

1861 -- In Memory of the Confederate Dead -- 1908

HOW TELEGRAPHERS SAVED VICKSBURG

A True Story of the Civil War
By DAVID J. WALTON Copyright, 1908, by C. N. Lurie



HERE was a sound of revelry by night in Vicksburg, the famous Confederate stronghold. It was Christmas eve in 1862. The light, to continue the apt Byronian quotation, "shone o'er fair women and brave men." The men were Confederate officers. The women were the beautiful belles of the Mississippi city. For many weeks General Grant, the enemy, had maneuvered at the outer gates. Though he had retired temporarily, it was but to devise and execute new plans for taking the city. By reducing Vicksburg the Union forces would control the Mississippi in twain. The importance of holding this position was paramount in the Confederate cause.

Christmas is Christmas, whether in war or in peace. Fair women and brave men will dance tonight, whatever may befall tomorrow. General Martin L. Smith, temporarily in command, was a central figure at the ball. Another officer present, unmarried, handsome, chivalrous, daring, was General Stephen D. Lee, only twenty-nine years of age and a noted leader. Shortly after midnight—the beginning of Christmas day—a muddy, bedraggled, uncouth soldier in gray burst suddenly into the ballroom. The intruder rushed between the waltzing couples, who shrank from his muddy boots. Stalking straight up to General Smith, he saluted.

"Well, sir, what do you want?" the general inquired somewhat angrily, while the startled dancers paused and the merry music continued.

"General, I have to report," said the intruder, "that sixty-six gunboats and transports have passed Lake Providence, and more are still passing." General Smith turned in a loud voice: "This ball is at an end! The enemy is coming down the river. All non-combatants must leave the city." Then the commander turned to the bearer of this important news, thanked him for the service and apologized for his harsh reception.

On Christmas day General Lee moved out of Vicksburg with six regiments of infantry and two batteries to check General Sherman in his landing on the Yazoo river, thirteen miles distant. General Lee occupied the bluffs and other high ground along a line of ten miles. There, on the three days following Christmas, was much bloody skirmishing, and on the 29th was fought the decisive battle of Chickasaw Bayou (or Bluffs), as some authorities call it. Lee defeated Sherman, who finally assailed his well placed forces, and the northern general abandoned his attempt to get into Vicksburg. Thus the city was saved to the Confederacy for more than six months.

The man in muddy boots and dripping clothes who broke up the ball and brought about the sanguinary conflict at Chickasaw bayou, a brilliant Confederate victory, was Philip H. Fall, a soldier detailed as a telegraph operator. Lee S. Daniel, another Confederate telegrapher, had co-operated with him in saving Vicksburg. The details of this important service, furnishing one of the most romantic stories of the war between the states, have been supplied recently by General Lee himself, the only surviving lieutenant general of the south.

Telegraphers were scarce in the south when the war began. Most of the operators were northerners and went home. When young Daniel and Fall enlisted at Vicksburg the discovery that they could handle the Morse key and code caused them to be detailed for telegraphing. Horace B. Tibbotts, a rich planter in Louisiana, owned a private telegraph line, running from his estate a few miles south of Lake Providence to De Soto, La., across the Mississippi directly opposite Vicksburg. The distance between the stations was sixty-five miles. The upper station, for military purposes, was established in the woods. Daniel was placed there as operator, with Fall as operator at De Soto. Daniel was instructed to keep a strict watch of the river, which by the fall of Memphis had been opened to Federal gunboats down to the vicinity of Vicksburg. He was to re-

port to Fall, who kept a skiff in which to row across to Vicksburg. At night a red light in the bow of the skiff protected him from being fired upon by the Confederate batteries on the heights of Vicksburg.

Early in December General Grant had ordered General Sherman to assemble at Memphis a large force of men and munitions, proceed on transports down the river under convoy of Admiral David D. Porter's gunboats and capture Vicksburg. General Sherman's plan was to disembark on the Yazoo river, which empties into the Mississippi a few miles above Vicksburg, and attack the city from the rear. He had about 80,000 men and strong artillery. In addition to Admiral Porter's flotilla of gunboats.

At about 8:45 o'clock on the night before Christmas Operator Daniel and Major E. G. Earnhart were playing "old sledge" to their little shanty lookout station near the river. A small colored girl who lived on the plantation rushed into the shack, crying:

"Marse 'Arnhart, yo' an' Marse Daniel better come out yah! Ah heahs a boat a-comin'!"

"Come, now, Artie," said the major, shuffling the cards; "you must be dreaming."

"No, sah, Ah heahs it say choo-choo-pat-pat-pat!"

By this the girl meant the sounds of the steam escape and the paddle wheels. Earnhart and Daniel went outside and listened intently. The major carried in his mouth the stem of a big meerschaum pipe, which he was puffing placidly. The placidity evanesced, however, when presently there came to the ears of the two Confederates the "choo-choo-pat-pat-pat" which had been caught by the keen ears of little Artie. The men had not heard that sound for months. They ran to the bank of the river and peered far up stream in the darkness. They watched, and in a short time their eyes beheld coming around a bend in the river two miles above the huge black hulk of a steam vessel.

"Grabboat!" said Daniel in a whisper, as the same instant snatching the meerschaum from the major's mouth. Some sparks were flying from the pipe. Daniel extinguished the fire under cover.

The men stood still, watching. Shortly the black monster was abreast of them, her engines puffing, her paddle wheels patting the water rhythmically with each downward change. Back of the first black monster was another and another and yet another. Seven gunboats the men counted, and vessels were coming around the bend seemingly without end. Fifty-nine transports loaded with Uncle Sam's blue-coats they counted. Satisfied at last that there were no more vessels in the fleet, Daniel leaped to the back of the little hay mare he kept close by and dashed for the telegraph station three miles back in the woods. His dear old home, Vicksburg, was in imminent peril. It was just after midnight when he reached his instrument.

"It was simply frantic," he said many years later. "It took less than half a minute to call up Fall, who was right on his job, but it seemed hours to me before he responded. 'Golly, old fellow, what's up?' was Fall's greeting." Operators show nervousness on the wire, just as men do speaking orally. Fall knew that Daniel had something startling to tell. The man in the woods swiftly ticked off his news:

"River lined with gunboats and transports—almost a hundred—just passed my lookout—counted seven gunboats and fifty-nine transports chock full of men."

"God bless you, Lee! Goodby. We may never meet again," answered Fall, who made a dash for his skiff.

The night was dark, cloudy, cold and drizzly. The sharp wind tossed the Mississippi's surface into angry whitecaps. The frail craft which Fall was pulling across, right in front of those terrible batteries trained down on the stream, rocked frantically on the tumultuous current. Fall feared that his red light would go out. That meant that his own side would annihilate him with cannon shot before he could reach the eastern bank.

He did reach there safely and broke up the ball, as related. Up at his end of the line Daniel shortly tried the wire again, but found no battery. Later he learned that the huge flotilla had landed men at several points below and cut down the poles and chopped the wires for a mile.

DASHED FOR THE TELEGRAPH STATION.

GENERAL SMITH TURNED PALE.



"RIVER LINED WITH GUNBOATS."



"GUNBOAT" SAID DANIEL.

De Soto. Daniel was instructed to keep a strict watch of the river, which by the fall of Memphis had been opened to Federal gunboats down to the vicinity of Vicksburg. He was to re-

Dixie's Immortal Dead



WHAT deeds were theirs, the soldier dead Of Dixie, what heroic deeds Upon a thousand battle meads That quaked beneath their martial tread!

What hearts were theirs, what hearts of hope That urged them on to doom's eclipse— To lie with cold and bloodless lips On sodden plain or purple slope!

What valor theirs, and all for naught! What knightly, high devoted souls Upbore them bravely toward the goal Where only wreck at last was wrought!

Call Lee's battalions back today, Their white phantoms from the past, And mark the eager heroes massed And marshaled into lines of gray!

And, hark! Along the moving lines, The stoutest foeman to appall, The "rebel yell," the southland's call Is thrilling through the aisles of pines!



They ride, as oft they rode in pride, With Stonewall Jackson in the van. And here, behold, is Stuart's clan, And yonder Forrest's rangers ride!

They charge, as once they charged in vain, When peerless Pickett flamed and flashed Against the heights where cannon crashed And rifles poured a leaden rain!

Attack! Recoil! Advance! Retreat! And forward to the fierce assault! Four years of hell and not a halt— Four years, and then—defeat, defeat!

Yes, let their ghosts in seric gray Stand guard o'er Dixie's broad expanse And let the order be "Advance!" Deny them not this boon today.

For Northron knows, as Southron knew, That never war's demonic breath Hath smitten with immortal death Men's hearts more valorously true.

Cheerful Dave Saddler.

Dave Saddler was a brave Confederate soldier who was in a Richmond hospital and who, in spite of his sufferings, always took a cheerful view of the situation. One day when he was recovering a visiting minister approached his cot and tendered him a pair of homemade socks.

"Accept these," said he. "I only wish the dear woman who knit them could present them to you in person today."

"Thank you very much," said Dave gravely. "But I have decided that I never shall wear another pair of socks while I live."

The preacher protested, but to no purpose, and finally he sought out the boy's sister to tell her how foolishly the invalid had behaved when he called upon him.

"Why," exclaimed she, "both his feet have been shot off!"

The Real Cause of Pneumonia.

Chicago Dispatch to The New York Times. The announcement of a new theory as to the cause of pneumonia and the discovery of a remedy for the disease was made last night by Dr. H. Manning Fish.

Dr. Fish said that the seat of trouble in pneumonia cases was not the lungs, but in the small cells in the bony framework at the top of the nose. "From these cells," said Dr. Fish, "the disease works rapidly down to the lungs, and to all appearances these organs immediately become the seat of trouble. However, the fluid which is feeding the flames of disease still is being furnished from the cells at the top of the nose."

The simple remedy consequently is to draw this dangerous pus from these cells. That is what was done in the case which I have described, and in twenty-four hours the disease had disappeared. The lungs, of course, were still affected, and it took days before the patient finally was able to leave his bed."

Jefferson Davis' Living Daughter.

One child still survives each of the war presidents, Jefferson Davis of the Confederacy and Abraham Lincoln of the Union. Mrs. J. Addison Hayes of Colorado Springs, wife of a banker, is a daughter of Jefferson Davis and the sole remaining member of the Confederate leader's family. Mr. Davis died in 1869 and Mrs. Davis in 1906. Their daughter Varina, more familiarly known as Winnie and celebrated as "the Daughter of the Confederacy," died in 1908. All are buried in Richmond, Va.

Lee and Washington.

General Robert E. Lee was indeed fully Washington's equal as a hero and a gentleman, and much his superior as a soldier, says the London Times. It is only in the larger political or semipolitical sphere that he stands lower, and there perhaps only because his opportunities were so much smaller.

IN MEMORY OF THE SOUTH'S SOLDIERS

"Tears and Love For the Gray"
By DAVID FRANCIS DODGE Copyright, 1908, by A. B. Lewis



GENERAL STEPHEN D. LEE.

SOLEMNLY enough, the observance of Memorial day in the northern states is of southern origin. It was the southern people who first began to decorate with flowers the graves of fallen soldiers. The Confederate Memorial day, except in Virginia, does not fall upon May 30, the northern Memorial day. In Alabama, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi the 20th of April is observed. In Texas the last Sunday in April, in North Carolina and South Carolina May 10 and in Tennessee the second Friday of May. The birthday of Jefferson Davis, June 3, is known as Confederate Memorial day in Louisiana. The date is particularly interesting this year because on June 3, 1808, just 100 years ago, Mr. Davis was born in Christian county (now Todd county), Ky.

It is a happy comment upon the restoration of the fraternal spirit to be able to say that in many places the Union veterans place flowers upon the graves of blue and gray alike, and this tribute is duplicated by the United Confederate Veterans in many cemeteries where the dead of both sides are buried.

The first "Decoration day" recorded in authentic history was early in 1867, just two years after the close of the war between the states. In the cemetery at Columbus, Miss., the tender hearted women of that town placed beautiful flowers on the graves of both southern and northern dead. An Ithaca (N. Y.) lawyer, who sometimes wrote excellent verses, but never published them, read of this incident in the newspapers. He was deeply touched. After thinking the matter over he sat down at his desk and penned the lines of the most famous lyric having to do with the civil war. This lawyer-poet, Francis Miles Finch, author of "The Blue and the Gray," died only last year, having enjoyed for forty years the reputation of writing a poem which perhaps more than any other single piece of literary work contributed to the healing of the wounds of war and the reuniting of the two sections in fraternal bonds. He was induced to have the poem published shortly after he wrote it, and at once it "went the rounds" of the press. It was clipped and pasted into many a scrap book now grown near with age. Those who could not procure printed copies wrote out the lines for preservation. "The Blue and the Gray" goes into all the anthologies and is read and reread with the same appreciation both north and south throughout our united country.

The next year after this poem was printed General John A. Logan, commander in chief of the newly organized Grand Army of the Republic, issued an official order designating May 30 as Memorial day. State by state the north accepted the suggestion, making the day official. The incident at Columbus, Miss., and Mr. Finch's poem, inspired thereby, undoubtedly influenced General Logan in promulgating his order and the states in accepting the suggestion. Thus it may be said that those devoted southern women were the real authors of Memorial day, which in many places is called Decoration day, the name by which it was first known.

Camps of the United Confederate Veterans are scattered all the way from Maryland to Texas. Local organizations of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and of the United Sons of Confederate Veterans are sprinkled over the same wide area. Each Memorial day, whether it be May 30 or an earlier date, hundreds of the veterans of the south march to the cemeteries and observe the beautiful custom of decorating soldiers' graves, while the sons and daughters join the veterans in their noble task, just as in the north the Sons of Veterans and the members of the Woman's Relief corps participate in the G. A. R. ceremonies at the cemeteries.

In recent years many efforts have been made to identify and mark the graves of southern dead who were buried without identification. This task obviously is highly difficult. While some have been identified with the aid of old records, diagrams of burial places and the like, the majority of the unknown dead must remain always unknown. Recognizing this pathetic fact, a few years ago the people of Winchester, Va., a town famous in civil war annals, erected in the local cemetery, where lie the bodies of many soldiers of both the south and the



WROTE "THE BLUE AND THE GRAY."

north, a handsome monument bearing this significant inscription:

"None Know Who They Were, but All Know What They Were."

The United States government has done much in recent years toward beautifying southern cemeteries containing the dust of northern dead, such as those at Sharpsburg (Antietam), Arlington and South Mountain. The southern people have done much of this sort of work for their own fallen heroes, funds being raised chiefly by private subscription. In many cemeteries which had been woefully neglected in the terrible stress of reconstruction days a wonderful transformation has been wrought. At Atlanta, for instance, around which city was some of the fiercest fighting of the war, nearly every one of the thousands of Confederate graves has been marked in some way. Several of the finest memorial monuments in the United States are in the Atlanta cemetery.

Thousands of unidentified Confederates were buried at Marietta, Ga. At this late day it is of course impossible to identify them, but all these graves have been marked with blank stones. Each Memorial day the nameless stones are decorated with blossoms.

Every year there is a great gathering in the cemetery at Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy, for the decoration of the graves of famous generals and of unknown soldiers who fell in the ranks. There is buried gallant "Jeb" Stuart, slain on the field of Yellow Tavern, seven miles distant. He was but thirty-one years of age, and he died a major general, leaving an enduring fame as a great cavalry leader. General George Pickett, who led the splendid but disastrous charge at Gettysburg, perhaps the most famous charge in history, also lies there. Upon a lofty eminence overlooking the James river sleeps Jefferson Davis, soldier, statesman and president of the Confederacy, with his devoted wife and "the Daughter of the Confederacy" beside him. The latter was Miss Winnie Davis, beloved alike both north and south.

"And on Memorial day," writes Landon Knight in a recent magazine article, "flowers from the hills of Vermont commingle over her grave with those from the plains of Texas and the land of the setting sun as a tribute to her worth and in attestation of a reunited country."

Decorating the nameless graves.

Waiting For the Bugle.

By FRANK H. SWEET. (Copyright, 1908, by Frank H. Sweet.)

WE wait for the bugle. The night dews are cold; The limbs of the soldiers feel jaded and old; The field of our bivouac is windy and bare; There is lead in our joints, there is frost in our hair; The future is veiled and its fortunes unknown.

As we lie with hushed breath till the bugle is blown, At the sound of the bugle each comrade will spring, Like an arrow released from the strain of the string. The courage, the impulse of youth shall come back To banish the chill of the drear bivouac And sorrows and losses and cares fade away When that life giving signal proclaims the new day.

Though the bivouac of age may put ice in our veins, And no fiber of steel in our sinew remains; Though the comrades of yesterday's march are not here, And the sunlight seems pale and the branches are near; Though the sound of our cheering dies down to a moan, We shall bid our last youth when the bugle is blown.

