

WAR STORIES.

Some Personal Recollections of Gettysburg by One of General Longstreet's Couriers.

Atlanta Journal.

In the issue of The Journal of March 30, 1901, Mr. Robert R. Hemphill, of Abbeville, S. C., says: "Pickett's loss at Gettysburg has been greatly exaggerated and for nearly 38 years the fancy story of his 'sacrifice' has been written up in glowing words until many persons believe that Pickett did all the fighting at Gettysburg."

Mr. Hemphill also gives the official losses of the various divisions of General Lee's army, as shown in the official records, and of course they must be taken as correct. These official figures show that Pickett's loss at Gettysburg was less than that of any other division of the army except Early's and R. H. Anderson's.

Now I do not recall any "fancy stories" of Pickett's famous charge which intimate even by inference that Pickett did all the fighting at Gettysburg. Neither do I believe Mr. Hemphill intended to detract or to add to the truth of history, but to state the "truth of history" and simple justice to all concerned.

Now let us see what the conditions and circumstances were. Up to Gettysburg General Pickett had done no fighting during that year except, perhaps, some little skirmishing. When the battle of Chancellorsville (including Salem Church and Fredericksburg) was fought Pickett and Hood's divisions were with General Longstreet at Suffolk, Va. After that most decisive battle of the war was fought and won General Longstreet was ordered back to Fredericksburg and reunited with the main army. The army rested and recruited there for some weeks and then started for Pennsylvania. Pickett's division was composed entirely of Virginians. They were all near their own homes and the division was easily recruited and equipped. Consequently, when General Lee entered Pennsylvania Pickett had one of the largest and best equipped divisions in the army.

When General Lee had reached Chambersburg a halt was made for several days. General Longstreet remained there; General Ewell moved further on toward Carlisle and General Hill moved up toward Gettysburg. This disposition of the army placed it in a sort of triangular shape, with each of the three corps resting about twenty miles apart, on the base and side lines of the triangle.

General J. E. B. Stuart, with the cavalry, was scouting somewhere in the direction of Washington, and for several days was "lost," so far as his whereabouts was known to General Lee or the army, was concerned. General Longstreet's corps was encamped around Chambersburg, I think, for a week or more, and General Lee's headquarters were located but a few hundred yards from General Longstreet's, as they were nearly always close together. One evening late a scout for General Longstreet, named Harrison, I think, galloped up to his headquarters and reported that General Meade's army was coming rapidly from Washington. General Longstreet reported the matter to General Lee at once when he sent notice of the same to Ewell and Hill. General Longstreet moved up to Greencastle, about half way between Chambersburg and Gettysburg the next day and camped for the night with Hood's and McLaws' divisions. The next day he moved on to Gettysburg. That was the first day of July. About 2:30 or 3 o'clock in the afternoon General Longstreet was riding along some distance in advance of the head of the column, and on reaching the summit of a slight elevation, Gettysburg came in plain view, as we were not far from the Emmetsburg road, which came in at right angles to the pike we were on from Chambersburg. A slight halt was made, and after a brief conference with the staff Col. G. M. Sorrell, the adjutant general, turned to me and directed me to go back to Chambersburg and tell General Pickett to move up his division to Gettysburg at once. Fighting was then in progress between portions of Ewell's and A. P. Hill's corps, and the federal advance. The rattle of musketry was pretty lively and was distinctly heard where we were. That must have been about 3 o'clock in the afternoon of July 1. General Pickett was still in camp two miles beyond Cham-

bersburg, that is, on the Virginia side. In going back I had to pass through the column of Hood's and McLaws' divisions greeting my loved comrades of the glorious Tenth Georgia regiment. Soon afterward I met a part of Ewell's corps coming in from the direction of Carlisle. Passing through these troops greatly retarded my progress, but I was well mounted, and after getting clear of them, I made fine speed, and reached General Pickett just at sundown. He appeared uneasy, and was evidently expecting orders. When I delivered my verbal message, he called for his own couriers immediately and sent them flying to his different brigades. In less than an hour, his division was on the road to Gettysburg. It was dark when I passed through Chambersburg on my return, and as I had been in the saddle since early in the morning, and my horse having had neither rest nor food, I stopped at a farm house and procured some corn for him and when I came to a strip of woods, I turned into it, unsaddled my horse, and fed him on the ground. I lay down on the ground by him and rested until Pickett's men had passed.

It has been sometimes said that General Longstreet was tardy in getting on the field and into position at Gettysburg, but I have never been able to understand what could have given rise to such an unjust and false charge as that. When I reached headquarters on my return from Chambersburg it was between 7 and 8 o'clock on the morning of July 2. General Longstreet was at the front. As soon as I could feed my horse and get some breakfast I hurried to him at the front. When I found him it was probably 9 o'clock. From that time on through the day I was with him continuously and can testify of my own personal knowledge that he worked harder to get a good line and get his men on it promptly than I ever knew him to have done on any other battlefield. Any delay can never be justly charged to General Longstreet. He was especially alert and active at Gettysburg and grew impatient and angry at any slowness on the part of his subordinates.

When the line was established Pickett's division had arrived in supporting distance, but was held in reserve, and did not take part in the fighting on that (the second) day.

When the line of battle was ready to move forward the men were lying down resting, and General Longstreet rode along in rear of the entire line to see if everything was in good shape and ready for the advance. Being satisfied with the situation, he rode down into a little ravine, dismounted, walked up to the line, ordered the men up, and placing himself at the head of the Twenty-fourth Georgia regiment, gave the order to advance. The line being near the crest of the elevation, a moment's forward movement brought the men into plain view of the enemy, in their strong position on the opposite ridge, and the two "Round Tops." As soon as our line became exposed to the view of the enemy, it was met by a most furious and terrific storm of shot and shell and our men were swept down like grass before the scythe. But the line rushed forward across the open field, and the advance line of the enemy was swept back, and melted away like snow in the warm sunshine. General Longstreet went in on foot, and followed the line of battle to the red brick house, where a slight halt was made. When he started in he had left the staff for the moment behind the crest of the hill, but as soon as the battle opened, they knowing that he might be killed in the charge, or would need their services, with one accord, mounted their horses, and galloped across the field to him in the face of that terrific fire. When we reached him, he was at the corner of the peach orchard. Some one had brought his horse to him, and as he mounted he directed me to go back and tell General Pendleton, who was in command of the reserve artillery, to bring up at once every piece of artillery he had. As I hurried back, under that awful fire, I passed by one of our batteries which had been posted on the crest of the hill we had started from, saw that every man and horse had been killed or wounded except a lieutenant and one private, and they were working heroically, trying to fire one gun. Hurrying on, I found General Pendleton, about one mile in the rear, sitting quietly on his horse at the head of an artillery battalion, awaiting orders. I delivered my message quickly, and he at once moved forward to the front. When I returned to the front I found General Longstreet considerably in advance of the brick house, where I had left him. The firing had now ceased, and our

part of the line was in a dead quiet. The battlefield was strewn with the killed and wounded, and everything had the appearance of a cyclone having passed over it. We had passed considerably beyond the line first occupied by the federals, and many prisoners were taken. Just beyond the red brick house a regiment of Zouaves had been posted, and the ground was thickly strewn with their dead. I think their organization was entirely destroyed, as I never saw them after that.

There was no more fighting that day, as both armies were badly crippled, and had lost heavily in killed, wounded and prisoners.

Next morning General Longstreet rode to the front early and was met by General Lee and the other general officers of the army. A consultation was held and the situation fully discussed. The question was as to what was best to be done, whether to renew the fighting or not. I think they were nearly or quite all opposed to the renewal of the fight, except General Lee. He felt that he could not honorably and consistently retire from the field under the circumstances without a further effort to crush the federal army. I am sure he was very strongly opposed in that position by his generals. But his wish and judgment was the law of the army and he insisted that the battle must be renewed and preparation for its renewal was ordered commenced at once. General Lee graciously and generously assuming all the responsibility of the possible result. All the artillery of the army was then ordered massed in as secure positions as possible along the front and the ammunition inspected and made ready. It was evident the enemy was preparing to meet whatever movement was made by General Lee. When everything was in readiness a signal gun was to be fired, which was to open the greatest artillery duel ever fought on this continent, or perhaps in the world. When the artillery duel was over, then an infantry assault was to be rushed upon the center of the enemy's line. General Pickett's division, which had not fired a gun up to that time, was selected to lead that assault in conjunction with Heth's division, supported by Lane's and Seale's brigades, of Pender's division, and Wilcox's brigade, of Anderson's division. Pickett's men were in fine condition for the terrible work before them. The ranks were full, and the men well equipped. In fact, it was perhaps the finest division in the army. When they were drawn up in line of battle, under cover before the signal gun was fired to open the great artillery conflict, they certainly presented a grand appearance. General Pickett, as he proudly rode up and down in front of his men, mounted on his fine black horse with his own long, black hair flowing back upon his shoulders, appeared a veritable cavalier at the head of his invincible clans. But all this was soon to be changed, and shorn of its martial grandeur. At last the boom of the signal gun sounded along the line, and then the 150 pieces belched forth their dreadful thunder and the air was quickly filled with exploding shells and shrieking solid shot. The enemy was ready and replied promptly and vigorously. The earth fairly trembled under the recoil, and the greatest artillery battle of modern times was on. It is impossible, at this late day, to describe it, though the memory of it still lingers vividly in the mind, and will ever remain fresh so long as life shall last. The terrific fire of the 250 pieces of artillery was grandly awful, and the roar is said to have been heard at Staunton, Va., 130 miles away. When it was over, which was probably two hours from the start, General Pickett was ordered to move forward with a rush. His line moved out from cover and was soon in plain view of the enemy. Their whole fire was now concentrated upon him, but his men moved steadily and rapidly forward. They had to cross an open space of three-quarters of a mile, under the most galling fire of the entire federal army in range of them. But onward they swept invincible with impetuosity and the steadiness of a dress parade. As the men fell dead or wounded the ranks were closed up and still pressed onward with wonderful precision and gallantry. I was on an elevation where I could see the entire line as it swept across the open, and I am sure I never saw it surpassed for bravery upon any battlefield of the war. There was neither lagging nor hesitation, but the brigades moved forward steadily and rapidly. At last the federal position was reached, when there was a sudden mixing of the two lines. The federals were pressed back, many of the Confederates were killed some distance inside the federal lines. Reinforcements were rushed in by the enemy from every direction. All of General Pickett's supports did not reach the line in time to enable him to withstand the onslaught that was made upon him, and having lost heavily in the charge upon the enemy's position the Confederates were compelled to retire, being badly out to pieces.

It will thus be seen that General Pickett fought scarcely an hour at Gettysburg, while some of the other divisions of the army were engaged in the three days' fighting, and all of them on the second and third days. The fighting every day was heavy, and I think this will fully explain why General Pickett's loss in killed and wounded was not as large as that of some of the other divisions. While it is true General Pickett was only engaged in the fight for a few minutes on the last day of the fighting, yet in those few minutes he won not only immortal fame and glory, but the admiration of the world for his gallantry.

Now I have written no "fancy words" in describing General Pickett's part in the battle of Gettysburg, but have simply endeavored to do him and General Longstreet and their brave men even justice.

The battle of Gettysburg was the greatest battle of the war, and I am sure will be so recognized by the impartial historian of the future, and Pickett's gallant and brave charge was perhaps the acme of the crowning glory to the Confederate arms on that great battlefield.

J. W. ANDERSON.

Jefferson Davis in History.

There is perhaps nothing so noteworthy, and to Americans of the Southern States there is nothing so gratifying, in the recent historical and semi-historical criticism of leaders in the war between the States as in the manner in which the life and character of Jefferson Davis yearly wins fairer and fuller recognition from writers at the North. That Mr. Davis is at length receiving justice from persons who opposed him in Congress and fought his Government on the battlefield is illustrated by an article printed in the Times-Demoerit of last Sunday and written by Col. Alexander S. McClure, who was an intimate friend of President Lincoln's and for years the close personal and political adviser of leaders successful not only in Pennsylvania, but also in the Nation. In criticizing Mr. Davis's character, manner and abilities Col. McClure writes:

"Mr. Davis was a man of forceful intellect, a great student and one of the ablest debaters in the National councils. He had the courage of his convictions and was scrupulously honest alike in public and private life. He believed in the right of secession and maintained it on all suitable occasions. He always disavowed disunion until after the election of Lincoln, when he took position in the front rank of those who advocated the dismembership of the Republic. He was respected by all his associates in public life because of the sincerity that guided him in his expressions and actions. He was grave and dignified to a degree approaching austerity, but was always one of the most courteous of gentlemen."

It is almost impossible for anyone who has ever lived at the North to read these words of Col. McClure's and not understand what a tremendous revolution in public sentiment has swept over the Northern States in the last score of years regarding the place which Southern leaders, and especially Jefferson Davis, should be given in history. Time, the wisest of all historians, is at length drawing the picture of our civil war in clear and perfect perspective, and in the grouping of the great men who played parts in the awful tragedy the figure of Jefferson Davis is showing in the foreground with distinct and commanding dignity. —New Orleans Democrat.

Prophetic Punishment.

A man is more likely to remember what he sees than what he hears. The Magazine of American History tells how General Scott taught temperance to his soldiers by an impressive object lesson. When the cholera broke out in his camp, at Rock Island, he gave various orders of a preventive nature and then continued:

In addition to the foregoing, the senior surgeon present recommends the use of flannel underclothing and woolen stockings; but the commanding general, who has seen much of the disease, knows that it is intemperance which, in the present state of the atmosphere, generates and spreads the calamity, and that, when once spread, good and temperate men are likely to take infection.

"He therefore peremptorily commands that every soldier or ranger who shall be found drunk or sensibly intoxicated after the publication of this order, be compelled, as soon as his strength will permit, to dig a grave at a suitable burying place, large enough for his own reception, as such grave cannot fail soon to be wanted for the drunken man himself, or some drunken companion. The order is given as well to serve for the punishment of drunkenness as to spare good and temperate men the labor of digging graves for their worthless companions."

— A political patriot is a man who loves his country for what he can make out of it.

— An old bachelor says the average woman exaggerates except when she's talking about her own age.

In a Frontier Saloon.

A stripping of effeminate rosiness and neat attire sat in the corner of a frontier saloon, modest, silent, and as far out of the way as he could get. He had stepped from the train and was waiting for the stage. It was starved linen that he wore; the city showed quite plainly in his hat and it is still in dispute whether any down was visible upon his lip. But he was old enough to be smoking a cigar with all the appearance of habit. The cigar, also, was not a native of the town. In fact, the young man made no purchase upon entering the saloon, nevertheless the proprietor could scarcely complain of him. The stranger had asked if he might wait there for the stage and thanked the proprietor for his permission.

Then he had sought his quiet corner and lighted his cigar.

A citizen walked out of the back room and up to the bar. He had left a faro game and the proprietor was friendly with him, but respectful, that sort of respect which is flavored delicately with just enough familiarity to bring it out. It is probable that the citizen had had more drinks than the one he now took. It is also likely that faro had not gone as well with him this morning as he considered his due. His dissatisfied eye fell upon the rosy youth and his cigar, and he took the glass from his lips and held it, considering the stranger.

At length, without removing his eyes, he inquired: "What Christmas tree did that drop off?"

The proprietor hastened to take this view. "Its express tag has fluttered away, I guess," he whispered, jocosely.

The citizen remembered his whiskey, the citizen it, set the glass gently down, gently drew his six-shooter and shot the cigar to smash out of the young man's mouth.

Now, I do not at all know what I should have done in the young man's place. Something sensible, I hope. What the youth did I know I should not have done. You will see that his behavior was out of the common. He stooped down, picked up his cigar, found it ruined, put it in his pocket, got a fresh one out of his spittoon, found a match in his waistcoat, slid it along the seat of his nice breeches, lighted the new cigar, and settled himself once more in his chair, without a word of protest or an attempt at resentment. The proprietor saw him do it all and told about it afterward.

The citizen took the second cigar, smash! like the first. Perhaps he went a trifle nearer the youth's lip.

What were the card players in the back room doing at all this noise? They all lay flat on the floor, like the well-trained indigenous people that they were, minding their own business. For there was no rear exit.

The youth felt in his waistcoat pocket, but brought no match from it. So he rose with still another cigar in his hand and walked to the bar. "I'll have to ask you for a match," he said to the proprietor, who at once accommodated him.

Once again he slid the match beneath his coat tails, and bringing out his own six-shooter, shot the citizen as instantly dead as that can be done. —Owen Wister, in Everybody's Magazine.

— A Missouri girl was thunderstruck when she learned of her beau's marriage to another girl, but recovered shortly after and eloped with a lightning-rod peddler.

— A man wants everything he can get and a woman wants everything she can't get.

— The best thing to do in a hurry is nothing.

Recently there have been several cases of prominent men suddenly falling in collapse just after eating a hearty meal. These men have all been under treatment for gastric "trouble," and yet the result shows that the treatment they had received had smothered the symptoms but had not retarded the progress of the disease.

There is a real danger in the use of palliatives when there is disease of the stomach and its allied organs of digestion and nutrition. The disease in such cases goes on, while the distressing symptoms alone are stopped. Presently, like a smothered fire, the disease breaks out in new places, involving heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, or some other organ.

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