

# LOCKETT DEFENDER OF VICKSBURG

By ETHEL HUTSON



COL. S. H. LOCKETT



**S**AID General Grant, speaking of the surrender of General Pemberton's army at Vicksburg:

"The men of the two armies fraternized as if they had been fighting for the same cause. When they passed out of the works they had so long and so gallantly defended, between lines of their later antagonists, not a cheer went up, not a remark was made that would give pain. I believe there was a feeling of sadness among the Union soldiers at seeing the dejection of their late antagonists."



In apparent contradiction to this statement, but in reality corroborating and confirming the truth of its spirit, Colonel Samuel H. Lockett, chief engineer of Pemberton's department of Mississippi and East Louisiana, wrote of the same occurrence:

"General Grant says there was no cheering by the Federal troops. My recollection is that on our right a hearty cheer was given by one Federal division 'for the gallant defenders of Vicksburg.'"

Now it is a curious coincidence that it is in the case of this same Colonel Lockett, constructor of the defenses of Vicksburg, which for more than a year held out against Farragut and Grant, that the Federal government is commemorating (by the first portrait tablet to the memory of a Confederate officer erected by order of the war department in one of the national military parks) the gallantry and skill which characterized that resistance to its armies. In exactly the same spirit of admiration for a good fight and for a worthy foe which animated the victorious army at Vicksburg the government to-day endeavors to commemorate with similar honors the feats of the engineers who defended and those who successfully besieged the city of Vicksburg.



and carry them forward.

"The flag must not go back again," he said.

"Obeying the order, I dashed through the line of battle, seized the colors from the color-bearer and said to him: 'General Bragg says these colors must not go to the rear.'"

"While I was talking to him the color sergeant was shot down. A moment or two afterward I was almost alone on horseback in the open field between the two lines of battle. An officer came up to me with a bullet hole in each cheek, the blood streaming from his mouth, and asked:

"What are you doing with my colors, sir?"

"I am obeying General Bragg's orders, sir, to hold them where they are," was my reply.

"Let me have them," he said. "If any man but my color-bearer carries these colors, I am the man. Tell

BEHIND THE BREASTWORK

right and wrong, honor and dishonor, by so strict a standard as to give his views a distinctive individuality."

Samuel Henry Lockett was born in Mecklenburg county, Virginia, July 7, 1837, the son of Napoleon and Mary Clay Lockett, who, while he grew up, the second in a family of twelve. He was graduated from Howard college, in Marion, when he was 16, and obtaining an appointment to West Point, he was graduated from the United States Military Academy with the second highest rank in the class of 1859. You see, the United States has a right to be proud of his engineering work at Vicksburg, for it was at West Point that he learned the science and art of fortifying. His high rank entitling him to an appointment in the engineer corps, he was made a second lieutenant in that body, and assigned to duty as assistant professor of Spanish at West Point. Here he married Cornelia Clarke, a very young and lovely girl who had grown up there at West Point, but who, in spite of her youth, followed her soldier-husband fearlessly and devotedly through war and siege and foreign lands. Her own people fought on the Union side.

It was in 1860 that the young lieutenant and his bride came south, to Fernandina, Fla.

But they had not been there many months before Alabama seceded, Jan. 11, 1861, and of course Lieutenant Lockett resigned and entered the service of the Confederacy.

He was appointed major of engineers by Governor Andrew Moore of Alabama, who sent him to take possession of the important defenses of Mobile Bay and Pensacola Harbor—a most audacious act on the part of Governor Moore, for which he was, after the close of the war, imprisoned for awhile by the Federal government, which was annoyed by the wise but unconstitutional precautions which he had taken to prevent it from making effective use of these footholds in Alabama and Florida.

On March 7, 1861, Young Lockett was commissioned captain of engineers in the Confederate States Army, and ordered to report to General Braxton Bragg, as chief engineer of the District of the Gulf. "In that capacity his services were very valuable," says General Joseph Wheeler in his biographical sketch published by the Alumni Association of the Military Academy. "Though almost without material or resources, Captain Lockett laid out a plan of defense, and partly constructed the military works at both Mobile and Pensacola. When the southward march of Buell and Grant made a concentration of troops necessary in north-Mississippi, General Bragg took Captain Lockett with him to the new seat of war, and in March, 1862, he laid out and constructed the defenses of Corinth, Miss."

He entered the Shiloh campaign as chief engineer of Bragg's corps, and performed most gallant and efficient service in reconnoitering the enemy's position and assisting his general in conducting the columns to the field and the arrangement of the line of battle. The chief engineer of the army, major, afterward Major General Gilmer, was wounded early in the action, and Captain Lockett became the chief engineer of the army upon the staff of General Albert Sidney Johnston until that distinguished commander fell mortally wounded.

In the series of war papers published by the Century Magazine—"Battles and Leaders of the Civil War"—Lockett himself wrote a vivid account of the "Surprise and Withdrawal at Shiloh." Two passages from this are of special interest to us in Louisiana:

"I witnessed," he says, "the various bloody and unsuccessful attacks on the 'Hornet's Nest.' During one of the dreadful repulses of our forces General Bragg directed me to ride forward to the central regiment of a brigade of troops that was receding across an open field, to take its colors

General Bragg I will see that these colors are in the right place. But he must attack this position in flank; we can never carry it alone from the front." It was Colonel H. W. Allen, afterward Governor of Louisiana.

"I returned, miraculously preserved, to General Bragg and reported Colonel Allen's words. I then carried an order to the same troops, giving the order, I think, to General Gibson, to fall back to the fence in the rear and reorganize. This was done, and then General Bragg dispatched me to the right and Colonel Frank Gardner (afterward major general) to the left to inform the brigade and division commanders on either side that a combined movement would be made on the front and flanks of that position. The movements were made, and Prentiss was captured.

"As Colonel William Preston Johnston says, that capture was a dear triumph to us—dear for the many soldiers we had lost in the first fruitless attacks, but still dearer on account of the valuable time it cost us. But after awhile the Confederates were gotten into ranks and a perfect line of battle was formed, our left wing resting on Owl Creek and our right on the Tennessee River. General Polk was on the left, then Bragg, then Hardee, then Breckinridge. In our front only one single point was showing, a hill crowned with artillery. I was with General Bragg, and rode with him along the front of his corps. I heard him say over and over again:

"One more charge, my men, and we shall capture them all." While this was going on a staff officer (or rather, I think it was one of the detailed clerks of General Beauregard's headquarters, for he wore no uniform) came up to General Bragg and said:

"The general directs that the pursuit be stopped; the victory is sufficiently complete; it is needless to expose our men to the fire of the gunboats."

"In regard to the second day's fight," he goes on, "I, as a great many other staff officers, was principally occupied in the early hours of the second day in gathering together our scattered men and getting them into some sort of manageable organization.

"When I reported to General Beauregard that I had the troops divided into companies, had assigned a captain to duty as lieutenant colonel and a first lieutenant as major, he himself put me in command of them as colonel.

"Not long after my regiment was thus officered and christened a message came from General Breckinridge, on our extreme right, that he was hard pressed, and needed re-inforcements. My regiment, which was at the time just behind General Beauregard, held in reserve by his orders, was sent by him to General Breckinridge's assistance. We marched down the line of battle to the extreme right, passed beyond General Breckinridge's right, wheeled by companies into line of battle, and went in with the 'rebel yell.' The men on the left took up the yell and the charge, and we gained several hundred yards of ground. From this point we fought back slowly and steadily for several hours, until word came that the army was ordered to retreat; that the commands would fall back in succession from the left, and that the right wing would be the rear guard. This order was carried out, and when night came the right wing was slowly falling back, with face to face.

To continue General Wheeler's account of Colonel Lockett's army career:

"He conducted all the engineering operations in and around Corinth, Miss., until the place was abandoned by the Confederate forces in 1862. For these services he was promoted to the rank of major of engineers. On June 20, 1862, he was ordered to report to General M. L. Smith, commander at Vicksburg, Miss. As his chief engineer Major Lockett designed and constructed the defenses of Vicksburg and the adjacent strategic points of Chickasaw Bluff, Haine's Bluff and Yazoo City, on the north, and Warrentown, on the south of Vicksburg."

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