

WAR STORIES.

Banner Battle of the War.

A. J. McBride, in Atlanta Journal.

On the 18th of November, 1862, the Tenth Georgia infantry regiment marched from their camp near Culpeper Court House towards Fredericksburg, Va.; a chilling rain poured down on us nearly all the way. As we tramped along the muddy way we met a great many women, children and old men who were leaving their homes to escape the threatened shelling of Fredericksburg. We went into camp near the Telegraph road, about two miles to the rear of Marye's Heights, where General Longstreet says that "General McLaws with 5,000 men against 40,000, put more than double his defending forces hors du combat, thus making for his numbers the best battle of the war."

About the 10th of December much activity was observed in the Yankee camps; on the 11th and 12th our pickets, Barksdale's gallant Mississippians, were hotly engaged most of the time resisting the efforts of the enemy to put down pon on bridges and cross the Rappahannock; about 3 o'clock on the morning of the 13th, the long roll called us to arms and the Tenth Georgia double quicked to the heights, since known as Lee's Hill, where we were held in reserve. We could distinctly hear the commands of the Federal officers, but on account of the dense fog, could see only a few yards. We thought at the time they were very close to us and that the battle would soon be on. About 10 o'clock the fog began to disappear and in a short time the bright sun had revealed to our view a splendid scene; a line of battle several miles long was plainly in view and rapidly advancing. The music of a hundred bands encouraged the troops; banners streaming, neighing horses, shouting captains, rattling musketry, roaring cannon told that a mighty struggle was on between the contending hosts; the beautiful Rappahannock flowed peacefully on to the sea, its lovely valleys being drenched with fraternal blood.

The Yankees did not advance against the immediate front of the Tenth Georgia so that from our lofty eminence we looked at the mighty struggle going on our right and left. General Lee and Longstreet were on our line most of the day; they had many narrow escapes as the Yankees shelled our position nearly all day long. We could see the white puffs of smoke on Stafford Heights rising from among the tulip poplars standing around the old Chatham mansion, where General Robert E. Lee courted and won his wife, and then could as plainly see the immense shells coming over in our direction; we would dodge down behind the parapet till they had plunged into the hillside in front or passed over us; very few of them struck our breast-works or exploded near us; the Tenth did not have a man hurt; one shell struck very near General Lee as he sat on the parapet surrounded by his staff, but no one was hurt; two or three of our large guns exploded during the day giving all of us some frightfully close calls. During the afternoon some one who wanted the Tenth to get into the thick of the fight worse than I did, ordered us to relieve one of the regiments behind the stone wall; we marched in quick time just after we crossed Hazel Run, just below Wolford's Mill, we were halted and ordered to march back to Lee's Hill as none of the regiments wanted to be relieved. While we were standing near the mill, the litter bearers passed us bearing the body of General Cobb, who had just been wounded by a shell. A deathly pallor was on his face and he seemed to be in great pain. Some cowardly miscreant has lately tried to defame General Cobb. I hesitate to even mention the cur's anonymous attack. All true men will hold in utter contempt the statement of a being who after 34 years would confess himself to being a sneaking, cowardly murderer. In this connection, the Journal has in hand the statements of General Cobb's brigade surgeon, Dr. E. J. Eldridge; his regimental surgeon, Dr. E. D. Newton, and his favorite courier, Mr. John W. Clark, all of whom are still living and were with him. I have also, through the courtesy of Judge Howell Cobb and Mr. A. L. Hull, of Athens, been permitted to read a letter from his pastor, Rev. R. K. Porter, who was supporting his head when he died. This letter was written January 9, 1863. In addition to all this the statement of our well known citizen, Mr. W. M. Crumley, who so signally distinguished himself in many battles, leaves no sort of doubt as to the nature of General Cobb's wound. He suffered intense pain for a short time after reaching the hospital and then in the red litten eve, while the very earth was trembling beneath the shock of contending hosts, as the

twilight was fading into the gloom of night, the great heart of Thomas R. R. Cobb, Georgia's Havelock, ceased to beat. Streamings of celestial light burst upon his enraptured vision; the din and roar of battle was hushed by heavenly harmonies and one of Time's purest, tenderest, knightliest souls went to an immortal home.

The Tenth Georgia, with but little exposure to danger, witnessed the many bloody assaults made by the Yankees against the stone wall and against Jackson's men in the open fields to our right; at night the flashing musketry looked like myriads of fire flies; stretched away to the right and along Stafford Heights and the Rappahannock, for many miles the campfires of the enemy and nearer the flickering lights of the pickets, as the noise of the camps and the music of the bands of either army died away. Suddenly between 10 and 11 o'clock the northern sky was illuminated by an extended aurora borealis shedding a baleful reddish light, which seemed a fit ending to the bloody strife and carnage.

The Yankees remained comparatively quiet all day Sunday, December 14th. The battle was over, and all day long lay in expectation of a renewal of the strife; there was some hot skirmishing, but no general movement. About 4 o'clock Sunday evening, December 14th, the Tenth Georgia marched from Lee's Hill to the stone and fence and relieved the Twenty-fourth Georgia regiment which had covered itself with glory in the banner battle of the war; we had considerable skirmishing that night and next day but no serious move was made; on the night of the 15th the Federals recrossed the river and the boys of the Tenth were on picket on the banks of the river, where the Mississippians had fought so fiercely; on the 16th or 17th a beautiful lady, accompanied by a Yankee officer in charge of a fatigue party of ten or twelve private soldiers, came over with a flag of truce to recover the body of her husband, who, as I remember, was a professor in Yale or Harvard College; I was ordered to take charge of the party and give such information and help as was proper. The officer and soldiers who came with her, thought they could locate his body; it was one of the saddest duties I ever performed. We exhumed a great many bodies; every member of the Tenth, who was near, joined in the search; the sickening orders nearly overcame us; the dead were piled on each other in a long, deep ditch, and as the men raked the dirt off them, they presented a gruesome sight. After a long and fruitless search, we sadly gave it up, the sorrowing wife was loth to go; it was a pathetic sight. I will never forget her look of despair or the tear-stained cheeks of the Confederate and Federal soldiers.

"Not hate but glory made these chiefs contend,  
For at heart each brave hero was a friend."

In company with Captain C. C. Kibbee, who was afterwards promoted to lieutenant colonel of the Tenth for skill and valor on the field, I conducted the truce party across the river. We were received and entertained by Lieutenant Colonel Morrison, of the Seventy-ninth New York regiment. He gave us an excellent lunch, some fine old Bourbon and cigars. While we were enjoying ourselves, suddenly the Yankees opened a rapid artillery fire on some wagon trains on our side. It developed that the commander of the battery did not know of the truce. His one-sided battle was quickly stopped. We gazed Colonel Morrison good-naturedly and told him that we had left sufficient force on our side to take care of our trains; his experience the past few days doubtless convinced him we were correct.

Of the numberless daring deeds of the war none can exceed in reckless valor those of the young South Carolinian Kirkland, who begged leave to carry water to the wounded yankees in front of the stone fence, the shells and bullets so thick that it seemed that a bird could not escape them; with two or three canteens filled with water he jumped over the wall and running from one wounded Yankee to another, he gave them water; the Yankee sharpshooters at first fired at him, but discovering his mission of mercy, both armies burst into loud chattering. No less daring was the rides across Marye's Heights of our fellow townsman, William M. Crumley, or the daring reconnaissance of Henry L. P. King, who after many deeds of daring was riddled with bullets on Marye's Hill and his body found on the 16th. On the night Captain King was first missing General McLaws had a brave Mississippi

boy named George Bowen as courier sleeping in his tent so he might be sent on any errand quick. At daylight George jumped up and said: "General, have you found Captain King?" The general told him "no." Then said Bowen: "I must have dreamed it. I thought he came into this tent last night, stooping down to get in and you spoke to him saying, 'Captain, I have been looking for you; I am glad to see you,' and he went and sat on the bed beside you." General McLaws had Bowen to repeat it, because he had the same dream in every particular.

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen,  
Both when we wake and when we sleep."

The men of the Tenth Georgia soon were on the best of terms with their friends the enemy. Lively trafficking in tobacco, paper, magazines, coffee, etc., was carried on between them and many a fishing frolic was had by both parties. The Yankees would seise on their side, the Johnnies on theirs, all of them dressed in the same garb Adam and Eve were in before they found the fig leaves. There was a sandbar very near the Yankee side of the river and really was their territory, but it was a convenient, easy place to drag the seine upon after a haul, so the boys of the Tenth encroached on it. The Yankees stood it for a day or two and then protested and told the Tenth Georgians they must stay on their side; that General Burnside ordered. The men of the Tenth answered that they were not in the habit of obeying General Burnside's orders. The Yankees said they would plant a battery and enforce the order. The Georgians told them if they placed a battery there they would charge it and capture it. Many interesting incidents occurred. The great snow battles must be described by others. I was not engaged in them, but suffering from broken arm and fractured rib, I was being tenderly nursed at the hospitable mat ion of Mrs. French near Fredericksburg, where convalescing I spent some joyous days with the Murat of the South, General Jeb. Stewart, Colonel John Esten Cook and Major Heros Von Borcke, recounting the toils and dangers of the past, speculating as to the future or listening to the inspiring music of Sweeney's banjo.

Benning's Brigade.

Editor Atlanta Journal: We of Benning's brigade, in common with others, had many "close calls" during the war, but I think as a command the closest grapple we had with death was on the morning of May 6, 1864, at the Wilderness.

As we were arriving on the field of battle, we met Wilcox's brigade of A. P. Hill's corps flying from the field, having been put to flight by the superior numbers of the enemy. But though routed and scattered, they were far from being panic stricken. Every one of them seemed to be in high spirits and good humor, ready to be quickly reformed. They were hastening to the rear with a kind of satisfied air, as if feeling conscious of having damaged the enemy worse than they were damaged by the enemy. And so we found it to be the case later in the day after the enemy had retired from the field.

General Lee was on the front with us, while Longstreet was quickly placing us in position and starting us forward to meet the victorious and advancing foe. The opposing lines of battle commenced firing on each other as soon as they came in sight of each other, each side continuing to advance until they came within twenty yards of each other and then both lines staggered and stood their ground. In a little while the enemy were re-inforced with a fresh line of battle and then with a third line. As we had no re-enforcements, if they had rushed on us, they could have easily ran over us with less damage to themselves, as there were so many more of them than of us. There was nothing we could do but remain where we were lying on the ground, loading and firing as rapidly as possible. Retreat was impossible, for if we had rose and turned our back to them they would have killed every one of us, they were so near. Nor could we have surrendered if we had desired to do so. There was no way to propose it. There were no commands given after the deadly contest began. They could not have been heard. The only way to surrender would be for each individual to act for himself, throw down his gun and run into the enemy's lines, and that would be almost certain death. As we could neither advance, being too weak, nor retreat, nor surrender, we could only remain as we were and do the enemy as much damage as possible as rapidly as possible. The most experienced troops during the excitement of battle are inclined to aim too high. The ground where the enemy staggered and stood was slightly higher than it was where our line was, and as we were lying down and they remained standing, the balls from those of us who aimed a little too high struck them about right, while the balls from those of the enemy who

aimed a little too high passed the higher over us, which was all that saved us from annihilation. Finally the enemy ceased to receive re-enforcements and all of them that were not killed gave back a half mile or more. We found among their dead in the most advanced position they occupied a major general. I think his name was Sedgewick, from New York. The enemy had so many men on the field and stood so long and so near us that their loss in killed was simply terrible. But I did not see any wounded they left behind when they retired.

While General Lee was present with us when we advanced, I feel sure he did not advance or attempt to advance with us. At that moment he had too much to look after. Just as we were being started on the advance some one brought his attention to a body of troops in motion far to our left. The uncertainty as to what troops they were, together with the victorious enemy so near in the immediate front and we not quite ready to receive them, seemed to somewhat disturb him, and he handed his glasses to one of his staff and to determine the body of troops asked him to "look quick," as I supposed to determine whether the body of troops on the left were friends, or foes. At that moment we started forward to meet the advancing enemy and had only advanced a short space when the deadly conflict began. I saw no more of General Lee all that day, though he may have been near by without my knowing it, or his presence may have become necessary on some other part of the line, nor did I ever learn whether the body of troops in motion on the left proved to be friends or foes.

GEORGE McRAE.

The Relic Room.

Columbia State.  
An important meeting of the ladies of the relic room committee of the United Daughters of the Confederacy was held at noon yesterday in the relic room at the State house.

Arrangements were made for keeping the room open to visitors during the three days of the reunion.

A picture of the first martyr of the cause was presented to the chapter by one of the members of the committee.

The history of the picture is interesting and was thus given to the meeting.

Madam President and Ladies of the Wade Hampton Chapter, U. D. C.:

In behalf of my aunt, Miss Fannie H. Earle, of Anderson, I desire to present to you this portrait of her lamented brother, Wilton Robinson Earle.

It is thought that he was our first martyr to the cause, and in that connection a brief outline of his life and of the circumstances attending his death may be of interest to your chapter.

You will recognize his name as belonging to a family that has served the State in peace and in war since the beginning of her history. He was the eldest son of Mr. Elias Earle, of Anderson, S. C., whose large fortune as well as the services of his two boys were freely given to the cause of the Confederacy.

Wilton was but 22 when the war began. He had just returned from the University of Virginia, where he went to complete his studies after graduating at the South Carolina College. His fine literary taste at that early age is evidenced by a collection of rare books which he had made as a nucleus for a private library. His disposition was frank, generous and impulsive. He was exceedingly handsome in appearance and so gentle and courteous in manner that he was a general favorite wherever he went.

"He was a gentleman and a soldier," writes his commander, "and was greatly loved by all his comrades."

When the volunteers were organizing to go to the front his father offered to equip a company of which he might go out as captain. He became impatient, however, at the length of

time necessary for the organization of his company, and fearing that he would be too late for the war, he enlisted as a private in the Fourth regiment commanded by Col. J. B. E. Sloan.

The regiment went into action at the First Battle of Manassas. "Our regiment was stationed," writes Mr. R. E. Sloan of Pendleton, "near the stone bridge and Wilton was killed by a shell supposed to have been fired from Long Tom, which you know has the credit of giving the first shot from the enemies' side."

The young man fell but the wound though mortal was not immediately fatal. There being no ambulance in the service at that time he was left to lie upon the field all day and though suffering great agony had only such assistance as could be rendered him by his body servant. Late in the afternoon a rude litter was constructed and he was carried to Culpeper Court H. where he again had to wait his turn among the wounded to have his wound dressed. That night he was taken into the home of some true hearted Virginians who tenderly cared for him until his death the following Sunday.

Such was the tragic and untimely death of this noble young man so enthusiastically devoted to the cause of his country, and though the opportunity was denied him to win fame upon the battlefield, shall we not write his name high upon the list of those who gave their lives for the State.

Respectfully submitted,

Harriet Earle Sloan.

Letters were produced from Col. J. B. E. Sloan of Charleston and Mr. R. E. Sloan of Pendleton substantiating the facts as stated. The picture was accepted by the committee and ordered hung upon the walls of the room.

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Absence may conquer love, but it sometimes takes costly presents to hold it.

"It is with a good deal of pleasure and satisfaction that I recommend Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy," says Druggist A. W. Sawtelle, of Hartford, Conn. "A lady customer, seeing the remedy exposed for sale on my show case, said to me: 'I really believe that medicine saved my life the past summer while at the shore,' and she became so enthusiastic over its merits that I at once made up my mind to recommend it in the future. Recently a gentleman came to my office so overcome with colic pains that he sank at once to the floor. I gave him a dose of this remedy which helped. I repeated the dose and in fifteen minutes he left my store smilingly informing me that he felt as well as ever." For sale by Hill-Orr Drug Co.

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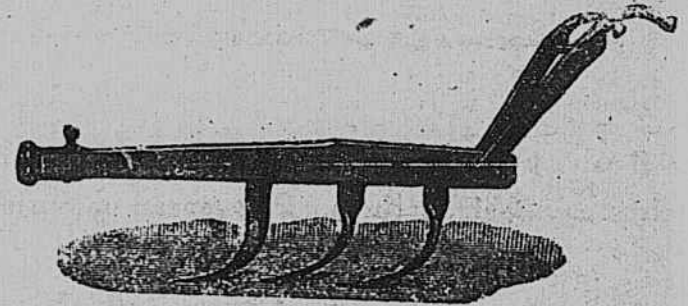
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