the day is ours!"

(A)s our line of battle moved briskly forward, our pickets commenced to engage the enemy's picket line and before the enemy's pickets could give the alarm we were into the enemy's camp. It was a complete surprise I saw men with their clothes in their hands running from their tents, not stoping even to get their muskets, but, as we pursued the fighting, we soon struck the second line, who by this time had formed. Then the battle commenced in earnest.

Inch by inch we drove the enemy continuously back until late in evening we reached a field on the oposite side of which the enemy had formed with many pieces of artillery for a last desperate stand. (T)his position was close to the bank of river. (W)ith the shell of the gun boats plowing continuously through our ranks (w)e charged through this field, broke their lines, and captured their battery in our front.(W)e shot the gunners down as they worked the guns, captured the battery and one of my mess even shot down the color bearer and captured the colors.

We still forwarded our lines and by this time we could see the enemy in our front on the bank of river waving their hands begining to surrender, but at this juncture a bullet struck me in the right side... I had to be carried off the field. (T)he shot and shell from the gun boats were plowing through the timber and bursting all around me, but about this time I saw two carriers coming toward me. (A)s they passed, I heard one say Gen. Abert Sidney Johnston has been killed. As how my young boyish heart sank within me; "(O)ur General, dead what will become of the army?" (A)s I was being carried still further to the rear, I heard other soldiers say Gen. Beauregard has stopped the advance and has ordered a retreat from the banks of river.

Depressed, weary, and faint from pain loss of blood and almost dying of thirst, having had no water for hours, I begged the men that were carrying me to stop, as we were crossing a

little stream, so that I could get some water to quench my raging thirst. (W)hile water was being procured for me I turned my weary head to get a new position and my eyes fell upon the prettiest face of a boy I think I had ever seen. A little golden headed wounded Yankey drummer boy laying there dying and crying, " (W)ater! (M)other, your boy is dying for water". When water was brought he was lifted up and water placed to his parched lips.( H)e fell back and with his last breath said," Oh, Mother." That scene, although many years has passed, lingers still in my memory and will continue as long as this life shall last. From that day to this the last bitterness that rankled in my brest for the rank and file of the Federal soldier departed never to return.

While I was being carried back to the rear, passing over and around heaps of dying and wounded soldiers, faint and weary, the news came that the army was retreating. I with others were hurridly placed in a army country wagon and driven all night over those long McNary country roads to Corinth; three dying in the wagon in which I was being conveyed. Could any condition of life be more pitiful to the heart of a poor wounded boy? Every few moments a currier would come riding up and say, " (D)rive faster they are pressing us harder in the rear". No one but an old soldier can grasp what that means when spoken to a frightened army wagon driver. The torture of that night and day with the dead and dying by my side in that terrible wagon driven by a terrified teamster can never be described. Although over 40 years have passed, yet it still tortures me in my restless dreams and when I awake my heart is wildly beating with a cold perspiration bathing my brow, only to be soothed to quiet by returning consciousness that it is all a dream.

When I arrived at Corinth,... my wound dressed and (I) placed in a comfortable bed, my mind could but revert back to the stirring and terrible events which I had just passed through. Well do I remember how grieved I was how I with others of my company had spoken such hard things about Generals Johnson and Polk. When in my feavorish moments I reflected how Gen Polk that sabath day after his corps had been held back as a reserve for hours lying in line of battle with shot and shell plowing through our ranks carrying death and destruction in their wake and we not alowed to advance or retreat "the most trying position that a soldier was ever placed in" the contending lines in front even in full view first one time advancing and

then retreating with our hearts filled sometimes with fear and then with joy as success or defeat seemed to crown our efforts as they appeared stretched out before us in the valley below came riding down in front of our lines mounted on his magnificent horse charger as magnificent a specimen of nobler courageous manhood I then thought and still think I had ever seen with his sword unsheathed and pointing toward our retreating and broken line in our front with the federal line in pursuit wheeling his horse to the front as he reached the center of our regiment strengthening himself in his stirrups with fire flashing from his eyes. Follow your Granny and led the charge. From that moment to the time of his death "which was in the front of our line of battle" that disgraceful epithet never again escaped the lips of a brave soldier for one and all felt that there dwelt within the breast of Gen Polk the noblest most courageous soul that ever drew sword in defence of human liberty. From that moment his corps loved and worshiped him until his deplored death and still revere him as few heroic commanders have been loved and worshiped in the worlds history.

And again as I lay there I thought how we had wronged our dear commanding general Albert S. Johnston how he had retreated presenting all the time a brave front to the enemy all the way from Bowling Green Ky to Shiloh concentrating as he could the scattering command from every quarter in his military district until he had a sufficient force to meet the advancing foe at the most strategic point that could have been chosen all the time undergoing the most severe criticism that any commander ever had heaped upon his head by an impetuous ignorant people unacquainted with the strategic operations of a military commander having to overcome almost unsurmountable obstacles yet with all this great responsibility upon his mind and shoulders he planned one of the most daring brilliant and successful campaigns of this or any other war considering the difficulties under which he had to contend. So alive to the stinging and as he well knew unjust reproaches with which he was accused he went into the battle. and so anxious was he when the momentous moment arrived that the centre of the enemies line of battle should be pierced with his great sword? still smarting under the unjust criticisms that had been heaped upon his deserved military fame as a commander he led the charge that pierced the centre of the Federal line and although wounded he was so anxious to follow up the advantage gained which he knew meant utter rout and capture of Grants entire army that

he would not stop long enough to have his wound dressed until he fell dying from his horse from a wound that ought not to have proved fatal if he had have stoped and had it treated in time thus died in my opinion one of the greatest Generals the world has ever seen and a battle won and lost if he could have lived coming so swiftly after the battles of Bullrun and Manassas that would have changed the map of the united states for if he had have lived Grants army would have been destroyed. Our army thrown across the Tennessee river Bull over taken and destroyed before he could have reached Louisville Ky together with the depression of the North from the previous victories of Bull run and Masassus would have in my opinion ended the war. Thus often it is that ones greatess and true worth is not appreciated until after death has claimed the victor. Thus after being in the hospital for some time I was furlowed and after spending a few weeks with loved ones at home I returend to my command which was then at Corrinth. Corrinth the mere mention of the name to this day depresses my soul as no other name on this earth Why. Because it was here that the first dart of doubt pierced my soul of the ultimate success of the confederate cause. It was here that the reorganisation of the army took place. It was here that all the officers of my regament "except one" that was not reelected left their comrades and went home never as I recolect to take up armes in defence of their country again hundred and thousands privates deserted on that account and went home. Many were brought back and I have seen five and six at a time marched out in the presence of the army and shot and in addition to this Typhoid fever and Dysentery broke out and claimed its thousands on account of poluted wells water. So frightful was the disease that the army was moved to Impelo? Miss I with many others were stricken with the disease and had to be moved to Columbus Miss. Where after a long illness I recoverd and again joind my command just as it was about to be moved to Chatanooga. We were carried over the M & O to Mobile where I first caught a glimpse of magnolia groves and the deep blue sea and also of mobile oisters. Well, do I remember the oisters for we had been living very hard and on light rations for some time I saw some of the soldiers place the shells in the fire and as they would open take them out pull them fully open pour in pepper sauce loosen them with the knife in shell lift the shell to mouth and pour the contents in mouth give a swallow and a gulp and down it would grin being very hungry I thought I would try one

myself Somehow the thing wouldn't go down I thought I would chew it but the more I chewed the larger it got. One of the boys saw my predicament and hollered out you fool why dont you swallow it I again tried but some how it hung again and I thought I was about to choke the boys while one shook the other beat me in the back and by some means it went down and from that day I have never tried a fresh oyster. We crossed the bay went by way of Montgomery Atlanta and then to Chattanooga at every depot along the way the mothers and daughters would cheer us and hand us boquetts of beautiful flowers with the donors name and address attached. Many letters of thanks left camp after we reached Chattanooga and to my knowled many a sad heart in the lonely and trying hours that followed in camp and hospital was brightened by the correspondents that grew out of the presentation of those flowers and after the cruel war was over many a soldier boy wandered back to Alabama & Georgia to plead his cause and some were succesful In 1862 General Brag was placed in command of army Then commenced weary hours of drilling picked[t] duty and hard work on fortifications The river divided the two armies. Often time a truce would be agreed to between the pickets between guard mounts and they would lay down their guns and hollow across river hellow Johny Reb or hellow Yank first have a friendly chat and trade a little. the reply would come back all right. Some bar or log in middle of river would be selected and they would meet by swimming from both sides to the dessignated place and there carry on a friendly conversation and exchange knives for Tobacco Sugar for Coffee and then again swim back to our respective posts and hollow out get to cover for if either side showed his head a bullet would whisk and very frequently it would hit the mark. I mention this to show that there wasent animosity between the true soldierry on either side In the early fall of 1862 Gen Brad commenced his march into Ky. We crossed river above Chatanooga and cross the mountain at--bass which was very dificult for the wagons to pass throug. When we arrived at top of mountain I dont think I have every seen such lucious peaches that were hanging on the trees in the orchards on each side of road as we passed for miles and miles and according to orders we were not allowed to brake ranks and to even get a peach when our stomachs was naughing and mouths watering for just one bite. I thought of the Greek fable of Tantalus starving and every delacacy surrounding him just out of reach But fortunately for our mess we



had a faithful colored servant that that night after camp was pitched came up with several haver sacks full of the delicious fruit. Oh what a feast it seems like in my imagination I can taste those peaches to this day. We marched on day after day the two armies moving parallel with each other. the goal being Louisville no one knew which army would arrive first until Perryville was reached and there was fought the battle of Perryville where a great many of our boys were killed Our regiment in this battle making one of the grandest and most heroic charges as any army ever made Right in the front of our regiment was a fine battery of Napoleon guns which our Brigade was ordered to charge which was stationed upon a high hill which was creating sad havoc in our ranks. We charged up that hill and captured that fine battery by at the price of many a noble life our color bearer Charley Gibbs the noblest and most heroic soul that ever died on any battle field was killed as he placed our regimental colors upon the center ... of the battery. We carried the battery off the field and it became our Brigade battery during the remainder of the war until the battle of Nashville it having been posted on Hoods extreme left. being outflanked by the enemy after every horse was killed and our brigade had to cut our way through to make our escape but in so doing many an eye was wet and many a heart was sad when we had to leave our dear Napoleon behind that had never failed to speak in clear and sweet tones to our soldier ears dealing death and destruction to the foe on every battle field in which our Brigade had been engaged since its capture to that fateful Dec morn. Although the enemy was defeated and driven off the field by morning they were reinforced and as we were outflanked and outnumbered we had to retire the next day leaving our wounded within the federal lines to Camp Dick Robinson. Before this advance into Ky. while in and around Chattanooga our rations were very scant and hard. The cattle which were furnished us for beef were very poor. It was said among the boys "and with some truth that every morning the cattle were driven around the pen and those that could not run were killed for the daily ration any way it was poor ... and very tough. It was so tough we had to hang it up in the smoke to tender it and when it got tender enough for the finger to stick into it when pressed against it it was in a condition to be cooked. Such was our fare when we entered Ky. Then do you wonder that our hearts as well as our stomachs were made glad when great fat Ky bluegrass steer were driven into our camps. I never will forget the first meal

I made on that Ky beef I can taste it yet. But it was too good to last for in a few days we had to leave camp Robinson and commenced our retreat out of Ky through the wild cat section which is a very hilly and rough section of country. As it was Gen Braggs custom to always push his wagon trains far to the rear on a retreat it was no exception on this occasion. I suppose he acted on the principal of the hibernating bear as he had been fattening us on Ky beef for several weeks that we would not starve until all the fat was consumed by the system. However that may be at any rate he did not issue us any rations for several days except salt and one ear of corn a day to season it. Being reduced to extreme extremities our faithful colored cook volunteered to go on one of his scouts for grub for the mess as we had strict order not to leave ranks. But as the settlers of that section were all gorrellars?? we advised him to keep with the troops be he contrary to our advice went but he never returned no doubt his bones now bleaches in that inhospital section a victim to his loyalty to the Confederate cause a nobler or truer heart never beat in the breast of any living being although it pulsed within a colored breast. Peace to his ashes. We continued our retreat by way of Cumberland gap to Knoxville and there for the first time for 3 long weary days and nights we were issued rations and it seemed to me although it was cold water corn bread and beef it was a feast good enough for the gods. The army was moved from Knoxville to Murfreesborough. I recollect passing over the mountains and coming down into the beautiful valey of the sequatsie at Loudon and following same to Sp. it is truly a beautiful valley with mountain ranges on each side the beautiful Sequatsie river clear and sparkling running its entire length it beautiful little coves and pretty white collages and fertile green pastures makes it as pretties and lovely a scene as one would wish to look upon. After leaving the valley we crossed the Cumberland mountain near Winchester The country which we had been passing throug although beautiful to look upon had been striped of almost everything in the way of provisions. So that when we descended into the section around Winchester I recollect a field of corn in full rostineers was bought and the troops were given full persession. I remember one great big stout fellow I my company said this is one time I am going to have a full stomach one again and he did to my knowledge eat 3 dosen rosteneers for supper without stopping to rest his jaws. I expected he would be dead by morning but to my great astonishment he was up by

day light next morning as gay as a lark hollowing for more roosting ears We moved on at slow stages until we reached Murfresborough and there remained until after the battle of Murfresborough or Stones river. Well do I remember the morning of the battle when Cheatams division was ordered to the left of the line of battle crossed stones river and took position in an open field in rear of front line of battle which was then engaged with the shot and shell plowing through our ranks. While we lay there General Cheatam rode down in front of our line the bullets raining like hail pointing to the advancing line our front line having retired for us to take their place and said-"he always caled us his boys" charge we checked the line and drove them across the field into a cedar thicket and over the hill beyond and held the position all that night. It was intensely cold that night but we could not build fires on account of it being a target for the enemies sharpshooters. On account of the intense cold whiskey was issued to our division that night the first time during the war and the last. We held our position all that night and all next day. but after Breckenridge made his fatal and unsuccessful charge and failed to carry the enemys left. Bragg quietly at night retired and so did Rosencranz both armies running from each other Rosencranz to Nashville Bragg to Shelbyville the first occurrence of the kind in the annals of war. Let me relate an incident that occurred in that battle to illustrate how hardened and unfeeling we had become to suffering and death when outside of our own company & regiment. While we were lying in rear of our first line of battle a soldier was shot and in his death struggles it sounded just like the death squeel of a hog that had been struck in the head with an ax and our whole line burst out into a great war of lafter. Although men were being shot and killed every few moments in our own ranks our army retreated to Shelbyville and so demoralised were the enemy that we went into winter quarters and remained through out the winter and on into the spring and summer. Then the army began its backward march to Chatanooga. Then commenced the great strategic movement that terminated in the battle of Chickamauga which occurred on Sept 19" 1863 which I think was one of the greatest battles of the western army. After weeks of marching and counter marching the countending armies eventually confronted each other along the banks of the Chickamauga creek. Well, do I remember an event that occurred that immediately preceded that memorable battle in which I was personally interested. The country at that time owing to

the continuous presence of so large an army was almost destitute of provisions. by by some means or other our mess had procured an old rooster and the day before the battle we had put him on to boil but before he had sufficiently cooked we all setting around like half starved wild animals eargally eying the boiling pot as the delicious aroma arose and was wafted to our highly sensory alfactory nerves our minds and almost famished stomachs was wrought up to the highes pitch of excitment and expectancy when we contemplated what intense joy and satisfaction those fragrant morsals would create when safely deposited within our half starved stomach Just at this time the bugal sounded a detailed was called for to go on picket and as no dely was possible the rest of my mess was selected for the picket posts and I being at that time one of the color guard who wer at all times excused from picket duty was left sole custodian of the thoroughly cooked and fragrant rooster When the five stalward fellows left "six constituted a mess" the leader of the mess turnd to me and said, look here Walker you take one sixth of that Rooster and put the rest away for us and if you eat any more than your sharr it wont be good for you when we come off picket I said all right boys. Well after the boys had departen I put the Rooster on a board and carved him up in to six eequal shares and fell to eating and when I had finished my allotted portion my apetite was keener than ever So craving was my apetite and longing for a few more morsels that I thought I would just take a small portion from each share but the more I ate the more my stomach called for that rooster untile I am ashamed to say it I ate the whol Rooster and not only the meat but soped up the gravy in the pot and like a wild animal of the forest after my apetite was satiated I lay down and went fast to sleep How long I slept I could never tell. I know in the contented condition of a full stomach I was dreaming of home and loved ones. and after while I dreamed that I was in the preasence of the loved one of my dreames and that she had clasped her tender sweet arms around my neck and the sensation was so thrilling that I awok but alas instead of my dreames being a reality when I fully came to my self I was in the grasp of those five half starved boy just off of picket four of them had hold of each one of my limbs and the fifth was slipping a large piece of wood between my teeth strugling and unable to articulate on account of the piece of wood that by this time he had gotton between my teeth and pursed my mouth open I said what does this mean. the big fellow that was looking after my head said be quiet

my boy we will show you in a few minutes. and he took from out his shirt pocket a long rubber tube about 6 or 7 feet long about the size of my finger with a bulb in centre with a funnel at the end and without lubricating it he will of an ... ramed half that tube down my throat and commence pouring in water into that funnel by the quart he would pour in water and then start the pump and chicken an bread gallore would come pouring out like a never ceasing fountain until the last vestage of that Rooster was out of my stomach and then he said I will pour in a half gallon for good measure for fear that some of the gravy might be left as they let me up after having removed the gag from between my the spokesman said now dam you we determined if our stomachs couldnt get part of that chicken yours shouldnt you may imajion what a rage I was in. The whole squad the minute they released me broke and ran I looked for my gun but it was gone they had taken it out of the tent before the operation commenced raging like a maniac treatening dire vengeance on the whole set. The bugar sounded orders wer heard far and wide fall in ranks boy the enemy are advancing all hatred and dire vengeance gone every man to his place the word of command was given forward march double quick the Chickamore creek was crossed and the battle of Chickamauga was on

Crossing the creek line of battle was formed and immediately in our front across a small clearing on the oposite side of clearing on an elevated ridge the enemy was posted behind breast works of rails The order charge the breast works wer given the line swing forward and from some cause a halt was made in centre of file orders were given to lie down and fire right in front of our file was a larg pine tree 3 or 4 feet in diameter we at once placed ourselves behind that tree and began to fire thinking we were were fortunate in having such a protection but as we soon found out to our sorrow the enemy had an enfilading firer on our line and that tree became the target and before the line advanced to take the fortified line which they did every soule behind that tree was either killed or wounded the writer among the number wounded The whole squad myself among the number with whom I had been so enfuriated at a few hours before were either dead or wounded and the dear old rough burley fellow that had manipulated the stomach pump had his arm shattered at the sholder joint and as I thoug mortally wounded As I lay there with my wounded dying & dead comrads around me amid the groanings of the wounded and dying mixed with the exalted yells of the charging

and victorious combatants the smoke and roar of canon and musketry the exploding of shells and the whis of bullets there came a horror over my sould?? in my famished and pained condition that no pen can depict or tongue can utter I was carried back to the field hospital and there I saw sights I hope it will never be my misfortune to ever see again. arms and legs thrown in a heap by the hundreds right close to where I lay waiting to have my wound dressed Having been sent back farther to the rear I remained in hospital until my wounds was heald I again rejoined my command on missionary ridge in front of Chattanooga. Let me remark here before passing on farther with my personal experiances that immediately prior to the battle of Chickamauga while the armies were maneuvering for positions that the 9" Tenn regiment was placed on picket duty on top of Look out Mountain and that when Bragg withdrew his army from around Chatanooga and that to my personal knowlege ther wasnt a dosen Confederate Soldiers on there mountain when Hooker made his celebrated charge above the clouds. That monument at point lookout to commermorate Hookers "great achievement" is all fuss and feathers there is not a word of truth in it. A few days before the commencement of the battle of Missionary ridge Maney's brigade of Cheatams division was on picket duty at the foot of the ridge. While there we had to exchange positions with other commands very frequently I recolect one night it was raining very hard and very cold we were ordered to change our positions and move up the line cold and rainy as it was we had to roll out of our little burch shacks "for we had no tents at that time" and when the line halted right behind me was a very cosy looking shack made of hickry poles filled with straw and covered with bark I thought I was in luck and rolled in and as the rain pattered upon the little roof above my head I fell peasfully to sleep to be awakened in about an hour in the greatest agony I think I was ever in. the Gray Back had made there first charge and from that time to the close of the war although they might be routed for awhile they persistently renewed the charge on every occasion when the opertunity offered and I must say the opertunity was very frequently offerd. Previous to the battle of Missionary ridge Cheatams division "which formally was composed wholly of Tenn troops" was partially taken away from him and given to other commands while their places wer filled by other state troops In the exchange Days Brigade of Alabama troops was given to our division which caused great dissatisfaction with both officers and men and President Davis

was bitterly blamed for making the change. Well do I remember that morning after our Brigade had been formed in line of battle on top of ridge above the tunnel with the whole federal army massed in the open plain at its lease in four dense dark lines of battle each line marching in close formation behind the preceding line We had only one line. Gen Cheatham we always called him Mars Frank" came walking along our lines with tears in his eyes he said they have taking my boys away from me but what of you remains we will fight it to the bitter end. See those massed lines in our front if we succeed we will have to use stones instead of bullets Fall to my lads and rowl heaps of these great stones to the edge of the ridge and when the lines commence climbing the ridge let loose on bolder after another down the mountainside We piled up those stones and when the lines of battle commenced to assend we let them loos one after another all along our line and as we did you could see boulder after boulder shooting down the mountainside leaping and bounding hitting rocks and trees in their path leaping sometimes 30 and 40 feet at each leap gaining momentum as they desended and by the time they reached the first line it seemed that the whole mountain side was in an eruption such an avelanch of stones was desending upon their lines It was such an appaling sight that the whole massed collumn broke and fled down the mountain side in terrify flight with the stones sweeping throug their ranks leaving great gaps and they never could be induced to charge that point again thoug they charged later to our left and broke through Days Alabama brigade and Mars Frank always said until the close of the war if he had have had his old brigade in its place the enemy never would have broke his line But be that as it may our line to the left was broken and we had to beat a hasty retreat to keep from being captured I will never forget that night retreat, It was bitter cold

way along in the night our command was halted pickets was thrown out on our right and orders came from Gen Cheatham that when the march again commenced that we must march with as little noise as possible as the enemy had cut us off from the rest of the army that we had to make a detour and cross the river lower dow at a ford unbeknown to the enemy we marched pretty well all night over the roughest mountain road I have ever traveled until just before day the head of collumn reach the ford all the while the enemy was passing paralel to our line of march on the main pike. General Cheatham stood on bank and as each file

passed going down the bank he would say boys keep quiet if you make the least noise we are lost. file after file plunged in to that icy flood 4 feet deep struggling to reach the opposite shore holding guns and accouterments upon top of their heads with bated breath and chattering teeth waist deep in that ice cold water oh how I dreaded my turn as my file reached the edge of water we plunged in with clinched teeth for fear our breath would come out in such force that it would end in a scream as we plunged waist deep in to that cold water but it proved too severe an ordeal for one of my file who was a great big fellow and as we stepped in to the water to our waists he hollered out to the top of his voice Jesus Christ God Almighty. but with few exceptions we passed over very quietly and struck the mountain trail and was soon on its top struck the main road with the enemy in our rear safe from capture at last we reached a safe place to camp about sun rise with our clothes frozen stiff upon us after one of the most trying night marches I experienced during the war From this point we continued our retreat in an orderly manner until we arrived at Dalton Georgia having several rear guard battles on the way for we Cheatham or Clabourns divisions were one or the other always on rear guard duty when on retreat or advance when we approached the enemy a dangerous and trying position but one we soldiers always took great pride in for Clabourns and Cheatham divisions were called the crack divisions of the western army. Dalton reached we went into winter quarters and then commenced the reorganization of the army General Bragg was superseded by Gen Joe Johnston and then commenced rigid drill & sham battles in one of which I was slightly wounded in face by a ramrod from the gun of a careless soldier. The winter was very severe so much so that we had to build close log huts with large wooden chimneys and fire places We had very heavy snows that winter and the only recreation we indulged in was snow balling one regiment would be pitted against another commanded by our officers I recollect one particular battle we had that winter It was a battle between Cheatham's division and some Alabama & Georgia divisions Our division was commanded by Gen Jordan "I think it was" now our Congressman from Tenn Each man had his haversack filled with snow balls while piles of balls were heaped in our rear with runners to supply our haversack as they became empty. The enemy had been for some days challenging us to mortal combat. We accepted the challenge were placed in position and word was sent by courier that they might



expect an attack at any moment. We eventually toward evening made the attack and completely routed the foe driving them through and capturing their camps the biggest snow battle on record five or six thousand men having been engaged During the winter a federal force was being sent from Memphis into Mississippi against Forest and our division was sent to reinforce him We went by way of Atlanta Montgomery & Selma. When we left Dalton a heavy snow was on the ground when we reached Montgomery the flowers were in bloom the atmosphere was mild so much so we slept at night under the trees wrapped in our blankets without the least discomfort when we reached Demopolis it was learned that Forest had gained a great victory and completely routed his opponent and we were recalled to Dalton. Which when we arrived we found still covered in snow A very amusing incident occurred while we were at Selma with one of my company A splendid fellow a graduate of a splendid university and as brave as Julius Caesar generous to a fault but very peevish and fretful over matters over which he had no control one of his troubles was that he had a sweet heart back in Tenn about which he spent many a restless night fretful that one of our boys that had been disabled discharge and sent back home would supplant him in her affections. While we were waiting at the wharf for our steamer to take us back to Montgomery an elegant dressed handsome fellow in citizen's clothes came into our regiment enquiring for this member of our company. They met was overjoyed to meet again having been separated for several years after their graduation from their alma mater. Conversation drifted along for some time and my friend said how are you getting along since the war commenced he replied oh fine I have just married one of the finest girls you ever saw yours which you use to rave about while in college can't compare with her I saw that the remark touched a sensitive spot his lip turned pale and quivered and he replied I would like to know why you are here at home "for Selma was his home" dressed in citizen's clothes married and not in the army He replied it is this way there was a fellow here in Selma whose father got him out of the army on the 30 Negro law that has been enacted into law that was about to marry my girl and so I got the old man to get my discharge under the same law he procured the discharge "his father being a very wealthy Alabama planter" I came home persuaded the girl to reject the other fellow and take me and so here I am. The shaft struck home to this fretful peevish nature but I am proud to say his

patritism and honor rose above the temptation he stuck to his colors to the last returned home after the surrender and married his girl after all. But let me remark here that that accursed 30 Negro Exemption law caused thousands of less firm and determined soldiers than this soldier to desert their collors and return home I think it was the greatest factor for dissatisfaction that perplexed the minds of the southern souldier during the sivel war as spring came an drills and sham battles were renewed After our division returned to Dalton a limited number of furlows wer isued I was one of the fortunate ones and procured an absence from my command of 30 days. I went to S C to a friend of mine and had a delightful time and on my return to my command having to pass Marretta Georgia where my old comrade that had so skilfully manipulated the Stomach pump was still confined in the hospittal I stoped "having a few day left of my furlow" to see how he was getting along. When I entered the hospittal I inquired of the Phycician about the condition of my friend and with a sad face he said my dear sir your friend has made a brave fight I had to make a second amputation of his arm blood poison has set up and he is now dying With a sad heart I entered his ward and there he lay a perfect reck of his former self pale and extremly emaciated But as I entered he with dificulty extended his left hand and said Walker I am glad to see you old fellow and as I grasped his emaciated hand I noticed a beautiful girl sitting by his bead side with a bibl opened in her hand from which sh had been reading to him God bless the girls of our south land for the noble work they did in the hospittles among the sick an dying during the war "he said Jennie this is Walker I have so often told you about the one I pumped that chicken out of his stomach" with a sad smile sh lef the room saying she would call again in a few hours After enquiring about the boys he said Walker I have had a hard time just then the old Surgeon came in and taking him by the hand said Sweet if you have any messages to send home you had better attend to it soon for I dont think you can live many days. Dr I am sorry to hear you say that you have been starving me now for 3 months as you say I am bound to dy cant I have a square meal. He replyed yes my boy you can have any thing you want and left the room with a sad face When he had left the room he called to his nurse and said Pat look under my pillow and get that 20 dollar Confedarate bill out of my purse and go over to the hotel and tell them to send me a square meal if it takes the entire bill In a short time the nurse brought in as

fine a meal as I have ever seen Join in old fellow he said an commenced to eat and I dont think I ever saw such a meal eaten by any one as he ate that night Noticing that I was just prenting to eat for the life of me I could not swallow a mouthful for realy I thought he would be dead before morning" he said what is the matter with you I made some evasive answer and sat there and saw him eat that entire meal. then he quietly and peasfully fell asleep. I really expected he would never awake He slept all night woke up in morning and had the meal repeated and quietly fell to sleep again and about 12 that day the Surgeon called he greeted him with a smile and said Dr I am not dead yet. The Dr examined him and as he did I saw his face brighten as he said my boy you are better I think you may recover. He replied yes I know I will if you will give me 3 square meals a day. And he did recover and by the time the army reached Marietter several months later he had sufficiently recovered to be carried farther south and eventually home and after the close of the war he came back to Georgia to plead his cause with his little girl friend who had been so kind to him but she told him no. that her heart was annothers but she still loved him as a dear friend He took his defeat bravely and as he thought of the other soldiers success and his failure he said the words of this couplet came to his mind The sadest thoughts of tounge or pen Tis it might have been

He returned home and eventually married one of the sweetest and best woman I ever knew raised a large family of bright children lives in Ark went to the State Legislature is still living loved and respected by all that comes within his genial influence

I mentioned this little insidence to show you what determined heroic souls the Confederate army was composed Is it any wonder that the heroism of the Confederate soldier is famed the world over.

I returned to my command and as spring advanced drills and sham battles were renewed In one of which I was painfully wounded by a ramrod shot from the gun of a carless soldier and by the time the Dalton capain opened Johnson had the most thorally drilled and organised army the south had in the field. So thoroughly drilled compact and imbued with confidence in Gen Johstons ability to cope with Sherman that when he said advance or retreat they obeyed implicetly with out a murmur believing that when the proper time came that he would completely rout and destroy Shermans army and I believe to this day that if Davis had

have let him have his way that Sherman would never have reached the Sea. When Sherman commenced his advance on Dalton Johnson placed his army on the mountain range on either side the gap that led into the town beyond the range. A fine view was caught of the enemy as it approached our lines but as our position was a very strong one Sherman moved his army to our left and we were forced to fall back on Resaca. There was one difference of Johnson's disposition of his army from that of Bragg I noticed and that was this when Bragg was expecting a battle he invariably issued 3 days rations and sent the commissary train to the rear and if we had a battle and had to retreat "which we generally had to do" we never caught up with those wagons for days until they were far in the rear in perfect safety for when a Quartermaster heard firing in his rear he moved his train on the double quick and it was impossible to stop him until his train was far in the rear and completely out of danger so that the army suffered severely for want of rations before it could catch up with the train. But we saw at a glance that the train was placed directly in our rear and if we retreated it moved back leisurely as we moved and when we stopped the train was always there and rations distributed on all occasions so much so that there never was a day while Johnson commanded the army that we did not get regular rations each day under all circumstances which was so different from the course pursued by Bragg it kept the army in good spirits and it created a confidence in our commander that we had never had before for we felt that he had confidence in his ability to cope with his foe so much so that he was never afraid to risk his supplies in close touch with his army.

As we were out flanked the army had to be moved to the rear and occupied a new position at Resaca. I will remark here that there was a belief among the rank and file at that time in the army "and it is held to be correct at the present time by all historical facts" that Sherman's army outnumbered Johnson more than two to one. which will explain why he continuously retreated from Dalton to Atlanta on account of superiority of numbers where by enabling Sherman when his adversary took a position that he was not able to carry by direct attack on account of his superior numbers force him to retreat by flank movements thus creating an impression among our great stay at how Generals and our cabinet at Richmond that he was an inefficient commander which ultimately caused him to be superseded by Hood

which the whole army almost to a man bitterly resented trusting and idolizing him to the last and which our authorities regretted afterwards when it was too late when months afterwards after the army had been demoralised and almost ruined was compelled to call him back to the command in order that he might reorganise and bring it back to its former effectiveness no doubt they remembered his firm but wise words when they demand him to hold Atlanta at all hazards "I would not sacrifice the life of our brave soldier in the defence of Atlanta if by so doing I did not think it would be for the best interests of the Confederate cause Grand or nobler words never proceeded from the heart and brain of any lover of humanity or his country the world over But to return to Resaca. Our position was vigorously assailed but to be defeated by heavy loss of the enemy They fell back and occupied a new position on a range of hills running parallel to our line directly in our front during the night both armies threw out pickets and when the sun arose the next morning the enemy saw that our picket line was well entrenched. Let me explain the manner and way in which we pickets on the firing lines entrenched ourselves. and especially during the Dalton Campaign As a general thing our picket line was posted at night. as soon as each squad was assigned its position on line our guns were placed on ground behind our position off went our coats and accouterments bayonets were unfixed and with the unfixed bayonet each man commenced to loosen the dirt and then scoop it up with our tin plates and throw it out. on the ground in our front facing the enemies line this was continued until a trench was dug 3 feet deep 3 deep an 6 long together with the excavated dirt formed a pretty fair protection and it was marvelous how expert we became in this line of work and how soon we would be able to build our little fort sufficiently strong to protect ourselves from the enemies shot and shell for often the lines of battle would not be more than 3 or 4 hundred yards apart Just before day the squad in my immediate front called for water and thinking I could carry them the water and return before the sharpshooters ... sufficiently to shoot I carried the water but as I was about to return to the protected line a battery of Tarrat guns opened and there I had to stay in the hot broiling sun the entire day. Never while I live will I forget that terrible day. The gunners of that Tarrat battery got the exact range of our little fort and commenced to throw their shots & shell into the little pile of dirt that the boys had thrown out of the ditch passing through it over the top of ditch and

burying themselves in the side of hill in our rear as the day wore slowly on the range became more accurate so much so that we had to continuously work with our tin pans to keep the loose dirt that was thrown into the ditch by the shot from filling the ditch. and as the day wore on the shot began to strike into the solid ground of our ditch to such a degree that by nightfall one of the five in that ditch was dead having expired? by a solid and two more wounded from shells. The dead boy we placed on top of ditch to give more room and when the enemy saw it them cheering all along the line. The two wounded we placed flat in ditch and as the dirt would be thrown in upon them they would have to place their hats over their faces to protect their eyes while the two of us who were unhurt continued to bail out the dirt that was continually being thrown in to the ditch. Oh how we longed for night. It at last came and when we were relieved we found that our command had been withdrawn and was then crossing the river. We with the assistance of the relief guard bore our wounded comrades to a house in the village. and hurriedly cross the bridge which was soon blown up to prevent the enemy from crossing Thus ended one of the terriblest days I spent during the war. The army slowly fell back to Dalis and there again entrenched and after charging our lines again having lost heavily we were again flanked out of our position to again retire and again entrench at Lost Mountain. Here as before a severe battle was fought and the enemy repulsed I think it was here that General Polk while in front of our lines in a very exposed position while observing the position of the contending army was instantly killed by a shell. Several of his officers having previously warned him to leave his dangerous position as he was in range of the enemy guns. Thus died one of the grandest noblest & bravest Generals of the war respected loved and mourned by the whole army & country he having on several occasions had the command of the army offer him but always refused saying in his modest way there are others more capable than myself. But as before not being able to break our lines we were flanked again to take position at New Hope Church where another severe battle was fought but the night after the battle of the day one of the most memorable battles of the war occurred the Lightning bug battle as it was called by the army It was this way after the battle of the day while the two armies were lying confronting each other we momentarily expecting the enemy to renew the charge night with dark and lowering clouds hanging dark and low over the contending

lines with the pickets continuous fire ringing in our ears all at once a vast army of lightning bugs descended and hovered over the enemies lines and their flashes of light resembled so perfectly the flashes of musketry at night that our line of battle thought that the enemy were making a night attack and the whole line opened fire and as we opened fire the enemy concluded we were also advancing and they opened in return and for hours each line with both musketry and artillery poured volley after volley into imaginary foes After again having our lines turned we again took position on Kenesaw Mountain in front of Marietta. Here occurred one of the most terrific battles of the campaign. Our whole line was charged and in our front the ground after the battle was as thickly covered with blue coated Yanks as if thousands of blackbirds had alighted upon the ground. Geff Davices division charged in our front and it was said that half of his command was left dead on the field. A flag of truce to bury the dead was denied by the federals at our request and for days the purifying bodies unburied lying in heaps in a few feet of our rifle works the stench of which was almost unendurable The enemy after repeated attempts to take our lines and failed commenced to advance their lines by paralleling and in a few days their lines were so close to ours that we could hear their voices in an ordinary conversation and also hear their pick as they approached our position with their tunnel for the purpose of blowing up our works in order to make a breach that they might pierce our line But before the tunnel was finished our line was charged. And we again slowly moved to the rear fighting as it were inch by inch without a single pang of fear of defeat so confident were we of ultimate victory until the Chalahoochee river was reached and crossed and we found ourselves in front of Atlanta the gateway city of the south after having retreated over one hundred miles fought 10 regular battles and numerous small ones covering a period of over four months having been during the whole of those 4 months continuously under the enemys fire night and day either asleep or awake either building entrenchments or on picket advancing or retreating the whole time taken up with the determination both among men and officers to eventually annihilate Sherman entire army For the impression was firmly fixed in the minds of the whole army the the plan of our General was Fabian like to draw the enemy farther in to the interior thereby lengthning and weakning his line of communication with the natural consequence of discouragement and

weakening of his numbers with Forest collecting a army to destory his line of communication made us feel and believe "and I still believe it as firmly now as then" that the time was near at hand when this much desired event would be accomplished. But in the midts of these high hopes and ambitions a rumor was spred through the camp that President Davis had removed Gen Johnson from the command of the army and that Gen Hood had been selected to take his place. I will never forget those ... (70) hours of uncertainty that racked our minds until the uncertainty became a burning reality. Then the terable bitter passions of our souls following the blasting of ourd cherished hopes and fond expectations of our beloved country hopes broke fourth with an irresistable force that swept reason comon sense and love of country away like chaff before the hurricans tremendous blast until men that had never before dreamed much less thought of deserting there colors swore that before they would submit to such conditions that they would throw down their arms surrender and return to their desolate homes Such was the conditons that prevailed throuout the army that had Gen Johnson encourage it the army would have disbanded But he knowing their intense feelings although himself smarting under the sting of unjust criticism wrongs envy and ignorance of his enemies in private & official circles suffering the humileation that was heaped upon him and forseeing the dire calamity that awaited his beloved army and country submitted to the injustice advised his army to be true to their colors and their country and quietly left the army. After the first surging passions of our souls passed gloom and dispondency prevailed but so thourally was the army trained to obey implicitly orders that when on the 20 of June Hood ordered an attack on Shermans lines on Peach Tree Creek that they rushed to the charge with their old time enthusiasm although to all appearances it seemed to be rushing into the very jaws of death which proved to be the case for we wer repulsed with fearful loss. We withdrew and that night moved around to the left of the enemies position. Hood thinking to take Shermans by surprise but to his surprise Sherman had proceeded him and entrenched his army behind 3 lines of breast works. The charge although under so unfavorable conditions was again ordered our lines forward at double quick drove the enemy from the firs two lines back on their 3 line fearful loss to our army. As the orders were given for the colors to be forwarded with a halt "and as I was with the colors that day" when the second line when I



reached the second without halting push on for the 3 line while passing from the second line to the third as I felt I was in touch with the guard on my left & right presuming that the line was also advancing "the smoke being so dense that all objects were obscured" we still advanced I noticed that the guard on my left fell after I had advanced about 30 yards from said line but as I was still in touch with the guard on my right thinking that the space would soon fill up I still advanced until the colors were placed on top of the third line just as that was done the guard on my left fell forward and plunged head forward into the ranks of the enemy pieced by a bullet as he fell forward into the trnch with the enemy the order reached my ears surrender just then a puff of wind lifted the smoke and to my horror there was not a confederate soldier to be seen. We three as far as I have ever been able to learn made that charge alone on that part of the line the rest of the line having stoped at the second line of the enemies works. You will no doubt ask did you obey orders. yes I did. for it was a universal order never to surrender the colors and I brought those colors back to our line well I would say at the rate of a mile a minute. We held the enemies second line that night. the enemy fell back during night from their 3 line and left us in possission of the field but before they lift they burried their dead in the trench of their 3 line.

As we held the field the next morning details wer sent out to gather up the dead for burrial and as I had been the only one who know where my comrades fell I was sent with a squad to recover their bodies. The first one which was shot down we found where he fell the other that fell into the enemies trenches behind there works we never found for the enemy had burned him by covering him up with their dead in the trench where he fell Their names were Tom & Roe Estis two as brave boys as ever doned a soldiers uniform or died for the cause for which they loved so well. After buring our dead our army moved to the left of the city and fought another terriffic battle the enemy this time charging our lines which charge we repulsed. After this battle Hood seems to have acted on the defencive and although the enemy never again while the army remained in front of the city renewed the attack yet there was a continuous picket battle going on night and day so much so to show how terriffic and countinuous it was bushels of bullets wer picked up off of the ground dayly behind our lines which was shot there from the enemies lines.

Let me here relate a little personal incident that occurred at this time while our army lay in front of Atlanta. The picket firing was so terrific as I have already stated that the whole army had to lay under cover night and day on account of the continuous shower of balls, so much so as even we had to dig pits and cover them over with logs and dirt in which to cook and eat our meals. Well one day I was rather late in getting to our pit for dinner the rest of mess having proceeded me and when I stooped down to enter the low door they were all seated eagerly devouring the scanty meal but just as I had descended the first step a minney ball from the enemy struck me in the side knocking the breath out of me and as I regained my breathe and consciousness I heard one of the boys say couldnt find the luck why couldnt that damned Yankkey bullet have struck him before he entered the door so that he wouldnt have fell on the table and ruined our dinner for in falling I had fell full length on the table breaking it down and ruining the dinner.

After they had gotten me off of the broken table and stretchered me out they commenced to examine me to see if I was very seriously wounded "which I was not" one of the mess fellows Walker that bullet payed havoc with your girls pin cushion case for every boy that had a girl at home as he had to mend his own clothes made him a pin cushion an elaborate affair large enough to hold buttons thread and all such things necessary beautifully embroidered to our eyes a joy and a beauty forever So highly did we prize them that we had them encased in heavy leather to protect them from rain and dust and wore them in our side shirt pocket next to our hearts as a priceless treasure such was the case that had caught the bullet tearing it and its contents into fragments but by its resisting power it had flattened the bullet stopping its force and there by saving my life In a few weeks I was well again and joined my regiment just as Hood was moving his army to the rear to check Shermons flank movement in front of Jonesborough but in the mean time while in camp I bundled that demolished pin cushion and the ball that had caused its wreck up into a bundle and sent it to its donor with this note attached you have been the means of saving my life and if I ever get through this cruel war you will have to say yes or no and when the cruel war was over I was faithful to my promise and to my intense delight and joy she said yes and I have always

thought she was the bravest best girl in the world for she married me when I didnt have a dollar in the world I could call my own

We wer hurriedly marched to Jonesboro Line of battle formed and the battle was on. Well do I remember as we moved forward to drive the enemy from a position they had taken "which was upon the top of a high range of hills" for the purpose of cutting off our retreat which was almos directly in or rear Hood having been completely out generated believing that when Shermon commenced the move he having recrossed the Chatachoochee river as a first(?) to make believe he was commencing to retreat in order to cover his intentions and recrossed the river lower down and striking our lines on the rear. Completely taking Hood by surprise so much so that he had to hurriedly move his army from the front of the city burn all his stors and hurry to Jonesbough to save his army, he having lost in the short space of time he had been in command of the army over one third of the army in killed and wounded and as we moved forward and charged that position I dont think a discouraged army ever met a more terriffic storm of shot an shell. The position was taken our rear again protected but with a great sacrifice of life. We held our position and rested on our arms that night to be attaked in return again in the morning. We held our position but again with fearful loss of life together with the capture of Gen Govans Brigade of Claborns Division which was cut off surrounded and captured during a flank movement of the enemy. As grand brave and heroic a body of soldiers as ever drew sword in defence of liberty. In spite of these terable disasters the army still held its position. But in one of the desperate charges of the enemy I was struck in my leg by a grapeshot was carried off field placed in a freight car packed in like cattle with many other soldiers without having our wounds dress to Macon Georgia and there remaind in the hospital until my wound was healed. While there General Johnson who had retired to Macon after he had been relieved of the command of the army often visited the Hospital and I often heard him with tears rowling down his face, as he passed up and down the ward looking at and speaking to the wounded and dying say poor boys this is terable and as he passed on speaking as it were to himself this is terable it ought never to have been it could have been avoided I then realized that he had a soul within him as tender as he was truly great After recovering from my wound I returned to my command which in the mean time had been

moved around to Florence Alabama and rejoined it at that place and from there started with the army on Hoods Nashville Campaign. Although the army was greatly reduced in numbers yet the idea of again entering on Tenn soil made us feel at least we Tennesseans bonant and happy. We crossed the Tenn below Florence and rapidly pushed on to Pulasky and then to Columbia where we first struck the enemy strongly entrenched. Columbia was flanked on the right and we struck the Columbia & Franklin pike at Spring Hill completely in Schoffields rear about 3 o'clock in evening and from some unknown cause which from that day to this has never been satisfactorially explained, we lay there parallel with the pike until the next morning not over one hundred yards from the pike and witnessed whole of Schoffield army pass in full view without the firing of a gun after the whole army had passed we took up our line of march again and followed in the enemies rear until we arrived at Franklin and found Scofield strongly entrenched behind formidable breast works this was let pass one of the best chances we boys in the ranks thought and I believe the best informed also think of the civil war of completely routing and completely destroying an army.

While pondering over the mystery of that particular part of that campaign I could but think of the lines of the immortal Shakespear.

There is a trade in the affairs of men  
When taken at their flood leads on to fortune  
Omitted all the rest of their lives are bound in shadows and miseries

We approach Franklin and instead of flanking as we did at Columbia a direct attack was made on the entire fortified line of the enemy. I will never forget that battle while memory retains its throne or this life shall last.

The enemy was strongly entrenched across a level plain in plain view in our front quietly awaiting our approach. Our line advanced over the hills and formed in double line of battle in the plain below. The command forward was given and as the lines moved forward all the bands in our army struck up the ... .. Dixieland I will live or die for Dixy/Something we aw soldiers had never heard before as we wer marching into battle.

With the strains of that inspiring music ... and ... our souls our lines sprang forward and captured the enemys picket line and without halting charged the breastworks of the enemy passing throug before reaching the works a very difficult obstruction of sharp spikes stuck

obliquely in the ground that broke up our lines and impeded our forward march but over coming and passing this we charged the main trenches under the most withering fire of the war and the wonder to me then and it is to me to this day that the whole army wasnt killed or wounded before we reached the works for we wer in full range of shot and shell for one half mile before we arrived at the fortifications. We charged the workes climbed up the seep embankments and in some places captured the line. Here it was that Gen Gordon leaped the workes and was captured But as Bates Division from some cause to our left failed to hold its position it caused the enemy to enfilade our lines so that hundreds of our men were shot down in the trenches as we were standing firing at the enemy on the oposite side of embankment not over 3 feet apart Here it was when we first reached the works that while sealing the embankment that young Sweet the last of my mess that had had started out with me at the commencement of the war shot throug the head and fell back against me he being a few feet in advance knocking me down and we both rolled into the ditch below together his brains and blood splattering all over my face and clothing thus died one of the best friends I ever had and one of the best purest braves and noblest souls that ever died upon any battlefield We held our position until day light (the charge having been made late in evening) but the enemy had quietly withdrew during the night and retreated to Nashville. Thus ended one of the terablest battles of the west. There being more men killed and wounded in this battle considering the numbers engaged than on any other battlefield during the war

I saw 5 generals of our army lying dead in a row on a porch at one time. the dead over that plain through which we charged lay in heaps and rows a scene undescribably sad and horrifying even to a heardend soldier. With few exceptions we the next day after the battle burned our dead as they lay on the battle field one of the exceptions was my dearest friend John Sweet. I with a few other comdrads conveyed his remains into the town procured a coffin employed the sexton to dig a grave with our assistance and layed him to rest the sexton marking his grave who after the war at the request of his Father desentured the body and it was conveyed to his home and again entered with his loved ones to await the last call when he will again rejoin many of his comrats in arms in that beautiful city where there will be no more sorrow death or cruel war

After we had burried our dead we moved on to Nashville and laid siege to the city.

After two weeks siege, Thomas moved on to join battle on 15th Dec 1864 we held our lines during that day and night but on the 16<sup>th</sup> our lines were broken in the centre and as our left was outflanked the whole line broke in great confusion infact it it was a complete rout the like of which I had never seen and hope I will never see again.

Our brigade was on the left occupying a commanding mob(?) many of which surrounds Nashvill in our centre was posted our beloved Napolian battery which we had since its capture at Perryville Ky had under our care and protection which we loved so dearly the music of whos guns had rang out so clar and defyant in so many hardfought battles whose deadly work we had witnessed so often with shuch delight

But when we in our commanding position saw to our right our whole line of battle broken and retreating in great disorder and the flanking column moving around our left to cut us off from the rest of army we had to spike our Napolions and with many a moisted eye left them to fall into the possession of the enemy among whome they had created such deadly havoc in their ranks and beat a hasty and disorderly retreat. While we wer retreating in this disorderly manner Gen Cheatham (the first time during during the war I had ever seen him act in that manner) dash by us at his hose at full speed. saying as he passed take care of yourselves boys the best you can I am going to make that pass through the ridge or die in the attempt and disappeared in our rear and then I thought the army was lost beyond all hope but from some cause the persuit was stoped the flanking column to our left halted we gained the pass in the ridge struck the Pike and as night came on covering the whole scen in darkness in a disorderly manner we pushed on through the whole night and by next morning we were far in the rear safe for the preasant from persuit Thus ended one of the most disastirous battles of the western army

And as the enemy did not for several days did not press us our companies regiments and Brigades wer what was not captured reformed and in an orderly manner persued our way back to Tennessee

On the retreat our Brigade was left with Gen Forest to assist him in protecting the rear of the army. and for days we were marched and countermarch by him just as he marched his

cavalry for after a few days the enemy commenced to vigorously press our rear until we were completely worn out continuously fighting and retreating with our shoes worn out and our feet sore and bleeding. I saw on that retreat many a poor fellow with the soles of his shoes worn out his feet bleeding sitting on the side of pike and as we would come up to push him forward to prevent him from being captured he would would say I cant move another foot and it would take force to induce him to make another effort and the only way such poor fellows did succeed in making their way out was by going to the slaughter pens at night when the cattle were being slaughtered by taking a fresh hide placing the flesh side next to the ground the hairy side up place the bare foot on the hide and cut a piece of hide large enough to fit the foot cut ... from the hide and sew the hide around the foot and I have actually seen those poore fellows the next day go whistling along with their cowhide slippers as merrily as wedding bells During that whole retreat it was intensely cold raining sleating & snowing and being in the rear of the army I have actually seen blood on the snow and sleet from the bleeding feet of these poor barefooted soldiers. I recolect late one evening I was detailed to go back to draw some rations for the company a Georgia command was passing we had then left the Pike and was traveling over a desperately muddy road in places knee deep. The night was very dark and rainey as the command was passing I heard one fellow call out Oh Bill Oh Billy. The responce came back Jon Jones you blasted fool What do you want with me spoken in a very fretful tone. the reply came back Billy dont you think South Carolina was rather hasty The sally seemed to produce a cheering affect and I could hear immediately joyous lafter and cheerful voices. I relate this to show although under desperate conditions the nobl boys of our army bore their sufferings patiently and with light and merry hearts Well to cut a long story short our army eventuerally after many long days of weary marching fatigue and suffering recrossed to Tenn river and moved on to Corrinth Miss where the west Tennessee troops whose homes wer then within the Confederate lines wer given furloughs and permitted to return to their home on a 30 days absence When our furloughs expired we started to rejoin our command but when we returned to Corrinth we found thay the army had been in our absence been orderd to North Carolina. We followed on after the army by of Meridian A Mongomry Atlanta & Augusta. At the latter place we found Gen Steven D Lee had bee

ordered to establish camp for the collection of the returning furloughed souldiers We remaind here for a few weeks and then under his command started through through South Carolina & North Carolina by way of Columbia SC Sharlot Ralleigh & Goldsborough NC. at the latter place we joined our command then under command of Gen Johnson who had again been reinstated. After the battle of Goldsborough where we fought another hard battle and although we held our ground for a few days and repulsed the enemy both at Goldsboro and at Bentonsville on account of the enemies surperior numbers we having only 25 thousand to Sermons 150 thousand Johonson retreated on Rolleigh and then to Greensboro where having heard of Gen Lees surrender negotiations for surrender were entered into between Johnson and Shermon which was consummated on Aprl 15 1865 after 4 long years of as heroic a struggle for liberty and constitutional rights as was ever recorded on the pages of the worlds history

I will never forget the morning we surrendered. We were marched out and stacked arms. and as the colors which we loved so well and under whose folds many nobled lives had been lost for its defence under which we had suffered so much and marched to so many glorious victories and had never let it trail in the dust and had never been tarnished by the touch of an enemies hand. Yes as it was brought forward a simultaneous rush was made and in a moment its precious folds were torn into fragments and every soldier to a sall fragment and put it in his bible that most of us wore next to our hearts to keep as a precious memento in after years. Then was commenced our long and teadious march to our once happy but now to many of us desolate and ruined homes we passed through thence over the Blue ridge throug gap down the mountain to Ashville NC. and while I was decending the mountain overlooking Ashvill the French broad river like a silver thread winding its tortuous cours through its narrow green valley hemed in on all sides by beautiful green mountains with Bald Mountain looming up in the distance presenting such a scene of ravishing beauty to my boyish minds that it has lingered with me as a pleasant dream through all these years we continued our march on down the river sometimes it was as calm and placid as a lake then again could be heard in the distance the roar of a cataract as a distant thunder and the water as we contintued to march would swift until it would be beaten into beaten into a raging foaming



white crested cataract then again there would be again long stretches of placid water and again a cataract and so it continued until we reached Paint rock a stupendous red Clift rising from the waters edge perpendiculary hundreds of feet from the waters edge the rock being so soft that hundreds of adventurous souls have cut with their knives their way to marvelous hights to carve their names in the soft rock. The road down this river from Ashville to Paint Rock one hundred miles dosent leave the river twenty feet the whole way having been cut out of the solid rock. From Paint rock we left the river and struck across the mountains to Greenville. As we approached Greenville a negro command of soldiers was placed open file on both sides of road as that we would be compelled to pass between the file for the purpose of humiliating us. and as we passed the neargros would say Dar now the bottom rail is now on top bless god. I was marching that day by the side of Old Captain Fielder as brave a soldier as ever lived He lived in Crocket Co. I think and as we passed those neagros with clenched fists and nashing teeth he said my boy this is more than I can stand If it was not my loved ones at home I had rather have dide at the front of my command fighting for my counties flag than to under such humiliation as this for it only presages what we will have to under go in the future. His words prove prophetic for he had reference to the Reconstruction days that were to follow the close of the war

We suffered many indignities while here. The horses and side arms that were left the officrs and men by the terms of the surrender were taken away from us we were crowded into box cars like sheep and sent on to Knoxville and from there to Chatanooga an Nashville and after several days delay went aboard a Steamer passed down the Cumberland into the Ohio thence into the Mississippi an landed at Fort Pillow and from there marched to Durhamville where I met my mother. and after several weeks moved with my mother to Dyer Co commenced the study of medicine and and in 1866 having borrowed money sufficient to carry me through the university went to Louisville and in 1867 graduated and commenced the practice of my profession and in 1868 paid a visit to my old friend Emory Sweet the wielder of the Stomach Pump noterity asked his sister to say yes or no and to my great delight she said yes. We were 1868 married I course of time you children came to bless and brighten our lives.

Now my dear children you above all others know whether I have lived up to the last  
farwell addres of the immortal R E Lee to his soldiers at the surrender at Appermadox

Go home men and make as good citizens as you have made soldiers

TJ Walker