

RECOLLECTIONS OF A PRIVATE.—V.*

RETIRING FROM THE CHICKAHOMINY.



THE CAMP KITCHEN. (FROM PHOTOGRAPH.)

ON the 25th of June preparations were made for a general advance from our position at Fair Oaks. Our pickets on the left were moved forward to an open field crossed by the Williamsburg road, and our lines then pushed forward beyond a swampy belt of timber, which for several days had been contested ground. Our troops, going in with a dash, met little serious resistance. The ground was so marshy in places that our men were obliged to cluster round the roots of trees or stand knee-deep in water. On the 27th (the day of the battle of Gaines's Mill) and the 28th the enemy in our front were unusually demonstrative, if not active. Our pickets were often so near the enemy's outposts as to hear them talk. One of my comrades told me of a conversation he overheard one night between two of the "Johnnies."

"Uncle Robert," said one, "is goin' to gobble up the Yankee army and bring 'em to Richmond."

"Well," said his comrade, with a touch of incredulity in his tones, "we uns 'll have a right smart of 'em to feed; and what are we uns goin' to do with 'em when we uns catch 'em?"

"Oh," said the other, with a touch of contempt, "every one of we uns will have a Yank to tote our traps!"

On the 27th one of my comrades, while on picket, heard orders given as if to a large body

of men—"From right of companies to rear into column—right face. Don't get into a dozen ranks there. Why don't they move forward up the path?" These commands excited our vigilance. What puzzled us was that we could not hear the tramp of men, which is usual in moving large bodies of troops, when near enough to hear their voices. Later we knew that the Confederates in our front were keeping up a big show with a small number of troops. We heard the heavy booming of cannon, which told of Porter's battle on the north side of the Chickahominy, and on that day a balloon was seen over the Confederate capital. Every sign pointed to unusual activity in our front. Then Porter followed us to the south side of the Chickahominy, and the whole aspect of affairs was changed.

Details were made to destroy such stores as could not easily be removed in wagons, and some of our officers, high in rank, set an unselfish example by destroying their personal baggage. No fires were allowed to be kindled in the work of destruction. Tents were cut and slashed with knives; canteens punched with bayonets; clothing cut into shreds; sugar and whisky overturned on the ground, which absorbed it. Some of our men stealthily imitated mother earth as regards the whisky. Most of our officers appreciated the gravity of the situation, and were considerate enough to keep sober, in more senses than one. Early on the morning of the 29th the work of destruction was complete, our picket-line was relieved, and with faces that reflected the gloom of our hearts we turned our backs upon Richmond, and started upon the retreat. The gloom was rather that of surprise than of knowledge, as the movement was but slightly understood by the mass of the army, or for that matter by most of the officers.

The weather was suffocatingly hot; dust rose in clouds, completely enveloping the marching army; it was inhaled into our nostrils and throats, and covered every part of our clothing as if ashes had been sifted upon us. About nine o'clock line of battle was formed near Allen's farm. Occasionally the report of a sharp-shooter's rifle was heard in the woods. Some of the troops took advantage of

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such shade as was afforded by scattering trees and went to sleep. All were suddenly brought to their feet by a tremendous explosion of artillery. The enemy had opened from the woods south of the railroad, with great vigor and precision. This attack after some sharp fighting was repelled, and, slinging knapsacks, the march was again resumed over the dusty roads. It was scorching hot when they arrived at Savage's Station, and there again they formed line of battle.

Franklin's corps, which had fallen back from Golding's farm, joined us here, and a detail was made as at other places to destroy supplies; immense piles of flour, hard bread in boxes, clothing, arms, and ammunition were burned, smashed, and scattered. Two trains of railroad cars, loaded with ammunition and other supplies, were here fired, set in motion towards each other, and under a full head of steam came thundering down the track like flaming meteors. When they met in collision there was a terrible explosion. Other trains and locomotives were precipitated from the demolished Bottom's bridge. Clouds of smoke rose at various points north of us, showing that the work of destruction was going on in other places.

Here, awaiting the approach of the enemy, we halted, while wagons of every description passed over the road on the retreat. It was now five o'clock in the afternoon (though official reports put it as early as four), when dense clouds of dust, rising in long lines from the roads beyond, warned us of the approach of the enemy. Soon they advanced from the edge of the woods and opened fire from the whole mass of their artillery. Our guns responded. For nearly an hour not a musket was heard, but the air vibrated with the artillery explosions. Then the infantry became engaged in the woods. Even after the shadows of night covered the scene with their uncertain light, the conflict went on, until nine o'clock, when to the deep-toned Union cheers there were no answering high-pitched rebel yells.*

Our regiment occupied till after sundown a position opposite the hospital camp near the station. It was then ordered to charge the enemy, which was done under cover of the heavy smoke that hung over the field. At nine o'clock they began to care for the wounded, and to carry them to the amputating-table. Our "Little Day" was wounded through the

* At Savage's Station I had the ill-luck to be taken prisoner, and in consequence was "unavoidably absent" from our lines until August, when we were exchanged. I afterwards learned from my comrades their experiences and the gossip of the intervening half-dozen weeks, which is briefly outlined in what follows.—W. L. G.

arm, but bandaged it himself. Wad Rider got another slight scalp-wound, which led him to remark, "Them cusses always aim for my head." Pendleton got what he called a ventilator through the side of his hat, the bullet grazing his head. One of the chaplains was indefatigable in his care of the wounded, and finally preferred to be taken prisoner rather than desert them.

Turning their backs upon the battle-field and the hospital camp of twenty-five hundred sick and wounded, who were abandoned to the enemy, the troops resumed their march. The long trains, of five thousand wagons and two thousand five hundred head of beef, had by this time crossed White Oak Swamp. The defile over which the army passed was narrow, but it possessed the compensating advantage that no attack could be made on the flank, because of the morass on either side. As fast as the rear-guard passed, trees were felled across the road to obstruct pursuit. Before daylight the Grand Army was across the swamp, with the bridge destroyed in the rear.

GLENDALE.

DURING the early morning hours of Monday, June 30th, our regiment was halted near a barn used as a temporary hospital. The boys lay down weary and footsore with fighting and marching. They were aroused about eight o'clock and resumed their march. At eleven they were halted near Nelson's farm. The country here began to change from swamp and wood to cultivated fields.

McCall's division, now numbering only about six thousand men, was formed nearly parallel to the New Market road, with his batteries in rear of the infantry. Kearny was within supporting distance on his right, guarding the space between the New Market and Charles City roads, while our corps, Sumner's with Hooker's division, were formed in the rear of McCall's advance line. To force the Union army from this key position and divide it, Longstreet gave battle. At 2:30 P. M., advancing with A. P. Hill by the Charles City road, he attacked with fury McCall's division. A heavy force of the enemy, passing through the woods, was hurled upon General Seymour's brigade, holding the left, who maintained a stubborn fight for two hours, finally causing him to fall back. Knieriem's and Diederichs' batteries were badly demoralized at this point. One of their officers blubbered outright. "Are you wounded? Are you killed?" asked Hooker's ironical jokers. "No; mine battery disgraces me worse than det," was his reply.

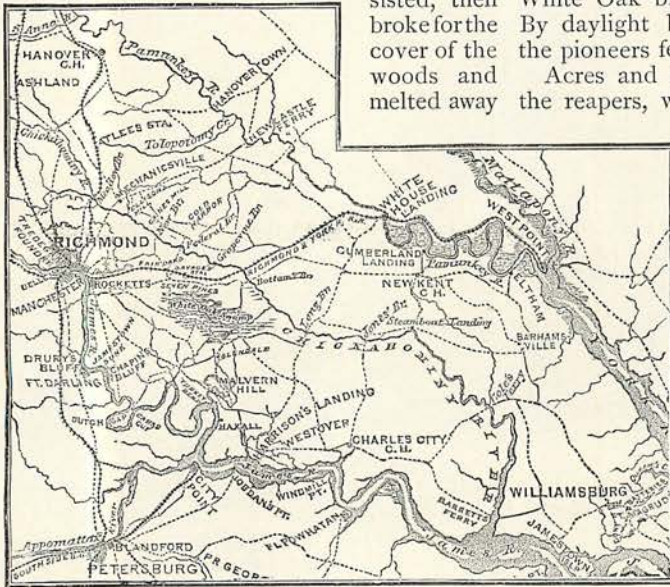
When McCall's division gave way the enemy, who had turned the left of the Union line, came down upon Sumner's troops, who soon received the order, "Forward, guide right"; and at double quick, while the batteries in the rear threw shot and shell over their heads into the ranks of the enemy, they pressed forward upon them. For a few moments the enemy resisted, then broke for the cover of the woods and melted away

were the prevailing colors. Some of them had a strip of carpet for a blanket, but the raggedness of their outfit was no discredit to soldiers who fought as bravely as did these men.

Franklin's force, which had been disputing the passage of White Oak Swamp during the day, at dark retreated from that position, which made it prudent to retire our whole force from Glendale, for Jackson's forces at White Oak bridge would soon be upon us. By daylight began our march to Malvern, the pioneers felling trees in the rear.

Acres and acres of waving grain, ripe for the reapers, were seen on every side. The

troops marched through the wheat, cutting off the tops and gathering them into their haversacks, for, except in more than ordinarily provident cases, they were out of rations and hungry, as well as lame and stiff from marching. The bands, which had been silent so long before Richmond, here began playing patriotic airs, which had a very inspiring effect. As they neared the James River and caught sight of our gunboats, a cheer went up from each regiment. About eleven o'clock in the morning they took up position on the Malvern plateau.



THE CHANGE OF BASE FROM WHITE HOUSE TO HARRISON'S LANDING. (SEE ALSO LARGE MAP, PAGE 453 OF THE JULY "CENTURY.")

in the twilight shadows gathering over the field. Our artillery continued to shell the woods, and the din of musketry did not cease until long after dark. This Union victory insured the safety of the army, which until that hour had been in peril.

During the night many of the enemy's stragglers were captured. Hooker's men, who heard them in the strip of woods calling out the names of their regiments, stationed squads at different points to answer and direct them into the Union lines, where they were captured. "Here by the oak," our men would say in answer to their calls, and thus gathered in these lost children of the Confederacy. Our regiment captured five or six stragglers in much the same manner. Many of them were under the influence of stimulants. It was current talk at that time—to account for the desperate, reckless charges made during the day—that the Confederates were plied with whisky. I am not of that opinion, as whisky will not make men brave. Those captured wore a medley of garments which could hardly be called a uniform, though gray and butternut

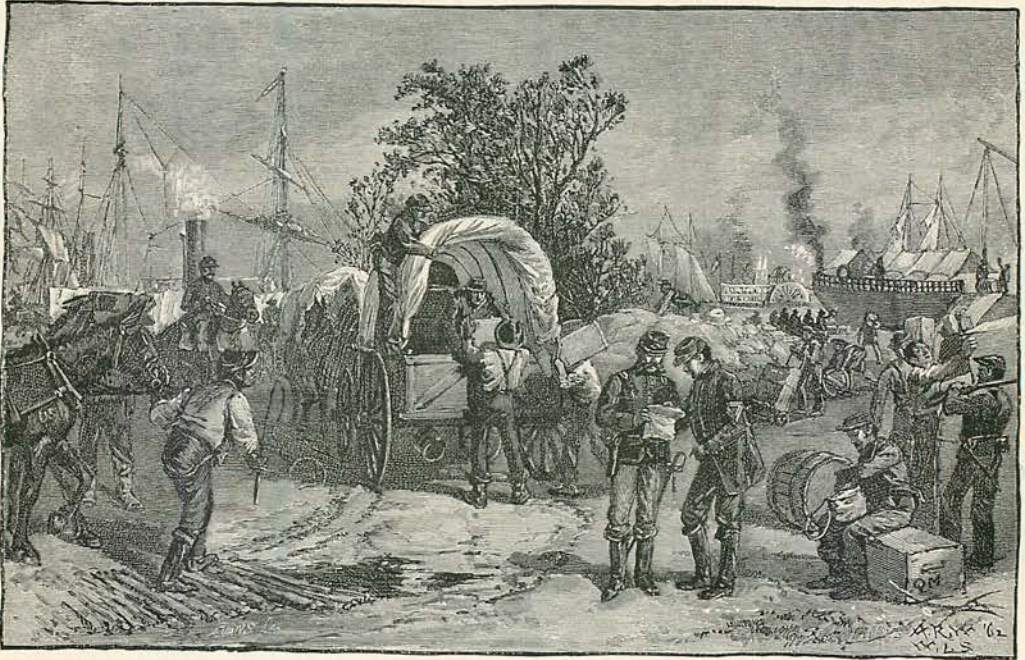
MALVERN HILL.

The morale of the army, notwithstanding its toilsome midnight marches and daily battles, with insufficient sleep and scanty food, was excellent. Its comparatively raw masses were now an army of veterans, tried in the fire of battle.

Our stragglers, their courage revived by sight of the gun-boats, came up the hill, seeking their regiments. One squad encountered half a dozen of the enemy's cavalry and charged them with empty muskets. Another squad came in with a Confederate wagon, in which were several wounded comrades rescued from the battle-field. Another squad had their haversacks filled with honey, and bore marks of a battle with bees. During the morning long lines of men with dusty garments and powder-blackened faces climbed the steep Quaker road. Footsore, hungry, and wearied, but not disheartened, these tired men took their positions and prepared for another day of conflict. The private soldiers were quick to perceive the advantages which

the possession of Malvern Hill gave us, and such expressions as "How is this for Johnny Reb!" were heard on every hand. Wad Rider, complacently and keenly viewing the surroundings, said, "Satan himself couldn't whip

terrible. Soon it partly died away and was followed by roaring volleys, and then the irregular *snap, crack, crack* of firing at will of the musketry. It was the attack of G. B. Anderson's brigade of D. H. Hill's division upon



SUPPLYING THE HUNGRY ARMY AT HARRISON'S LANDING. (FROM SKETCH BY A. R. WAUD MADE AT THE TIME.)

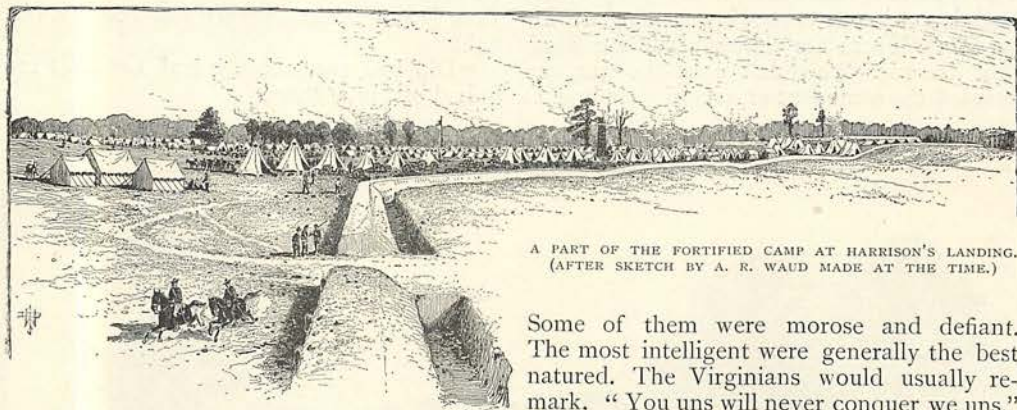
us out of this!" As soon as it was in position near the north front of the hill, our regiment was given the order, "In place — rest," and in a few minutes the men were asleep, lying upon their muskets.

Early in the forenoon skirmishing began along the new line. Some of the troops, while going up the hill to take their positions on the field, were fired upon by the enemy's batteries. Small parties advanced within musket-shot, evidently reconnoitering our position, and fired from the cover of the woods on our men. Shells from our gun-boats on the James came hoarsely spluttering over the heads of the troops. Occasionally hostile regiments appeared from the woods below the crest of the hill, and were as often driven back by our artillery.

The fighting of the day might be described as a succession of daring attacks and bloody repulses. Heavy firing began at different points soon after noon, followed by a lull. About three o'clock there was heard an explosion of artillery, with the well-known rebel yell, followed by the cheering of our men. The crash of artillery was even at this time

Couch's front. In a hand-to-hand struggle at this time, the Thirty-sixth New York captured the colors of the Fourteenth North Carolina and a number of prisoners. Couch then advanced his line to a grove, which gave a stronger position and a better range for the musketry. An assault at the same time was made along the left, but was speedily repulsed by the batteries. At four o'clock there was quiet. But the storm of battle at six o'clock burst upon Malvern cliff. Brigade after brigade came up the hill with impetuous courage, breasting the storm of canister, grape, and shell which devastated their ranks. Half-way up they would break in disorder, before the destructive cannonade and the deadly volleys of musketry. Vainly they were rallied. It was more than human courage could endure.

After D. H. Hill, Magruder made his attack. Our guns, grouped around the Crew house, opened upon the Confederates, as with fierce yells they charged up the slope. In some instances our infantry, being sheltered by the inequalities of the ground in front of the guns, withheld their fire until the charging column was within a few yards of them.



A PART OF THE FORTIFIED CAMP AT HARRISON'S LANDING.
(AFTER SKETCH BY A. R. WAUD MADE AT THE TIME.)

Sometimes the enemy attacked from the cover of the ravine on the left, but they never reached the crest. Night came, yet the fight went on, with cheers answering to yells and gun answering to gun. The lurid flashes of artillery along the hostile lines, in the gathering darkness; the crackle of musketry, with flashes seen in the distance like fire-flies; the hoarse shriek of the huge shells from the gun-boats, thrown into the woods, made it a scene of terrible grandeur. The ground in front of Porter and Couch was literally covered with the dead and wounded. At nine o'clock the sounds of the battle died away, and cheer after cheer went up from the victors on the hill.

During the battle of Malvern Hill the infantry where my regiment was posted was not brought into active opposition to the enemy. They lay on the ground in front of the guns, which threw shot, shell, and canister over their heads. Several times after three o'clock brigades were sent from this position to act as supports where the attack was heaviest on Couch's lines. Just after three o'clock the artillery fire was heavy on our brigade, but the loss was light, owing to the protection afforded to the infantry by the inequalities of the ground. Between six and seven o'clock our company was detailed to guard prisoners; and about that time, as one of my comrades said, General Hooker rode by on his white horse, which formed a very marked contrast to his very red face. He rode leisurely and complacently, as if in no alarm or excitement, but looked very warm. Behind a bluff, not far from the Crew house, was the extemporized hospital towards which stretcher-bearers were carrying the wounded; those able to walk were hobbling, and in some instances were using a reversed musket for a crutch.

All of the prisoners were "played-out" men who had evidently seen hard service with marching, fighting, and short rations.

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Some of them were morose and defiant. The most intelligent were generally the best natured. The Virginians would usually remark, "You uns will never conquer we uns." In general they were poorly clad.

Thus ended the Union advance on Richmond. The grand "Army of the Potomac" forced its way to within sight of the enemy's capital, only to fall back, in a desperate struggle of seven successive days, to the James River. Yet it preserved its trains, its courage, and its undaunted front, and inflicted upon the enemy heavier losses than it sustained. Though crowded back in the final movement, our army defeated the enemy on every battle-field but one during the seven days. The moral advantage was on the side of the Confederates; the physical on the side of the Federals. We had inflicted a loss of about 20,000 on the enemy, while sustaining a loss of but 15,849. The North was in humiliation over the result, while the Confederates rejoiced.

ON THE JAMES.

THE next morning at daybreak our regiment moved with its squad of prisoners down the road to Haxall's. Here, for some reason, they were halted for two or three hours while regiments, trains, and cattle moved over the narrow defile, jumbled in confusion together. There were loud discussions as to the right of way, and a deal of growling among the soldiers at retreating, after giving the "rebs" such a whipping; but most of them seemed to think "Little Mac" knew what he was about, and the enthusiasm for him grew in intensity rather than decreased. The halt gave leisure for talk with the prisoners. One of them was a good-looking, intelligent fellow about twenty-two years of age. He informed one of my comrades that he belonged to a North Carolina regiment. He was a college graduate, and the prospect of spending a summer at the North did not seem to displease him. He confidentially said that he had been a Union man just as long as he could, and finally went

into the Confederate army to save his property and reputation and to avoid conscription. He added: "There are thousands in the South just like me. We didn't want the war, and resisted the sentiment of secession as long as

march and some right smart fighting, for Old Jack is powerful on prayer just before a big fight."

"Did you ever see General Lee?" I inquired of one of them.



THE WESTOVER MANSION, CAMP AT HARRISON'S LANDING, JULY, 1862.

we could. Now it has gone so far we've got to fight or sever all the associations with which our lives are interlinked. I know it is a desperate chance for the South. Look at your men, how they are disciplined, fed, and clothed, and then see how our men are fed and clothed. They are brave men, but they can't stand it forever. Southern men have got fight in them, and you will find them hard to conquer."

One lean "Johnny" was loud in his praise of Stonewall Jackson, saying: "He's a general, he is. If you uns had some good general like him, I reckon you uns could lick we uns. 'Old Jack' marches we uns most to death; a Confed that's under Stonewall has got to march."

"Does your general abuse you—swear at you to make you march?" inquired one of his listeners.

"Swear?" answered the Confederate; "no. Ewell he does the swearing; Stonewall does the praying. When Stonewall wants us to march he looks at us soberly, just as if he was sorry for we uns, but couldn't help it, and says, 'Men, we've got to make a long march.' We always know when there is going to be a long

"Yes, I was a sort of orderly for 'Uncle Robert' for a while. He's mighty calm-like when a fight is going on."

About ten o'clock in the morning the regiment resumed its march. It reached Harrison's Landing about four in the afternoon, just as it began to rain in torrents. Here they were relieved from guard duty and allowed the privilege of making themselves as comfortable as possible under the circumstances. The level land which terminates in bluffs on the James River was covered with hundreds of acres of wheat ready for the harvest. The process of cutting for the army began without delay, and before night every blade of it was in use for bedding and forage; not a vestige remained to tell of the waving fields which had covered the plain a few hours previous. The fields whereon it stood were trampled under foot; not even a stubble stood in sight. Great fields of mud were the resting-place of the army. It was almost as muddy as if the waters of the deluge had just receded from the face of the earth. Mules, horses, and men were alike smeared and spotted with mire, and the ardor of the army was somewhat dampened thereby.



MCCLELLAN'S HEADQUARTERS, HARRISON'S LANDING, JAMES RIVER. (FROM SKETCH BY A. R. WAUD, 1862.)

This house was the birthplace of General (afterward President) William Henry Harrison. During the month of July, 1862, it was used as a hospital and as a signal-station, the scaffolding about the chimneys having been built for that purpose.

At Harrison's Landing the army settled down to a period of rest, which was much needed. The heat during the day was intolerable, and prevented much exercise. Men lay under their shelter, smoked, told stories, discussed the scenes and battles of the previous month, and when evening came on visited each other's camps and sang the popular songs of the day. Those vampires of the army, the sutlers, charged double prices for everything they had to sell, until the soldiers began to regard them as their natural enemies. No change smaller than ten cents circulated in camp. It was the smallest price charged for anything. Sutlers' pasteboard checks were in good demand as change, and were very useful in playing the game of "bluff." Thus the army whiled away the month of July.

During August some of the prisoners captured from us on the seven days' retreat arrived in our lines for exchange. They were a sorry-looking crowd — emaciated, hungry, sick, ragged, and dirty. They did not have a high opinion of the entertainment they had received at Belle Isle and Libby prison.

During one of those quiet, still August nights, dark, and as close and muggy as only a night in "dog days" can be, some time after midnight, the whole camp was roused by the furious and rapid bursting of shells in our very midst. Imagine, if you can, a midnight shelling of a closely packed camp of fifty thousand men, without giving them one hint or thought of warning; imagine our dazed appearance as we rolled from under our canvas

coverings, and the running and dodging here and there, trying to escape from the objective point of the missiles. Of course the camp was a perfect pandemonium during the half hour that the shelling lasted. We soon discovered that the visitors came from a battery across the James River, and in twenty minutes a few of our guns silenced them completely. Most of these shells burst over and amongst us who occupied the center of the camp, near the old Harrison's Landing road. This road was lined on either side with large shade-trees, which were probably of some assistance to the enemy in training their guns.

While at Harrison's Landing there was a great deal of sickness. But, more than any other ailment, homesickness was prevalent. It made the most fearful inroads among the commissioned officers. Many sent in their resignations, which were promptly returned disapproved. One, who had not shown a disposition to face the enemy proportionate to his rank, hired two men to carry him on a stretcher to the hospital boat; and this valiant officer was absent from the army nearly a whole year. We believed at that time that some of the hospitals at the North, for the sake of the money made on each ration, sheltered and retained skulkers. In contrast with this was the noble action of men who insisted on joining their commands before their wounds were fairly healed, or while not yet recovered from their sickness.

Bathing and swimming in the James was a luxury to us soldiers, and did much, no doubt



DUMMIES AND QUAKER GUNS LEFT IN THE WORKS AT HARRISON'S LANDING ON THE EVACUATION BY THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC. (FROM SKETCH AT THE TIME BY A. R. WAUD.)

towards improving the health of the army. Boxes with goodies from home came by express in great numbers. One of my friends at one time received a whole cheese, and for a week was the envy of the company.

Hooker's brigade moved towards Malvern Hill on the second of August, and on the fourth attacked the enemy near Glendale. On the fifteenth all was bustle and confusion, getting ready for some movement—perhaps another advance on Richmond. But instead we took up our line of march down the Penin-

sula. The people on the way openly expressed hatred of us and sympathy with the rebellion. No guards were posted over the houses as heretofore, and we used the fences to cook our coffee, without reproach from our officers. At one house, near the landing, a notice was posted forbidding the burial of a Yankee on the estate. That house was very quickly and deliberately burned to the ground. Steamboats and wagons were crowded with our sick. After rapid marches we arrived at Hampton, and embarked again for Alexandria.

Warren Lee Goss.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

General Imboden's "Incidents of the Battle of Manassas."

THE series of War Papers now being published in THE CENTURY are of such extraordinary value as history and material for history, that it is desirable to have them as accurate as possible, and to correct even small errors of fact as they are stated. Allow me to correct two in General Imboden's article in the May CENTURY. The general could not have tossed "little Julia," the daughter and only child of Stonewall Jackson, in his arms three days after the battle of Bull Run, for she was not born until more than a year after that time. She might have been seen in "long dresses" near Fredericksburg, just before

her father was killed at Chancellorsville, for she was there making her first visit to the army, and was then only about six months old.

Again, General Jackson did not put General D. H. Hill under arrest while crossing the Potomac into Maryland at Leesburg. It was General A. P. Hill who was put under arrest on the day before we crossed the Potomac, Sept. 4th, for disobedience of orders in not moving his division as early in the morning as he was directed to do, and thereby delaying the prompt movement of the corps. I had given the order to General Hill fixing the hour for marching, and carried the order from General Jackson putting him under arrest. General Branch was in command of A. P. Hill's divis-