A HARD ROAD TO TRAVEL OUT OF DIXIE.

IT was past noon of the first day of the bloody contest in the Wilderness. The guns of the Fifth Corps, led by Battery D of the 1st New York Artillery, were halted along the Orange turnpike, by which we had made the fruitless campaign to Mine Run. The continuous roar of musketry in front and to the left indicated that the infantry was desperately engaged, while the great guns filling every wooded road leading up to the battle-field were silent. Our drivers were lounging about the horses, while the cannoneers lay on the green grass by the roadside or walked by the pieces. Down the line came an order for the center section, under my command, to advance and pass the right section, which lay in front of us. General Warren, surrounded by his staff, sat on a gray horse at the right of the road where the woods bordered an open field dipping between two wooded ridges. The position we were leaving was admirable, while the one to which we were ordered, on the opposite side of the narrow field, was wholly impracticable. The captain had received his orders in person from General Warren, and joined my command as we passed.

We dashed down the road at a trot, the cannoneers running beside their pieces. At the center of the field we crossed by a wooden bridge over a deep, dry ditch, and came rapidly into position at the side of the turnpike and facing the thicket. As the cannoneers were not all up, the captain and I dismounted and lent a hand in swinging round the heavy trails. The air was full of minié-balls, some whistling by like mad hornets, and others, partly spent, humming like big nails. One of the latter struck my knee with force enough to wound to the bone without penetrating the grained-leather boot-leg. In front of us the ground rose into the timber where our infantry was engaged. It was madness to continue firing here, for my shot must first plow through our own lines before reaching the enemy. So after one discharge the captain ordered the limbers to the rear, and the section started back at a gallop. My horse was cut on the flanks, and his plunging, with my disabled knee, delayed me in mounting, and prevented my seeing why the carriages kept to the grass instead of getting upon the roadway. When I overtook the guns they had come to a forced halt at the dry ditch, now full of skulkers, an angle of which cut the way to the bridge. Brief as the interval had been, not a man of my command was in sight. The lead horse of the gun team at my side had been shot and was reeling in the harness. Slipping to the ground, I untoggled one trace at the collar to release him, and had placed my hand on the other when I heard the demand "Surrender!" and turning found in my face two big pistols in the hands of an Alabama colonel. "Give me that sword," said he. I pressed the clasp and let it fall to the ground, where it remained. The colonel had taken me by the right arm, and as we turned towards the road I took in the whole situation at a glance. My chestnut horse and the captain's bald-faced brown were dashing frantically against the long, swaying gun teams. By the bridge stood a company of the 61st Alabama Infantry in butternut suits and slouch hats, shooting straggling and wounded Zouaves from a Pennsylvania brigade as they appeared in groups of two or three on the road in front. The colonel as he handed me over to his men ordered his troops to take what prisoners they could and to cease firing. The guns which we were forced to abandon were a bone of contention until they were secured by the enemy on the third day, at which time but one of the twenty-four team horses was living.

With a few other prisoners I was led by a short detour through the woods. In ten minutes we had turned the flank of both armies and reached the same turnpike in the rear of our enemy. A line of ambulances was moving back on the road, all filled with wounded, and when we saw a vacant seat beside a driver I was hoisted up to the place. The boy driver was in a high state of excitement. He said that two shells had come flying down this same road and showed where the trace of the near mule had been cut by a piece of shell, for which I was directly responsible.

The field hospital of General Jubal Early's corps was near Locust Grove Tavern, where

the wounded Yankees were in charge of Surgeon Donnelly of the Pennsylvania Reserves. No guard was established, as no one was supposed to be in condition to run away. At the end of a week, however, my leg had greatly improved, although I was still unable to use it. In our party was another lieutenant, an aide on the staff of General James C. Rice, whose horse had been shot under him while riding at full speed with despatches. Lieutenant Hadley had returned to consciousness to find himself a prisoner in hospital, somewhat bruised, and robbed of his valuables, but not otherwise disabled. We two concluded to start for Washington by way of Kelly's Ford. I traded my penknife for a haversack of cornbread with one of the Confederate nurses, and a wounded officer, Colonel Miller of a New York regiment, gave us a pocket compass. I provided myself with a stout pole, which I used with both hands in lieu of my left foot. At 9 P. M. we set out, passing during the night the narrow field and the dry ditch where I had left my guns. Only a pile of dead horses marked the spot.

On a grassy bank we captured a firefly and shut him in between the glass and the face of our pocket compass. With such a guide we shaped our course for the Rapidan. After traveling nearly all night we lay down exhausted upon a bluff within sound of the river and slept until sunrise. Hastening to our feet again, we hurried down to the ford. Just before reaching the river we heard shouts behind us and saw a man beckoning and running after us. Believing the man an enemy, we dashed into the shallow water, and after crossing safely hobbled away up the other side as fast as a man with one leg and a pole could travel. I afterwards met this man, himself a prisoner, at Macon, Georgia. He was the officer of our pickets, and would have conducted us into our lines if we had permitted him to come up with us. As it was, we found a snug hiding-place in a thicket of swamp growth, where we lay in concealment all day. After struggling on a few miles in a chilling rain my leg became so painful that it was impossible to go farther. A house was near by, and we threw ourselves on the mercy of the family. Good Mrs. Brandon had harbored the pickets of both armies again and again, and had luxuriated in real coffee and tea and priceless salt at the hands of our officers. She bore the Yankees only good-will, and after dressing my wound we sat down to breakfast with herself and her daughters.

After breakfast we were conducted to the second half-story, which was one unfinished room. There was a bed in one corner where we were to sleep. Beyond the stairs was a pile of yellow ears of corn, and from the rafters and sills hung a variety of dried herbs and medicinal roots. Here our meals were served, and the girls brought us books and read aloud to pass away the long days. I was confined to the bed, and my companion never ventured below stairs except on one dark night, when at my earnest entreaty he set out for Kelly's Ford, but soon returned, unable to make his way in the darkness. One day we heard the door open at the foot of the stairs, a tread of heavy boots on the steps, and the clank, clank of something that sounded very much like a saber. Out of the floor rose a gray slouch hat with the yellow cord and tassel of a cavalryman, and in another moment there stood on the landing one of the most astonished troopers that ever was seen. "Coot" Brandon was one of "Jeb" Stuart's rangers, and came every day for corn for his horse. Heretofore the corn had been brought down for him, and he was as ignorant of our presence as we were of his existence. On this day no pretext could keep him from coming up to help himself. His mother worked on his sympathies, and he departed promising her that he would leave us undisturbed. But the very next morning he turned up again, this time accompanied by another ranger of sterner mold. A parole was exacted from my able-bodied companion and we were left for another twenty-four hours, when I was considered in condition to be moved. Mrs. Brandon gave us each a new blue overcoat from a plentiful store of Uncle Sam's clothing she had on hand, and I opened my heart and gave her my last twenty-dollar greenback — and wished I had it back again every day for the next ten months.

I was mounted on a horse, and with Lieutenant Hadley on foot we were marched under guard all day until we arrived at a field hospital established in the rear of Longstreet's corps, my companion being sent on to some prison for officers. Thence I was forwarded with a train-load of wounded to Lynchburg, on which General Hunter was then marching, and we had good reason to hope for a speedy deliverance. On more than one day we heard his guns to the north, where there was no force but a few citizens with bird guns to oppose the entrance of his command. The slaves were employed on a line of breastworks which there was no adequate force to hold. It was our opinion that one well-disciplined regiment could have captured and held the town. It was several days before a portion of General Breckinridge's command arrived for the defense of Lynchburg.

I had clung to my clean bed in the hospital just as long as my rapidly healing wound would permit, but was soon transferred to a prison where at night the sleepers — Yankees,

Confederate deserters, and negroes — were so crowded upon the floor that some lay under the feet of the guards in the doorways. The atmosphere was dreadful. I fell ill, and for three days lay with my head in the fireplace, more dead than alive.

A few days thereafter about three hundred prisoners were crowded into cattle cars bound for Andersonville. We must have been a week on this railroad journey when an Irish lieutenant of a Rochester regiment and I, who had been allowed to ride in the baggage car, were taken from the train at Macon, Georgia, where about sixteen hundred Union officers were confined at the Fair-Grounds. General Alexander Shaler, of Sedgwick's corps, also captured at the Wilderness, was the ranking officer, and to him was accorded a sort of interior command of the camp. Before passing through the gate we expected to see a crowd bearing some outward semblance of respectability. Instead, we were instantly surrounded by several hundred ragged, barefooted, frowzy-headed men shouting "Fresh fish!" at the top of their voices and eagerly asking for news. With rare exceptions all were shabbily dressed. There was, however, a little knot of naval officers, who had been captured in the windings of the narrow Rappahannock by a force of cavalry, and who were the aristocrats of the camp. They were housed in a substantial fair-building in the center of the grounds, and by some special terms of surrender must have brought their complete wardrobes along. On hot days they appeared in spotless white duck, which they were permitted to send outside to be laundered. Their mess was abundantly supplied with the fruits and vegetables of the season. The ripe red tomatoes they were daily seen to peel were the envy of the camp. I well remember that to me, at this time, a favorite occupation was to lie on my back with closed eyes and imagine the dinner I would order if I were in a first-class hotel. It was no unusual thing to see a dignified colonel washing his lower clothes in a pail, clad only in his uniform dress-coat. Ladies sometimes appeared on the guard-walk outside the top of the stockade, on which occasions the cleanest and best-dressed men turned out to see and be seen. I was quite proud to appear in a clean gray shirt, spotless white drawers, and moccasins made of blue overcoat cloth.

On the Fourth of July, after the regular morning count, we repaired to the big central building and held an informal celebration. One officer had brought into captivity, concealed on his person, a little silk national flag, which was carried up into the cross-beams of the building, and the sight of it created the wildest enthusiasm. We cheered the flag and applauded the patriotic speeches until a detachment of the guard succeeded in putting a stop to our proceedings. They tried to capture the flag, but in this they were not successful. We were informed that cannon were planted commanding the camp, and would be opened on us if we renewed our demonstrations.

Soon after this episode the fall of Atlanta and the subsequent movements of General Sherman led to the breaking up of the camp at Macon, and to the transfer of half of us to a camp at Charleston and half to Savannah. Late in September, by another transfer, we found ourselves together again at Columbia. We had no form of shelter, and there was no stockade around the camp, only a guard and a dead-line. During two hours of each morning an extra line of guards was stationed around an adjoining piece of pine woods, into which we were allowed to go and cut wood and timber to construct for ourselves huts for the approaching winter. Our ration at this time consisted of raw corn-meal and sorghum molasses, without salt or any provision of utensils for cooking. The camp took its name from our principal article of diet, and was by common consent known as "Camp Sorghum." A stream of clear water was accessible during the day by an extension of the guards, but at night the lines were so contracted as to leave the path leading to the water outside the guard. Lieutenant S. H. M. Byers, who had already written the well-known lyric "Sherman's March to the Sea," was sharing my tent, which consisted of a ragged blanket. We had been in the new camp but little more than a week when we determined to make an attempt at escape. Preparatory to starting we concealed two tin cups and two blankets in the pine woods to which we had access during the chopping hours, and here was to be our rendezvous in case we were separated in getting out. Covering my shoulders with an old gray blanket and providing myself with a stick from the woodpile about the size of a gun, I tried to smuggle myself into the relief guard when the line was contracted at six o'clock. Unfortunately an unexpected halt was called, and the soldier in front turned and discovered me. I was now more than ever determined on getting away. After a hurried conference with Lieutenant Byers, at which I promised to wait at our rendezvous in the woods until I heard the posting of the ten o'clock relief, I proceeded alone up the side of the camp to a point where a group of low cedars grew close to the dead-line. Concealing myself in their dark shadow, I could observe at my leisure the movements of the sentinels. A full moon was just rising above the horizon to my left, and in the soft, misty

light the guards were plainly visible for a long distance either way. An open field from which the small growth had been recently cut away lay beyond, and between the camp and the guard-line ran a broad road of soft sand — noiseless to cross, but so white in the moonlight that a leaf blown across it by the wind could scarcely escape a vigilant eye. The guards were bundled in their overcoats, and I soon observed that the two who met opposite to my place of concealment turned and walked their short beats without looking back. Waiting until they separated again, and regardless of the fact that I might with equal likelihood be seen by a dozen sentinels in either direction, I ran quickly across the soft sand road several yards into the open field, and threw myself down upon the uneven ground. First I dragged my body on my elbows for a few yards, then I crept on my knees, and so gradually gained in distance until I could rise to a standing position and get safely to the shelter of the trees. With some difficulty I found the cups and blankets we had concealed, and lay down to await the arrival of my companion. Soon I heard several shots which I understood too well; and, as I afterwards learned, two officers were shot dead for attempting the feat I had accomplished, and perhaps in emulation of my success. A third young officer, whom I knew, was also killed in camp by one of the shots fired at the others.

At ten o'clock I set out alone and made my way across the fields to the bank of the Saluda, where a covered bridge crossed to Columbia. Hiding when it was light, wandering through fields and swamps by night, and venturing at last to seek food of negroes, I proceeded for thirteen days towards the sea.

In general I had followed the Columbia turnpike; at a quaint little chapel on the shore of Goose Creek, but a few miles out of Charleston, I turned to the north and bent my course for the coast above the city. About this time I learned that I should find no boats along the shore between Charleston and the mouth of the Santee, everything able to float having been destroyed to prevent the escape of the negroes and the desertion of the soldiers. I was ferried over the Broad River by a crusty old darky who came paddling across in response to my cries of "O-v-e-r," and who seemed so put out because I had no fare for him that I gave him my case-knife. The next evening I had the only taste of meat of this thirteen days' journey, which I got from an old negro whom I found alone in his cabin eating possum and rice.

I had never seen the open sea-coast beaten by the surf, and after being satisfied that I had no hope of escape in that direction it was in part my curiosity that led me on, and partly a vague idea that I would get Confederate transportation back to Columbia and take a fresh start westward bound. The tide was out, and in a little cove I found an abundance of oysters bedded in the mud, some of which I cracked with stones and ate. After satisfying my hunger, and finding the sea rather unexpectedly tame inside the line of islands which marked the eastern horizon, I bent my steps towards a fire, where I found a detachment of Confederate coast-guards, to whom I offered myself as a guest as coolly as if my whole toilsome journey had been prosecuted to that end.

In the morning I was marched a few miles to Mount Pleasant, near Fort Moultrie, and taken thence in a sail-boat across the harbor to Charleston. At night I found myself again in the city jail, where with a large party of officers I had spent most of the month of August. My cell-mate was Lieutenant H. G. Dorr of the 4th Massachusetts Cavalry, with whom I journeyed by rail back to Columbia, arriving at "Camp Sorghum" about the 1st of November.

I rejoined the mess of Lieutenant Byers and introduced to the others Lieutenant Dorr, whose cool assurance was a prize that procured us all the blessings possible. He could borrow frying-pans from the guards, money from his brother Masons at headquarters, and I believe if we had asked him to secure us a gun he would have charmed it out of the hand of a sentinel on duty.

Lieutenant Edward E. Sill, of General Daniel Butterfield's staff, whom I had met at Macon, during my absence had come to "Sorghum" from a fruitless trip to Macon for exchange, and I had promised to join him in an escape when he could secure a pair of shoes. On the 29th of November our mess had cut down a big pine tree and had rolled into camp a short section of the trunk, which a Tennessee officer was to split into shingles to complete our hut, a pretty good cabin with earthen fireplace. While we were resting from our exertion, Sill appeared with his friend Lieutenant A. T. Lamson of the 104th New York Infantry, and reminded me of my promise. The prisoners always respected their parole on wood-chopping expeditions, and went out and came in at the main entrance. The guards were a particularly verdant body of back country militia, and the confusion of the parole system enabled us to practice ruses. In our present difficulty we resorted to a new expedient and forged a parole. The next day all three of us were quietly walking down the guard-line on the outside. At the creek, where all the camp came for water, we

found Dorr and Byers and West, and calling to one of them in the presence of the guard asked for blankets to bring in spruce boughs for beds. When the blankets came they contained certain haversacks, cups, and little indispensable articles for the road. Falling back into the woods, we secured a safe hiding-place until after dark. Just beyond the village of Lexington we successfully evaded the first picket, being warned of its presence by the smoldering embers in the road. A few nights after this, having exposed ourselves and anticipating pursuit, we pushed on until we came to a stream crossing the road. Up this we waded for some distance and secured a hiding-place on a neighboring hill. In the morning we looked out upon mounted men and dogs, at the very point where we had entered the stream, searching for our lost trail. We spent two days during a severe storm of rain and sleet in a farm barn where the slaves were so drunk on applejack that they had forgotten us and left us with nothing to eat but raw turnips. One night, in our search for provisions, we met a party of negroes burning charcoal who took us to their camp and sent out for a supply of food. While waiting a venerable "uncle" proposed to hold a prayer meeting. So under the tall trees and by the light of the smoldering coal-pits the old man prayed long and fervently to the "bressed Lord and Massa Lincoln," and hearty amens echoed through the woods. Besides a few small potatoes, one dried goat ham was all our zealous friends could procure. The next day, having made our camp in the secure depths of a dry swamp, we lighted the only fire we allowed ourselves between Columbia and the mountains. The ham, which was almost as light as cork, was riddled with worm holes, and as hard as a petrified sponge.

We avoided the towns, and after an endless variety of adventures approached the mountains, cold, hungry, ragged, and footsore. On the night of December 13 we were grouped about a guide-post, at a fork in the road, earnestly contending as to which way we should proceed. Lieutenant Sill was for the right, I was for the left, and no amount of persuasion could induce Lieutenant Lamson to decide the controversy. I yielded, and we turned to the right. After walking a mile in a state of general uncertainty we came to a low white farm-house standing very near to the road. It was now close upon midnight and the windows were all dark, but from a house of logs, partly behind the other, gleamed a bright light. Judging this to be servants' quarters, two of us remained back while Lieutenant Sill made a cautious approach. In due time a negro appeared, advancing stealthily, and, beckoning to my companion and me, conducted us in the shadow of a hedge to a side window, through which we clambered into the cabin. We were made very comfortable in the glow of a bright wood fire. Sweet potatoes were already roasting in the ashes, and a tin pot of barley coffee was steaming on the coals. Rain and sleet had begun to fall, and it was decided that after having been warmed and refreshed we should be concealed in the barn until the following night. Accordingly we were conducted thither and put to bed upon a pile of corn-shucks high up under the roof. Secure as this retreat seemed, it was deemed advisable in the morning to burrow several feet down in the mow, so that the children, if by any chance they should climb so high, might romp unsuspecting over our heads. We could still look out through the cracks in the siding and get sufficient light whereby to study a map of the Southern States, which had been brought us with our breakfast. A luxurious repast was in preparation, to be eaten at the quarters before starting, but a frolic being in progress, and a certain negro present of questionable fidelity, the banquet was transferred to the barn. The great barn doors were set open, and the cloth was spread on the floor by the light of the moon. Certainly we had partaken of no such substantial fare within the Confederacy. The central dish was a pork pie, flanked by savory little patties of sausage. There were sweet potatoes, fleecy biscuits, a jug of sorghum, and a pitcher of sweet milk. Most delicious of all was a variety of corn-bread, having tiny bits of fresh pork baked in it, like plums in a pudding.[1]

Filling our haversacks with the fragments, we took grateful leave of our sable benefactors and resumed our journey, retracing our steps to the point of disagreement of the evening before. Long experience in night marching

[1] Major Sill contributes the following evidence of the impression our trio made upon one, at least, of the pickaninnies who looked on in the moonlight. The picture of Lieutenants Sill and Lamson which appears on page 937 was enlarged from a small photograph taken on their arrival at Chattanooga, before divesting themselves of the rags worn throughout the long journey. Years afterwards Major Sill gave one of these pictures to Wallace Bruce of Florida, now United States consul at Glasgow. In the winter of 1888–89 Mr. Bruce, at his Florida home, was showing the photograph to his family when it caught the eye of a colored servant, who exclaimed: "O Massa Bruce, I know those gen'men. My father and mother hid 'em in Massa's barn at Pickensville and fed 'em; there was three of 'em; I saw 'em." This servant was a child scarcely ten years old in 1864, and could only have seen us while we were eating our supper in the barn door, and that in the uncertain moonlight. Yet more than twenty years thereafter he greeted the photograph of the ragged Yankee officers with a flash of recognition.

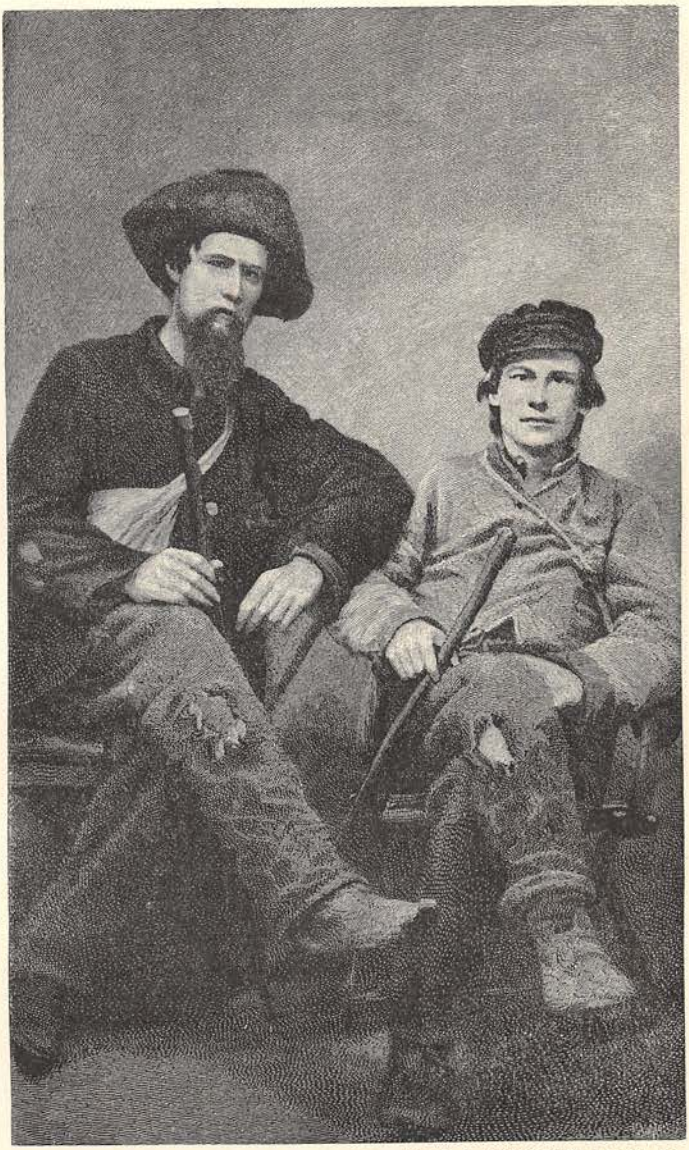
had taught us extreme caution. We had advanced along the new road but a short way when we were startled by the barking of a house dog. Apprehending that something was moving in front of us, we instantly withdrew into the woods. We had scarcely concealed ourselves when two cavalrymen passed along, driving before them a prisoner. Aware that it was high time to betake ourselves to the cross-roads and describe a wide circle around the military station at Pickensville, we first sought information. A ray of light was visible from a hut in the woods, and believing from its humble appearance that it sheltered friends, my companions lay down in concealment while I advanced to reconnoiter. I gained the side of the house, and looking through a crack in the boards saw, to my horror, a soldier lying on his back before the fire and playing with a dog. I stole back with redoubled care. Thoroughly alarmed by the dangers we had already encountered, we decided to abandon the roads. Near midnight of December 16 we passed through a wooden gate on a level road leading into the forest. Believing that the lateness of the hour would secure us from further dangers, we resolved to press on with all speed, when two figures with lighted torches came suddenly into view. Knowing that we were yet unseen, we turned into the woods and concealed ourselves behind separate trees at no great distance from the path. Soon the advancing lights revealed two hunters, mere lads, but having at their heels a pack of mongrel dogs, with which they had probably been pursuing the coon or the possum. The boys would have passed unaware of our presence, but the dogs, scurrying along with their noses in the leaves, soon struck our trail and were instantly yelping about us. We had possessed ourselves of the name of the commanding officer of the neighboring post at Pendleton, and advanced boldly, representing ourselves to be his soldiers. "Then where did you get them blue pantaloons?" they demanded, exchanging glances, which showed they were not ignorant of our true character. We coolly faced them down and resumed our march leisurely, while the boys still lingered undecided. When out of sight we abandoned the road and fled at the top of our speed. We had covered a long distance through forest and field before we heard in our wake the faint yelping of the pack. Plunging into the first stream, we dashed for some distance along its bed. Emerging on the opposite bank, we sped on through marshy fields, skirting high hills and bounding down through dry watercourses, over shelving stones and accumulated barriers of driftwood; now panting up a steep ascent, and now resting for a moment to rub our shoes with the resinous needles of the pine; always within hearing of the dogs, whose fitful cries varied in volume in accordance with the broken conformation of the intervening country. Knowing that in speed and endurance we were no match for our four-footed pursuers, we trusted to our precautions for throwing them off the scent, mindful that they were but an ill-bred kennel and the more easily to be disposed of. Physically we were capable of prolonged exertion. Fainter and less frequent came the cry of the dogs, until, ceasing altogether, we were assured of our escape.

At Oconee, on Sunday, December 18, we met a negro well acquainted with the roads and passes into North Carolina, who furnished us information by which we traveled for two nights, recognizing on the second objects which by his direction we avoided, like the house of Black Bill McKinney, and going directly to that of friendly old Tom Handcock. The first of these two nights we struggled up the foothills and outlying spurs of the mountains, through an uninhabited waste of rolling barrens, along an old stage road, long deserted, and in places impassable to a saddle mule. Lying down before morning, high up on the side of the mountain, we fell asleep, to be awakened by thunder and lightning and to find torrents of hail and sleet beating upon our blankets. Chilled to the bone, we ventured to build a small fire in a secluded place. After dark, and before abandoning our camp, we gathered quantities of wood, stacking it upon the fire, which when we left it was a wild tower of flame lighting up the whole mountain side in the direction we had come, and seeming, in some sort, to atone for a long succession of shivering days in fireless bivouac. We followed the same stage road through the scattering settlement of Casher's Valley in Jackson County, North Carolina. A little farther on, two houses, of hewn logs, with verandas and green blinds, just fitted the description we had received of the home of old Tom Handcock. Knocking boldly at the door of the farther one, we were soon in the presence of the loyal mountaineer. He and his wife had been sleeping on a bed spread upon the floor before the fire. Drawing this to one side, they heaped the chimney with green wood and were soon listening with genuine delight to the story of our adventures.

After breakfast next day, Tom, with his rifle, led us by a back road to the house of "'Squire Larkin C. Hooper," a leading loyalist, whom we met on the way, and together we proceeded to his house. Ragged and forlorn, we were eagerly welcomed at his home by Hooper's invalid wife and daughters. For several days

we enjoyed a hospitality given as freely to utter strangers as if we had been relatives of the family.

Here we learned of a party about to start through the mountains for East Tennessee, guided by Emanuel Headen, who lived on the crest of the Blue Ridge. Our friend Tom was to be one of the party, and other refugees were coming over the Georgia border, where Headen, better known in the settlement as "Man Heady," was mustering his party. It now being near Christmas, and the 'squire's family in daily expectation of a relative, who was a captain in the Confederate army, it was deemed prudent for us to go on to Headen's under the guidance of Tom. Setting out at sunset on the 23d of December, it was late in the evening when we arrived at our destination, having walked nine miles up the mountain trails over a light carpeting of snow. Pausing in front of a diminutive cabin, through the chinks of whose stone fireplace and stick chimney the whole interior seemed to be red hot like a furnace, our guide demanded, "Is Man Heady to hum?" Receiving a sharp negative in reply, he continued, "Well, can Tom get to stay all night?" At this the door flew open and a skinny woman appeared, her homespun frock pendent with tow-headed urchins.



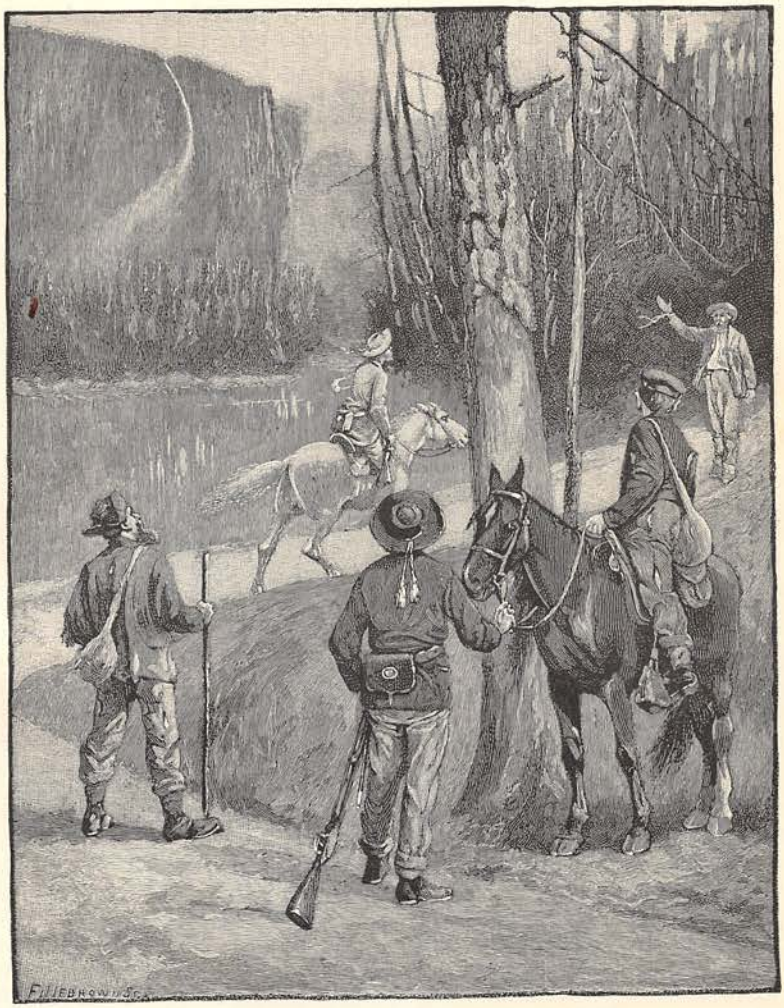
LIEUTENANTS E. E. SILL AND A. T. LAMSON. (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ON THEIR ARRIVAL AT CHATTANOOGA.)

"In course you can," she cried, leading the way into the cabin. Never have I seen so unique a character as this voluble, hatchet-faced, tireless woman. Her skin was like yellow parchment, and I doubt if she knew by experience what it was to be sick or weary. She had built the stake-and-cap fences that divided the fields, and she boasted of the acres she had plowed. The cabin was very small. Two bedsteads, with a narrow alleyway between, occupied half the interior. One was heaped with rubbish and in the other slept the whole family, consisting of father, mother, a daughter of sixteen, and two little boys. When I add that the room contained a massive timber loom, a table, a spinning wheel, and a variety of rude seats, it will be understood that we were crowded uncomfortably close to the fire. Shrinking back as far as possible from the blaze, we listened in amused wonder to the tongue of this seemingly untamed virago, who, nevertheless, proved to be the kindest-hearted of women. She cursed, in her high-pitched tones, for a pack of fools, the men who had brought on the war. Roderic Norton, who lived down

the mountain, she expressed a profane desire to "stomp through the turnpike" because at some time he had stolen one of her hogs, marked, as to the ear, with "two smooth craps an' a slit in the left." Once only she had journeyed into the low country, where she had seen those twin marvels, steam cars and brick chimneys. On this occasion she had driven a heifer to market, making a journey of forty miles, walking beside her horse and wagon, which she took along to bring back the corn-meal received in payment for the animal. Charged by her husband to bring back the heifer bell, and being denied that musical instrument by the purchaser, it immediately assumed more importance to her mind than horse, wagon, and corn-meal. Baffled at first, she proceeded to the pasture in the gray of the morning, cornered the cow and cut off the bell, and, in her own picturesque language, "walked through the streets of Walhalla cussin'." Rising at midnight she would fall to spinning with all her energy. To us, waked from sleep on the floor by the humming of the wheel, she seemed by the light of the low fire like a witch in a sun-bonnet, darting forward and back.

WE ARRIVE AT HEADEN'S.

We remained there several days, sometimes at the cabin and sometimes at a cavern in the rocks such as abound throughout the mountains, and which are called by the natives "rock houses." Many of the men at that time were "outliers"—that is, they camped in the mountain fastnesses, receiving their food from some member of the family. Some of these men, as now, had their copper stills in the rock houses, while others, more wary of the recruiting sergeant, wandered from point to point, their only furniture a rifle and a bedquilt. On December 29, we were joined at the cavern by Lieutenant Knapp and Captain Smith, Federal officers, who had also made their way from Columbia, and by three refugees from Georgia, whom I remember as Old Man Tigue and the two Vincent boys. During the night our party was to start across the mountains for Tennessee. Tom Handcock was momentarily expected to join us. Our guide was busy with preparations for the journey. The night coming on icy cold, and a cutting wind driving the smoke of the fire into our granite house, we abandoned it at nine o'clock and descended to the cabin. Headen and his wife had gone to the mill for a supply of corn-meal. Although it was time for their return, we were in no wise alarmed by their absence, and formed a jovial circle about the roaring chimney. About midnight came a rap on the door. Thinking it was Tom Handcock and some of his companions, I threw it open with an eager "Come in, boys!" The boys began to come in, stamping the snow from their boots and rattling their muskets on the floor, until the house was full, and yet others were on guard without and crowding the porch. "Man Heady" and his wife were already prisoners at the mill, and the house had been picketed for some hours awaiting the arrival of the other refugees, who had discovered the plot just in time to keep out of the toils. Marshaled in some semblance of military array, we were marched down the mountain, over the frozen ground, to the house of old Roderic Norton. The Yankee officers were sent to an upper room, while the refugees were guarded below, under the immediate eyes of the soldiery. Making the best of our misfortune, our original trio bounced promptly into a warm bed, which had been recently deserted by some members of the family, and secured a good night's rest.



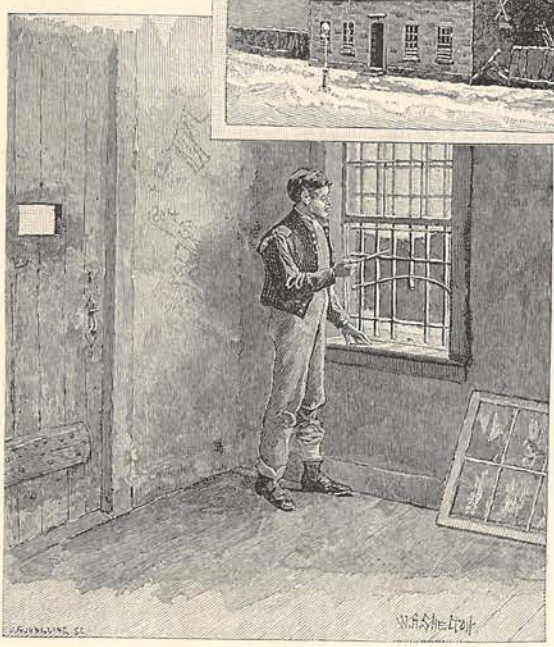
THE ESCAPE OF HEADEN.

Lieutenant Knapp, who had imprudently indulged in frozen chestnuts on the mountain side, was attacked with violent cramps, and kept the household below stairs in commotion all night humanely endeavoring to assuage his agony. In the morning, although quite recovered, he cunningly feigned a continuance of his pains, and was left behind in the keeping of two guards, who having no suspicion of his deep designs left their guns in the house and went out to the spring to wash. Knapp, instantly on the alert, possessed himself of the muskets, and breaking the lock of one, by a powerful effort he bent the barrel of the other, and dashed out through the garden. His keepers, returning from the spring, shouted and rushed indoors only to find their disabled pieces. They joined our party later in the day, rendering a chapfallen account of their detached service.

We had but a moderate march to make to the headquarters of the battalion, where we were to spend the night. Our guards we found kindly disposed towards us, but bitterly upbraiding the refugees, whom they saluted by the ancient name of Tories. Lieutenant Cogdill, in command of the expedition, privately informed us that his sympathies were entirely ours, but as a matter of duty he should guard us jealously while under his military charge. If we could effect our escape thereafter we had only to come to his mountain home and he would conceal us until such time as he could despatch us with safety over the borders. These mountain soldiers were mostly of two classes, both opposed to the war, but doing home-guard duty in lieu of sterner service in the field. Numbers were of the outlier class, who, wearied of continual hiding in the laurel brakes, had embraced this service as a compromise. Many were deserters, some of whom had coolly set at defiance the terms of their furloughs, while others had abandoned the camps in Virginia, and, versed in mountain craft, had made their way along the Blue Ridge and put in a heroic appearance in their native valleys.

That night we arrived at a farm-house near the river, where we found Major Parker, commanding the battalion, with a small detachment, billeted upon the family. The farmer was a gray-haired old loyalist, whom I shall always remember, leaning on his staff in the middle of the kitchen, barred out from his place in the chimney-corner by the noisy circle of his unbidden guests. Major Parker was

a brisk little man, clad in brindle jeans of ancient cut, resplendent with brass buttons. Two small piercing eyes, deep-set beside a hawk's-beak nose, twinkled from under the rim of his brown straw hat, whose crown was defiantly surmounted by a cock's feather. But he was exceedingly jolly withal and welcomed the Yankees with pompous good humor, despatching a sergeant for a jug of apple-jack, which was doubtless as inexpensive to the major as his other hospitality. Having been a prisoner at Chicago, he prided himself on his knowledge of dungeon etiquette and the military courtesies due to our rank.



GREENVILLE JAIL.

We were awakened in the morning by high-pitched voices in the room below. Lieutenant Sill and I had passed the night in neighboring caverns of the same miraculous feather-bed. We recognized the voice of the major, informing some culprit that he had just ten minutes to live, and that if he wished to send any dying message to his wife or children then and there was his last opportunity; and then followed the tramping of the guards as they retired from his presence with their victim. Hastily dressing, we hurried down to find what was the matter. We were welcomed with a cheery good morning from the major, who seemed to be in the sunniest of spirits. No sign of commotion was visible. "Step out to the branch, gentlemen; your parole of honor is sufficient; you 'll find towels—been a prisoner myself." And he restrained by a sign the sentinel who would have accompanied us. At the branch, in the yard, we found the other refugees trembling for their fate, and learned that Headen had gone to the orchard in the charge of a file of soldiers with a rope. While we were discussing the situation and endeavoring to calm the apprehensions of the Georgians the executioners returned from the orchard, our guide marching in advance and looking none the worse for the rough handling he had undergone. The brave fellow had confided his last message and been thrice drawn up towards the branch of an apple tree, and as many times lowered for the information it was supposed he would give. Nothing was learned, and it is probable he had no secrets to disclose or conceal.

Lieutenant Cogdill, with two soldiers, was detailed to conduct us to Quallatown, a Cherokee station at the foot of the Great Smoky Mountains. Two horses were allotted to the guard, and we set out in military order, the refugees two and two in advance, Headen and Old Man Tigue lashed together by the wrists, and the rear brought up by the troopers on horseback. It was the last day of the year, and although a winter morning, the rare mountain air was as soft as spring. We struck the banks of the Tuckasegee directly opposite to a feathery waterfall, which, leaping over a crag of the opposite cliff, was dissipated in a glittering sheet of spray before reaching the tops of the trees below. As the morning advanced we fell into a more negligent order of marching. The beautiful river, a wide, swift current, flowing smoothly between thickly wooded banks, swept by on our left, and on the right wild, uninhabited mountains closed in the road. The two Vincents were strolling along far in advance. Some distance behind them were Headen and Tigue; the remainder of us following in a general group, Sill mounted beside one of the guards. Advancing in this order, a cry from the front broke on the stillness of the woods, and we beheld Old Man Tigue gesticulating wildly in the center of the road and screaming, "He 's gone! He 's gone!

Catch him!" Sure enough the old man was alone, the fragment of the parted strap dangling from his outstretched wrist. The guard, who was mounted, dashed off in pursuit, followed by the lieutenant on foot, but both soon returned, giving over the hopeless chase. Thoroughly frightened by the events of the morning, Headen[1] had watched his opportunity to make good his escape, and as we afterwards learned, joined by Knapp and Tom Handcock, he conducted a party safely to Tennessee.

At Webster, the court town of Jackson County, we were quartered for the night in the jail, but accompanied Lieutenant Cogdill to a venison breakfast at the parsonage with Mrs. Harris and her daughter, who had called on us the evening before. Snow had fallen during the night, and when we continued our march it was with the half-frozen slush crushing in and out, at every step, through our broken shoes. Before the close of this dreary New Year's day we came upon the scene of one of those wild tragedies which are still of too frequent occurrence in those remote regions, isolated from the strong arm of the law. Our road led down and around the mountain side, which on our right was a barren, rocky waste, sloping gradually up from the inner curve of the arc we were describing. From this direction arose a low wailing sound, and a little farther on we came in view of a dismal group of men, women, and mules. In the center of the gathering lay the lifeless remains of a father and his two sons; seated upon the ground, swaying and weeping over their dead, were the mother and wives of the young men. A burial party, armed with spades and picks, waited by their mules, while at a respectful distance from the mourners stood a circle of neighbors and passers-by, some gazing in silent sympathy, and others not hesitating to express a quiet approval of the shocking tragedy. Between two families, the Hoopers and the Watsons, a bitter feud had long existed, and from time to time men of each clan had fallen by the rifles of the other. The Hoopers were loyal Union men, and if the Watsons yielded any loyalty it was to the State of North Carolina. On one occasion shortly before the final tragedy, when one of the young Hoopers was sitting quietly in his door, a light puff of smoke rose from the bushes and a rifle ball plowed through his leg. The Hoopers resolved to begin the new year by wiping out their enemies, root and branch. Before light they had surrounded the log cabin of the Watsons and secured all the male inmates, except one who, wounded, escaped through a window. The latter afterwards executed a singular revenge, by killing and skinning the dog of his enemies and elevating the carcass on a pole in front of their house.

After a brief stay at Quallatown we set out for Asheville, leaving behind our old and friendly guard. Besides the soldiers who now had us in charge, a Cherokee Indian was allotted to each prisoner, with instructions to keep his man constantly in view. To travel with an armed Indian, sullen and silent, trotting at your heels like a dog, with very explicit instructions to blow out your brains at the first attempt to escape, is neither cheerful nor ornamental, and we were a sorry looking party plodding silently along the road. Detachments of prisoners were frequently passed over this route, and regular stopping-places were established for the nights. It was growing dusk when we arrived at the first cantonment, which was the wing of a great barren farm-house owned by Colonel Bryson. The place was already occupied by a party of refugees, and we were directed to a barn in the field beyond. We had brought with us uncooked rations, and while two of the soldiers went into the house for cooking utensils, the rest of the party, including the Indians, were leaning in a line upon the dooryard fence; Sill and Lamson were at the end of the line, where the fence cornered with a hedge. Presently the two soldiers reappeared, one of them with an iron pot in which to cook our meat, and the other swinging in his hand a burning brand. In the wake of these guides we followed down to the barn, and had already started a fire when word came from the house that for fear of rain we had best return to the corn-barn. It was not until we were again in the road that I noticed the absence of Sill and Lamson. I hastened to Smith and confided the good news. The fugitives were missed almost simultaneously by the guards, who first beat up the vicinity of the barn, and then, after securing the remainder of us in a corn-crib, sent out the Indians in pursuit. Faithful dogs, as these Cherokees had shown themselves during the day, they proved but poor hunters when the game was in the bush, and soon returned, giving over the chase. Half an hour later they were all back in camp, baking their hoecake in genuine aboriginal fashion, flattened on the surface of a board and inclined to the heat of the fire.[2]

That I was eager to follow goes without saying, but our keepers had learned our slip-

1 A short time ago the writer received the following letter: "Casher's Valley, May 28, 1890. Old Manuel Headen and wife are living, but separated. Julia Ann is living with her mother. The old lady is blind. Old man Norton (Roderic), to whose house you were taken as prisoner, has been dead for years. Old Tom Handcock is dead.—W. R. HOOPER."

2 Sill and Lamson reached Loudon, Tennessee, in February. A few days after their escape from the Indian guard they arrived at the house of "Shooting John

pery character. All the way to Asheville, day and night, we were watched with sleepless vigilance. There we gave our parole, Smith and I, and secured thereby comfortable quarters in the court-house, with freedom to stroll about the town. Old Man Tigue and the Vincents were committed to the county jail. We were there a week, part of my spare time being employed in helping a Confederate company officer make out a correct pay-roll.

When our diminished ranks had been recruited by four more officers from Columbia, who had been captured near the frozen summit of the Great Smoky Mountains, we were started on a journey of sixty miles to Greenville in South Carolina. The night before our arrival we were quartered at a large farm-house. The prisoners, together with the privates of the guard, were allotted a comfortable room, which contained, however, but a single bed. The officer in charge had retired to enjoy the hospitality of the family. A flock of enormous white pullets were roosting in the yard. Procuring an iron kettle from the servants, who looked with grinning approval upon all forms of chicken stealing, we sallied forth to the capture. Twisting the precious necks of half a dozen, we left them to die in the grass while we pierced the side of a sweet-potato mound. Loaded with our booty we retreated to the house undiscovered, and spent the night in cooking in one pot instead of sleeping in one bed. The fowls were skinned instead of plucked, and, vandals that we were, dressed on the backs of the picture frames, taken down from the walls.

At Greenville we were lodged in the county jail to await the reconstruction of railway bridges, when we were to be transported to Columbia. The jail was a stone structure, two stories in height, with halls through the center on both floors and square rooms on each side. The lock was turned on our little party of six in one of these upper rooms, having two grated windows looking down on the walk. Through the door which opened on the hall a square hole was cut as high as one's face and large enough to admit the passage of a plate. Aside from the rigor of our confinement we were treated with marked kindness. We had scarcely walked about our dungeon before the jailer's daughters were at the door with their autograph albums. In a few days we were playing draughts and reading Bulwer, while the girls, without, were preparing our food and knitting for us warm new stockings. Notwithstanding all these attentions, we were ungratefully discontented. At the end of the first week we were joined by seven enlisted men, Ohio boys, who like ourselves had been found at large in the mountains. From one of these new arrivals we procured a case-knife and a gun screwdriver. Down on the hearth before the fire the screwdriver was placed on the thick edge of the knife and belabored with a beef bone until a few inches of its back were converted into a rude saw. The grate in the window was formed of cast-iron bars, passing perpendicularly through wrought-iron plates, bedded in the stone jambs. If one of these perpendicular bars, an inch and a half square, could be cut through, the plates might be easily bent so as to permit the egress of a man. With this end in view we cautiously began operations. Outside of the bars a piece of carpet had been stretched to keep out the raw wind, and behind this we worked with safety. An hour's toil produced but a few feathery filings on the horizontal plate, but many hands make light work, and steadily the cut grew deeper. We recalled the adventures of Claude Duval, Dick Turpin, and Sixteen-string Jack, and sawed away. During the available hours of three days and throughout one entire night the blade of steel was worrying, rasping, eating the iron bar. At last the grosser yielded to the temper and persistence of the finer metal. It was Saturday night when the toilsome cut was completed, and preparations were already under way for a speedy departure. The jail had always been regarded as too secure to require a military guard, although soldiers were quartered in the town; besides, the night was so cold that a crust had formed on the snow, and both citizens and soldiers, unused to such extreme weather, would be likely to remain indoors. For greater secrecy of movement, we divided into small parties, aiming to traverse different roads. I was to go with my former companion, Captain Smith. Lots were cast to determine the order of our going. First exit was allotted to four of the Ohio soldiers. Made fast to the grating outside were a bit of rope and strip of blankets, along which to descend. Our room was immediately over that of the jailer and his sleeping family, and beneath our opening was a window, which each man must pass in his descent. At eleven o'clock the exodus began. The first man was passed through the bars amid a suppressed buzz of whispered cautions. His boots were handed after him in a haversack. The

Brown," who confided them to the care of the young Hoopers and a party of their outlying companions. From a rocky cliff overlooking the valley of the Tuckasegee they could look down on the river roads dotted with the sheriff's posse in pursuit of the Hoopers. So near were they that they could distinguish a relative of the Watsons leading the sheriff's party. One of the Hooper boys, with characteristic recklessness and to the consternation of the others, stood boldly out on a great rock in plain sight of his pursuers (if they had chanced to look up), half resolved to try his rifle at the last of the Watsons.

rest of us, pressing our faces to the frosty grating, listened breathlessly for the success of the movement we could no longer see. Suddenly there was a crash, and in the midst of mutterings of anger we snatched in the rag ladder and restored the piece of carpeting to its place outside the bars. Our pioneer had hurt his hand against the rough stones, and, floundering in mid-air, had dashed his leg through sash and glass of the window below. We could see nothing of his further movements, but soon discovered the jailer standing in the door, looking up and down the street, seemingly in the dark as to where the crash came from. At last, wearied and worried and disappointed, we lay down in our blankets upon the hard floor.

At daylight we were awakened by the voice of Miss Emma at the hole in the door. "Who got out last night?" "Welty." "Well, you was fools you did n't all go; pap would n't 'a' stopped you. If you 'll keep the break concealed until night we 'll let you all out." The secret of the extreme kindness of our keepers was explained. The jailer, a loyalist, retained his position as a civil detail, thus protecting himself and sons from conscription. Welty had been taken in the night before, his bruises had been anointed, and he had been provisioned for the journey.

We spent the day repairing our clothing and preparing for the road. My long-heeled cowhides, "wife's shoes," for which I had exchanged a uniform waistcoat with a cotton-wooled old darky on the banks of the Saluda, were about parting soles from uppers, and I kept the twain together by winding my feet with stout cords. At supper an extra ration was given us. As soon as it was dark the old jailer appeared among us and gave us a minute description of the different roads leading west into the mountains, warning us of certain dangers. At eleven o'clock Miss Emma came with the great keys, and we followed her, in single file, down the stairs and out into the back yard of the jail. From the broken gratings in front, the bit of rope and strips of blanket were left dangling in the wind.

We made short work of leave-taking, Captain Smith and I separating immediately from the rest, and pushing hurriedly out of the sleeping town, by back streets, into the bitter cold of the country roads. We stopped once to warm at the pits of some negro charcoal burners, and before day dawned had traveled sixteen miles. We found a sheltered nook on the side of the mountain open to the sun, where we made a bed of dry leaves and remained for the day. At night we set out again, due west by the stars, but before we had gone far my companion, who claimed to know something of the country, insisted upon going to the left, and within a mile turned into another left-hand road. I protested, claiming that this course was leading us back. While we were yet contending we came to a bridgeless creek whose dark waters barred our progress, and at the same moment, as if induced by the thought of the fording, the captain was seized with rheumatic pains in his knees, so that he walked with difficulty. We had just passed a house where lights were still showing, and to this we decided to return, hoping at least to find shelter for Smith. Leaving him at the gate, I went to a side porch and knocked at the door, which was opened by a woman who proved to be friendly to our cause, her husband being in the rebel army much against his will. We were soon seated to the right and left of her fireplace. Blazing pine knots brilliantly lighted the room, and a number of beds lined the walls. A trundle-bed before the fire was occupied by a very old woman, who was feebly moaning with rheumatism. Our hostess shouted into the old lady's ear, "Granny, them 's Yankees." "Be they!" said she, peering at us with her poor old eyes. "Be ye sellin' tablecloths?" When it was explained that we were just from the war, she demanded, in an absent way, to know if we were Britishers. We slept in one of the comfortable beds, and as a measure of prudence passed the day in the woods, leaving at nightfall with well-filled haversacks. Captain Smith was again the victim of his rheumatism, and directing me to his friends at Cæsar's Head, where I was to wait for him until Monday (it then being Tuesday), he returned to the house, little thinking that we were separating forever.

I traveled very rapidly all night, hoping to make the whole distance, but day was breaking when I reached the head waters of the Saluda. Following up the stream I found a dam on which I crossed, and although the sun was rising and the voices of children mingled with the lowing of cattle in the frosty air, I ran across the fields and gained a secure hiding-place on the side of the mountain. It was a long, solitary day, and glad was I when it grew sufficiently dark to turn the little settlement and get into the main road up the mountain. It was six zigzag miles to the top, the road turning on log abutments, well anchored with stones, and not a habitation on the way until I should reach Bishop's house, on the crest of the divide. Half way up I paused before a big summer hotel, looming up in the woods like the ghost of a deserted factory, its broken windows and rotting gateways redoubling the solitude of the bleak mountain side. Shortly before reaching Bishop's, "wife's shoes" became quite unmanageable. One had climbed up my leg half way to the knee, and I knocked at the door with the wreck of the other in my hand. My visit had been preceded but a

day by a squad of partisan raiders, who had carried away the bedding and driven off the cattle of my new friends, and for this reason the most generous hospitality could offer no better couch than the hard floor. Stretched thereon in close proximity to the dying fire, the cold air coming up through the wide cracks between the hewn planks seemed to be cutting me in sections as with icy saws, so that I was forced to establish myself lengthwise of a broad puncheon at the side of the room and under the table.

In this family "the gray mare was the better horse," and poor Bishop, an inoffensive man, and a cripple withal, was wedded to a regular Xantippe. It was evident that unpleasant thoughts were dominant in the woman's mind as she proceeded sullenly and vigorously with preparations for breakfast. The bitter bread of charity was being prepared with a vengeance for the unwelcome guest. Premonitions of the coming storm flashed now and then in lightning cuffs on the ears of the children, or crashed venomously among the pottery in the fireplace. At last the repast was spread, the table still standing against the wall, as is the custom among mountain housewives. The good-natured husband now advanced cheerfully to lend a hand in removing it into the middle of the room. It was when one of the table legs overturned the swill-pail that the long pent-up storm burst in a torrent of invective. The prospect of spending several days here was a very gloomy outlook, and the relief was great when it was proposed to pay a visit to Neighbor Case, whose house was in the nearest valley, and with whose sons Captain Smith had lain in concealment for some weeks on a former visit to the mountains. I was curious to see his sons, who were famous outliers. From safe cover they delighted to pick off a recruiting officer or a tax-in-kind collector, or tumble out of their saddles the last drivers of a wagon train. These lively young men had been in unusual demand of late and their hiding-place was not known even to the faithful, so I was condemned to the society of an outlier of a less picturesque variety. Pink Bishop was a blacksmith, and just the man to forge me a set of shoes from the leather Neighbor Case had already provided. The little still-shed, concealed from the road only by a low hill, was considered an unsafe harbor, on account of a fresh fall of snow with its sensibility to tell-tale impressions. So we set up our shoe factory in a deserted cabin, well back on the mountain and just astride of that imaginary line which divides the Carolinas. From the fireplace we dug away the cornstalks, heaping the displaced bundles against broken windows and windy cracks, and otherwise secured our retreat against frost and enemies. Then ensued three days of primitive shoemaking. As may be inferred, the shoes made no pretension to style. I sewed the short seams at the sides and split the pegs from a section of seasoned maple. Rudely constructed as these shoes were they bore their wearer triumphantly into the promised land.

I restrained my eagerness to be going until Monday night, the time agreed upon, when, my disabled companion not putting in an appearance, I set out for my old friend's in Casher's Valley. I got safely over a long wooden bridge within half a mile of a garrisoned town. I left the road, and turned, as I believed, away from the town, but I was absolutely lost in the darkness of a snow-storm, and forced to seek counsel as well as shelter. In this plight I pressed on towards a light, glimmering faintly through the blinding snow. It led me into the shelter of the porch to a small brown house, cut deeply beneath the low eaves and protected at the sides by flanking bedrooms. My knock was answered by a girlish voice, and from the ensuing parley, through the closed door, I learned that she was the daughter of a Baptist exhorter, and that she was alone in the house, her brother away at the village, and her father, having preached the day before at some distance, was not expected home until the next morning. Reassured by my civil-toned inquiries about the road, she unfastened the door and came out to the porch, where she proceeded to instruct me how to go on, which was just the thing I least desired to do. By this time I had discovered the political complexion of the family, and, making myself known, was instantly invited in, with the assurance that her father would be gravely displeased if she permitted me to go on before he returned. I had interrupted my little benefactress in the act of writing a letter, on a sheet of foolscap, which lay on an old-fashioned stand in one corner of the room beside the ink-bottle and the candlestick. In the diagonal corner stood a tall bookcase, the crowded volumes nestling lovingly behind the glass doors—the only collection of the sort that I saw at any time in the mountains. A feather-bed was spread upon the floor, the head raised by means of a turned-down chair, and here I was reposing comfortably when the brother arrived. It was late in the forenoon when the minister reached home, his rickety wagon creaking through the snow, and drawn at a snail's pace by a long-furred, knock-kneed horse. The tall but not very clerical figure was wrapped in a shawl and swathed round the throat with many turns of a woolen tippet. The daughter ran out with eagerness to greet her father and tell of the wonderful arrival. I was received with genuine delight. It was the enthusiasm of a patriot,

eager to find a sympathetic ear for his long-repressed views.[1]

When night came and no entreaties could prevail to detain me over another day, the minister conducted me some distance in person, passing me on with ample directions to another exhorter, who was located for that night at the house of a miller who kept a ferocious dog. I came first to the pond and then to the mill, and got into the house without encountering the dog. Aware of the necessity of arriving before bedtime, I had made such speed as to find the miller's family still lingering about the fireplace with preacher number two seated in the lay circle. That night I slept with the parson, who sat up in bed in the morning, and after disencumbering himself of a striped extinguisher nightcap electrified the other sleepers by announcing that this was the first time he had ever slept with a Yankee. After breakfast the parson, armed with staff and scrip, signified his purpose to walk with me during the day, as it was no longer dangerous to move by daylight. We must have been traveling the regular Baptist road, for we lodged that night at the house of another lay brother. The minister continued with me a few miles in the morning, intending to put me in the company of a man who was going towards Cashier's Valley on a hunting expedition. When we reached his house, however, the hunter had gone; so, after parting with my guide, I set forward through the woods, following the tracks of the hunter's horse. The shoe-prints were sometimes plainly impressed in the snow, and again for long distances over dry leaves and bare ground, but an occasional trace could be found. It was past noon when I arrived at the house where the hunters were assembled. Quite a number of men were gathered in and about the porch, just returned from the chase. Blinded by the snow over which I had been walking in the glare of the sun, I blundered up the steps, inquiring without much tact for the rider who had preceded me, and was no little alarmed at receiving a rude and gruff reception. I continued in suspense for some time until my man found an opportunity to inform me that there were suspicious persons present, thus accounting for his unexpected manner. The explanation was made at a combination meal, serving for both dinner and supper, and consisting exclusively of beans. I set out at twilight to make a walk of thirteen miles to

PINK BISHOP AT THE STILL.

[1] The Rev. James H. Duckworth, now postmaster of Brevard, Transylvania County, North Carolina, and in 1868 member of the State Constitutional Convention, in his letter of June 24, 1890, says: "I have not forgotten those things of which you speak. I can almost see you (even in imagination) standing at the fire when I drove up to the gate and went into the house and asked you, 'Have I ever seen you before?' Just then I observed your uniform. 'Oh, yes,' said I; 'I know who it is now.' . . . This daughter of whom you speak married about a year after, and is living in Morgantown, North Carolina, about one hundred miles from here. Hattie (for that is her name) is a pious, religious woman."

the house of our old friend Esquire Hooper. Eager for the cordial welcome which I knew awaited me, and nerved by the frosty air, I sped over the level wood-road, much of the way running instead of walking. Three times I came upon bends of the same broad rivulet. Taking off my shoes and stockings and rolling up my trousers above my knees, I tried the first passage. Flakes of broken ice were eddying against the banks, and before gaining the middle of the stream my feet and ankles ached with the cold, the sharp pain increasing at every step until I threw my blanket on the opposite bank and springing upon it wrapped my feet in its dry folds. Rising a little knoll soon after making the third ford, I came suddenly upon the familiar stopping-place of my former journey. It was scarcely more than nine o'clock, and the little hardships of the journey from Cæsar's Head seemed but a cheap outlay for the joy of the meeting with friends so interested in the varied fortunes of myself and my late companions. Together we rejoiced at the escape of Sill and Lamson, and made merry over the vicissitudes of my checkered career. Here I first learned of the safe arrival in Tennessee of Knapp, Man Heady, and Old Tom Handcock.

After a day's rest I climbed the mountains to the Headen cabin, now presided over by the heroine of the heifer bell in the absence of her fugitive husband. Saddling her horse, she took me the next evening to join a lad who was about starting for Shooting Creek. Young Green was awaiting my arrival, and after a brief delay we were off on a journey of something like sixty miles; the journey, however, was pushed to a successful termination by the help of information gleaned by the way. It was at the close of the last night's march, which had been long and uneventful, except that we had surmounted no fewer than three snow-capped ridges, that my blacksmith's shoes, soaked to a pulp by the wet snow, gave out altogether. On the top of the last ridge I found myself panting in the yellow light of the rising sun, the sad wrecks of my two shoes dangling from my hands, a wilderness of beauty spread out before me, and a sparkling field of frosty forms beneath my tingling feet. Stretching far into the west towards the open country of East Tennessee was the limitless wilderness of mountains drawn like mighty furrows across the toilsome way, the pale blue of the uttermost ridges fading into an imperceptible union with the sky. A log house was in sight down in the valley, a perpendicular column of smoke rising from its single chimney. Towards this we picked our way, I in my stocking feet, and my boy guide confidently predicting that we should find the required cobbler. Of course we found him in a country where every family makes its own shoes as much as its own bread, and he was ready to serve the traveler without pay. Not-

ARRIVAL HOME OF THE BAPTIST MINISTER.

SURPRISED AT MRS. KITCHEN'S.

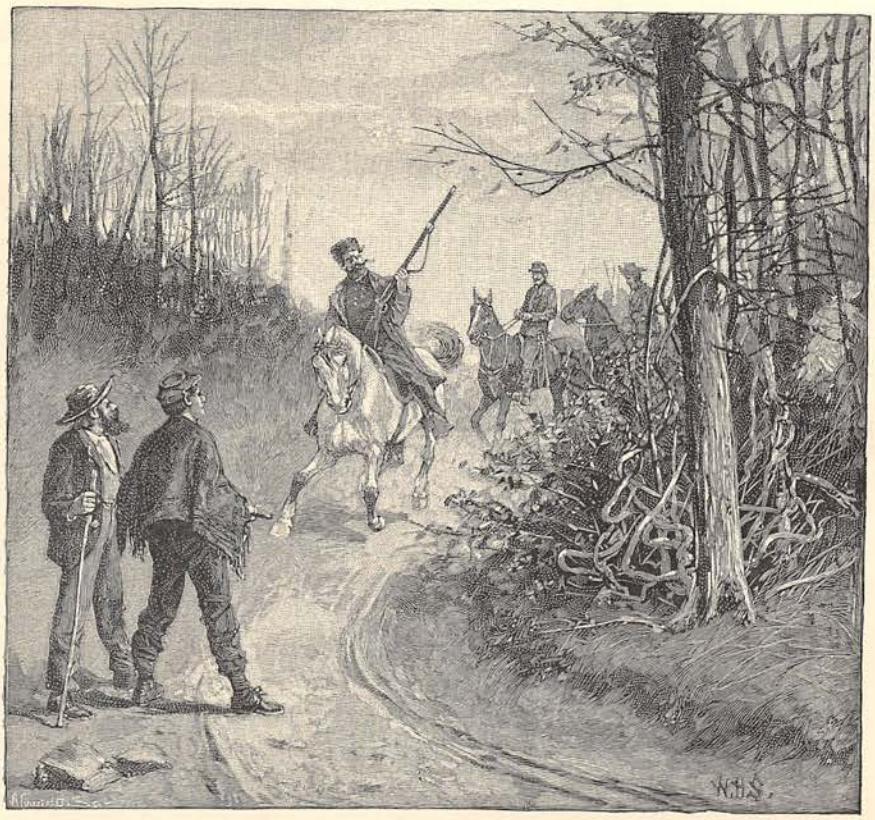
withstanding our night's work, we tarried no longer than for the necessary repairs, and just before sunset we looked down upon the scattering settlement of Shooting Creek. Standing on the bleak brow of "Chunky Gall" Mountain, my guide recognized the first familiar object on the trip, which was the roof of his uncle's house. At Shooting Creek I was the guest of the Widow Kitchen, whose house was the principal one in the settlement and whose estate boasted two slaves. The husband had fallen by an anonymous bullet while salting his cattle on the mountain in an early year of the war.

On the day following my arrival I was conducted over a ridge to another creek, where I met two professional guides, Quince Edmonston and Mack Hooper. As I came upon the pair parting a thicket of laurel, with their long rifles at a shoulder, I instantly recognized the coat of the latter as the snuff-colored sack in which I had last seen Lieutenant Lamson. It had been given to the man at Chattanooga, where these same guides had conducted my former companions in safety a month before. Quince Edmonston, the elder, had led numerous parties of Yankee officers over the Wacheesa trail for a consideration of a hundred dollars, pledged to be paid by each officer at Chattanooga or Nashville.

Two other officers were concealed near by, and a number of refugees, awaiting a convoy, and an arrangement was rapidly made with the guides. The swollen condition of the Valley River made it necessary to remain for several days at Shooting Creek before setting out. Mack and I were staying at the house of Mrs. Kitchen. It was on the afternoon of a memorable Friday, the rain still falling in torrents without, that I sat before the fire poring over a small Sunday-school book; the only printed book in the house, if not in the settlement. Mack Hooper was sitting by the door. Attracted by a rustling sound in his direction, I looked up just in time to see his heels disappearing under the nearest bed. Leaping to my feet with an instinctive impulse to do likewise, I was confronted in the doorway by a stalwart Confederate officer fully uniformed and armed. Behind him was his quartermaster sergeant. This was a Government party collecting the tax-in-kind, which at that time throughout the Confederacy was the tenth part of all crops and other farm productions. It was an ugly surprise. Seeing no escape, I ventured a remark on the weather; only a stare in reply. A plan of escape flashed through my mind like an inspiration. I seated myself quietly, and for an instant bent my eyes upon the printed pages. The two soldiers had advanced to the corner of the chimney nearest the door, inquiring for the head of the family and keeping their eyes riveted on my hostile uniform. At this juncture I was seized with a severe fit of coughing. With one hand upon my chest,

I walked slowly past the men, and laid my carefully opened book face down upon a chest. With another step or two I was in the porch, and bounding into the kitchen I sprang out through a window already opened by the women for my exit. Away I sped bareheaded through the pelting rain, now crashing through thick underbrush, and now to my waist in swollen streams, plunging on and on, only mindful to select a course that would baffle horsemen in pursuit. After some miles of running I took cover behind a stack, within view of the road which Mack must take in retreating to the other settlement; and sure enough here he was, coming down the road with my cap and haversack, which was already loaded for the western journey. Mack had remained undiscovered under the bed, an interested listener to the conversation that ensued. The officer had been assured that I was a friendly scout; but convinced of the contrary by my flight, he had departed swearing he would capture that Yankee before morning if he had to search the whole settlement. So alarmed were we for our safety that we crossed that night into a third valley and slept in the loft of a horse-barn.

On Sunday our expedition assembled on a hillside overlooking Shooting Creek, where our friends in the secret of the movement came up to bid us adieu. With guides we were a party of thirteen or fourteen, but only three of us officers who were to pay for our safe conduct. Each man carried his supply of bread and meat and bedding. Some were wrapped in faded bedquilts and some in tattered army blankets; nearly all wore ragged clothes, broken shoes, and had unkempt beards. We arrived upon a mountain side overlooking the settlement of Peach Tree, and were awaiting the friendly shades of night under which to descend to the house of the man who was to put us across Valley River. Premature darkness was accompanied with torrents of rain, through which we followed our now uncertain guides. At last the light of the cabin we were seeking gleamed humidly through the trees. Most of the family fled into the outhouses at our approach, some of them not reappearing until we were disposed for sleep in a half-circle before the fire. The last arrival were two tall women in homespun dresses and calico sunbonnets. They slid timidly in at the door, with averted faces, and then with a rush and



THE MEETING WITH THE 2D OHIO HEAVY ARTILLERY.

a bounce covered themselves out of sight in a bed, where they had probably been sleeping in the same clothing when we approached the house. Here we learned that a cavalcade of four hundred Texan Rangers had advanced into Tennessee by the roads on the day before. Our guides, familiar with the movements of these dreaded troopers, calculated that with the day's delay enforced by the state of the river a blow would have been struck and the marauders would be in full retreat before we should arrive on the ground. We passed that day concealed in a stable, and as soon as it was sufficiently dark we proceeded in a body to the bank of the river attended by a man and a horse. The stream was narrow, but the current was full and swift. The horse breasted the flood with difficulty, but he bore us all across one at a time, seated behind the farmer.

We had now left behind us the last settlement, and before us lay only wild and uninhabited mountains. The trail we traveled was an Indian path extending for nearly seventy miles through an uninhabited wilderness. Instead of crossing the ridges it follows the trend of the range, winding for the most part along the crests of the divides. The occasional traveler having once mounted to its level pursues his solitary way with little climbing.

Early in the morning of the fourth day our little party was assembled upon the last mountain overlooking the open country of East Tennessee. Some of us had been wandering in the mountains for the whole winter. We were returning to a half-forgotten world of farms and fences, roads and railways. Below us stretched the Tellico River away towards the line of towns marking the course of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad. One of the guides who had ventured down to the nearest house returned with information that the four hundred Texan Rangers had burned the depot at Philadelphia Station the day before, but were now thought to be out of the country. We could see the distant smoke arising from the ruins. Where the river flowed out of the mountains were extensive iron-works, the property of a loyal citizen, and in front of his house we halted for consultation. He regretted that we had shown ourselves so soon, as the rear guard of the marauders had passed the night within sight of where we now stood. Our nearest pickets were at Loudon, thirty miles distant on the railway, and for this station we were advised to make all speed.

For half a mile the road ran along the bank of the river and then turned around a wooded bluff to the right. Opposite to this bluff and accessible by a shallow ford was another hill, where it was feared that some of the Rangers were still lingering about their camp. As we came to the turn in the road our company was walking rapidly in Indian file, guide Edmonston and I at the front. Coming around the bluff from the opposite direction was a countryman mounted on a powerful gray mare. His overcoat was army blue, but he wore a bristling fur cap, and his rifle was slung on his back. At sight of us he turned in his saddle to shout to some one behind, and bringing his gun to bear came tearing and swearing down the road, spattering the gravel under the big hoofs of the gray. Close at his heels rode two officers in Confederate gray uniforms, and a motley crowd of riders closed up the road behind. In an instant the guide and I were surrounded, the whole cavalcade leveling their guns at the thicket and calling on our companions to halt, who could be plainly heard crashing through the bushes. The dress of but few of our captors could be seen, nearly all being covered with rubber talmas, but their mounts, including mules as well as horses, were equipped with every variety of bridle and saddle to be imagined. I knew at a glance that this was no body of our cavalry. If we were in the hands of the Rangers the fate of the guides and refugees would be the hardest. I thought they might spare the lives of the officers. "Who are you? What are you doing here?" demanded the commander, riding up to us and scrutinizing our rags. I hesitated a moment, and then, throwing off the blanket I wore over my shoulders, simply said, "You can see what I am." My rags were the rags of a uniform, and spoke for themselves.

Our captors proved to be a company of the 2d Ohio Heavy Artillery, in pursuit of the marauders into whose clutches we thought we had fallen. The farmer on the gray mare was the guide of the expedition, and the two men uniformed as rebel officers were Union scouts. The irregular equipment of the animals, which had excited my suspicion most, as well as the animals themselves, had been hastily impressed from the country about the village of Loudon, where the 2d Ohio was stationed. On the following evening, which was the 4th of March, the day of the second inauguration of President Lincoln, we walked into Loudon and gladly surrendered ourselves to the outposts of the Ohio Heavy Artillery.

W. H. Shelton.