

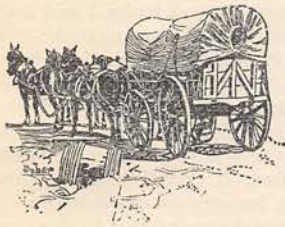
leaving the latter without more than eight thousand men to secure the town and the prisoners. Ewell's absent division was expected soon, but it did not arrive until near sunset, when the Twelfth Federal Corps and Stannard's Vermont brigade were also up, and the Third Corps arriving. In fact an assault by the Confederates was not practicable before

5:30 P. M., and after that the position was perfectly secure. For the first time that day the Federals had the advantage of position, and sufficient troops and artillery to occupy it, and General Ewell would not have been justified in attacking without the positive orders of General Lee, who was present, and wisely abstained from giving them.

Henry J. Hunt.

MEMORANDA ON THE CIVIL WAR.

A Young Hero of Gettysburg.



SINCE the great battle of Gettysburg it has been commonly supposed that Constable John L. Burns, the old hero of three-score years and ten so justly famous in song and story, who hurried to

the scene with his trusty rifle at the first clash of arms on the morning of July 1st and fought until thrice wounded, was the only citizen of that now historic town, or of the vicinity, who took up arms in defense of native soil. Yet such is not the case. I am able now to present another, a mere youth, in point of age standing almost at the other extreme of human life.

On the day before the battle, while the company in which I was serving (A, Twelfth Massachusetts) was at Marsh Run, two and one-half miles north of Emmetsburg, Maryland, and about five miles from Gettysburg, Anson B. Barton, one of our sergeants, went to that stream for water. While filling his canteen he was approached by a slender lad, apparently not more than sixteen years old, who made some inquiries as to the probable outcome of the movements then in progress, and being informed that we would undoubtedly soon encounter the enemy, and that then a great battle would be fought, his eyes glowed with enthusiasm, and he expressed a wish to join the army at once, "and fight the rebels."

Sergeant Barton took the little fellow into camp, turning him over to Captain Clark with the remark: "Captain, here's a recruit for you." The boy was then taken to headquarters, where Colonel Bates questioned him closely, and something like a "scene" ensued. The little fellow was desperately in earnest. In answer to the colonel's questions he said that he lived near there; that he was "willing to be mustered into service if necessary," but that in any event he was determined to "fight the rebels," and would do so whether enrolled as a soldier or not if the colonel would give him "a musket and a box of cartridges." The interview finally ended by the colonel remarking to Captain Clark: "Well, captain, you may take him into your company if you wish, but we cannot muster him in now, as the books are back with the teams."

So the little patriot was turned over to our company. Our men took kindly to him from the start, for we were all charmed by the spirit he had shown, and

every one set about actively to fit him for his new duties. After an extended search, a cap, blouse, musket, and roundabout were secured, together with a supply of ammunition, and thus equipped he took his place in the ranks.

The next day our corps (the First) met the enemy at Gettysburg, and a terrible battle took place. Our little recruit fought with the steadiness of a veteran, and was twice wounded. When we fell back to Cemetery Hill we had to leave him lying upon the field, but the enemy kindly brought him off and placed him in a hospital inside the town. Here he was seen after the battle by one of our men, and until a few months ago this was supposed to be the only trace the survivors of the company had of their little hero. Even his name was thought to have been forgotten.

Last autumn, having been invited to deliver the dedicatory address at the unveiling of the regimental monument at Gettysburg, and thinking that the occasion would be an appropriate one upon which to mention such facts as I might be able to gather in regard to the boy, I made diligent inquiry among my comrades. By Lieutenant Whitman of New York city, who at the battle of Gettysburg was a sergeant in Company A, I was informed that the little fellow's name was J. W. Weakley, and that after the battle he was sent to the hospital at Carlisle. This information, although only partly correct, led finally to a successful result, as will be seen below.

I then addressed a letter to Surgeon-General Murray, United States Army, asking if the name in question appeared upon the records of the hospital at Carlisle, and, in case it did, if he could give me any further information in regard to the boy. That official very kindly replied to my inquiries, although his letter did not come to hand in season for use at the dedication. It was as follows:

"WAR DEPARTMENT, SURGEON-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, D. C., October 20, 1885.

"MR. GEORGE KIMBALL, BOSTON, MASS.

"SIR: In reply to your letter of the 3d instant, asking whether the records of the hospital at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, contain the name of J. W. Weakley, and whether or not he recovered, and where he belonged, I have to inform you that the records of Post Hospital, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, between June and August, 1863, are not on file at this office. It appears, however, from the records of the General Field Hospital First Army Corps, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, that C. F. Weakley, private Company A, Twelfth Massachusetts, was admitted to that hospital; complaint, 'Right thigh and arm'; no disposition given. He is also reported on the records of the Superintendent of Hospitals at Gettysburg, for July 1st, 2d, and 3d; complaint, 'Gun-shot, right arm and thigh.' No further record concerning the above-

named soldier is found. The information above given must not be used as a basis for any claim against the United States Government.

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
"R. MURRAY,
"Surgeon-General United States Army."

My imperfect mention of the matter at Gettysburg excited the interest of Mr. W. H. Tipton and other gentlemen of that town, and active work was at once begun to discover, if possible, young Weakley's antecedents. After the receipt of the Surgeon-General's letter, I wrote to Mr. Samuel Motter, editor of the Emmettsburg "Chronicle," with this end also in view. Some years before I had written to the Selectmen of Emmettsburg in regard to the affair, and my letter found its way into Mr. Motter's paper; but I did not then know the name of the boy, so no result was obtained. Now, however, I felt quite confident of success.

In a few days I received a reply from Mr. Motter, giving me the results of his investigations, which were very gratifying. They were, in substance, that young Weakley, at the time of the events above described, was living with his father on a mountain about three miles from Emmettsburg, his mother being dead. Both father and son were somewhat eccentric—even nomadic—in their manner of life. They were both well known in Emmettsburg, but were, however, without "social standing." The boy often wandered from the paternal roof, and frequently separated himself for weeks from his father. It was probably during one of these aimless excursions from his mountain home that young Weakley became impressed with the duty he owed his country, and acted upon his convictions. He was often seen upon the streets of Emmettsburg after the battle, with his injured arm in a sling, and showing other evidences of hardship and suffering, but the people of the town did not believe his story, or credit him with sufficient courage to go voluntarily into a battle. Such is often the lot of the poor and lowly, who, nevertheless, often perform deeds of patriotism and noble daring.

Young Weakley soon recovered from his wounds, and, although of delicate physique and at that time subject to epilepsy, enlisted in a Maryland regiment. After several months' service in Virginia, he became still weaker physically, and one day his comrades found him lying dead at the bottom of a ditch into which he had evidently fallen from exhaustion. Some years after the war, his father obtained a pension on account of the son's death, but the present whereabouts of Mr. Weakley are unknown to the people of Emmettsburg.

The name of this heroic young mountaineer deserves a place upon the roll of fame beside that of John L. Burns of Gettysburg.

Boston, August, 1886.

George Kimball.

Comments on "General Grant's Reasons for Relieving General William F. Smith."

As we derive our greatest pleasures from favors unintentionally bestowed, I desire to make my acknowledgments to those who have hunted up and furnished for publication, in the September CENTURY, my letter to the late Senator Foot, dated July 30, 1864. That letter was evidently written to prove that upon the

showing of General Grant, himself, there was no charge affecting my military reputation, and I entered into no discussion as to the validity of General Grant's reasons. That forgotten letter is valuable to me as showing to many friends, who in later days have questioned me on the subject that my statements in regard to my removal from command in July, 1864, are more at length but substantially the same as those furnished to Senator Foot on the heels of the occurrence to which it relates. All those who have heard my statements will, I think, bear me witness that after stating all the reasons General Grant gave at the time for his action, I have invariably said that I was in utter ignorance of the real cause which induced my summary removal from an important military command. When General Grant stated that he removed me because he could not relieve General Butler, I said that could not be the reason because General Butler was relieved by order of the President, and before I had been placed in command, but after I had asked General Grant to let me go to some other field of duty. From that position General Grant himself retreated, and then spoke of an article in the "New York Tribune" which he thought I had written. To that I replied, "You cannot have relieved me because you suspected me of writing such a paper; and the truth is that I never saw or heard of the article until it was published, and have not the faintest idea of its authorship." After this statement General Grant brought up two other reasons, equally without foundation, and all these reasons having reference to events which had taken place before my assignment to the command of the Army of the James. The charge that I had months before written two letters to two of General Grant's most devoted friends to urge him not to carry out a particular campaign when he stood committed to another on the records of the War Department, is hardly worthy a reference. When General Grant closed the interview to which I have referred, he made a remark on which, with facts and letters in my possession, I based a theory as to the reasons which brought about my removal. I could not offer that theory unsupported by sufficient data, and so in view of all the facts known to me, I am clearly entitled to reassert that I am to-day in ignorance of the real causes which induced my removal from a command to which I had been assigned only two weeks before,—ten days of which had been spent on leave of absence,—and when the command had come to me both unexpectedly and without solicitation.

Wm. Farrar Smith.

The Finding of Lee's Lost Order.

IN reply to your request for the particulars of the finding of General Lee's lost dispatch, "Special Orders 191," and the manner in which it reached General McClellan, I beg leave to submit the following account:

The Twelfth Army Corps arrived at Frederick, Maryland, about noon on the 13th of September, 1862. The Twenty-seventh Indiana Volunteers, of which I was colonel at that date, belonged to the Third Brigade, First Division, of that corps.

We stacked arms on the same ground that had been occupied by General D. H. Hill's corps the evening before.