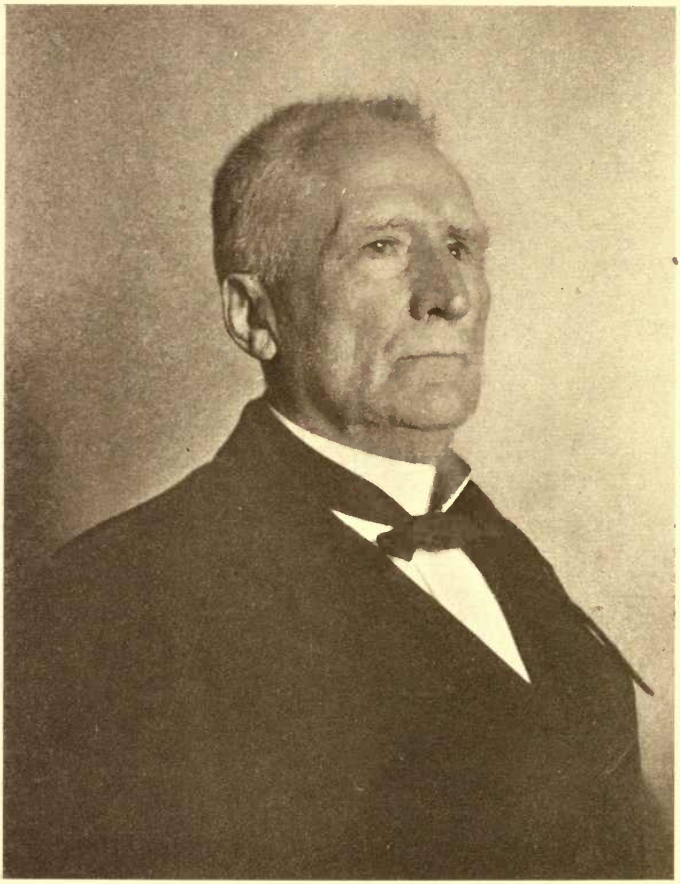
# REMINISCENCES OF A MOSBY GUERRILLA

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



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JOHN S. MOSBY, TO-DAY.

# REMINISCENCES OF A MOSBY GUERRILLA

BY

JOHN W. MUNSON

*FULLY ILLUSTRATED*

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

1906
MOFFAT, YARD AND COMPANY
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*Published October, 1906*

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To

MY WIFE

WHO FOR THIRTY YEARS

HAS BEEN

MY MOST PATIENT AND APPRECIATIVE LISTENER

THESE STORIES OF

MOSBY'S GUERRILLAS

ARE

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

299183

# PREFACE

Every man in Mosby's Command had ample material of which to make an interesting story of his experiences. Some of them have contributed portions of their recollections to the writer, who has unblushingly adopted them as his own, much in the spirit in which he was wont to appropriate whatever was contributed to him by the Yankees during the war. He is positive, however, that he is welcome to use whatever matter they have sent him, for the same spirit prevails among the survivors today as when all were welcome to whatever each had in the days when they stood together to acquire it. In fact in war times the ancient doctrine of the Scottish clan prevailed in all things:

> "For why? Because the good old rule
> Sufficeth them; the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can."

If only a whisper could be got from some of the closed lips, or the stiffened fingers of the dead be relaxed, these pages would be enriched beyond compare with now forgotten deeds; but those gallant spirits have long ago told their stories to a Higher Critic, and I believe have met His approval. They will not be forgotten, however, in these chronicles,

for there were few incidents worth recording in any story of Mosby's Command that did not include acts of uncommon bravery and valor.

In the following pages Mosby's men will sometimes be spoken of as Guerrillas, and their enemies as Yankees, in the same spirit in which these terms were used during the war. Mosby's men made the word Guerrilla honorable from 1863 to 1865, and no fair-minded Southerner can deny that the Union Army has made the world respect the word Yankee.

With a pardonable oversensitiveness some of the old comrades have objected to the use of the word Guerrilla, but they need not be offended nor fear disparagement; their fame is established for all time. The men who fought them know what they were; and, after all, history is built upon facts. It is enough to know their old Commander never has objected to the use of the word Guerrilla, for he once wrote to the author asking to have an article written for the *New York Herald* which should deal with his old negro body-servant, Aaron, and to head it, "The Nestor of Mosby's Guerrillas."

It would sound odd to a Mosby man if he habitually referred to his friends, the enemy, as the Federals or the United States troops or even the Union soldiers. He knew them in the old days as Yankees, and as such he still remembers them; and moreover they are good enough Yankees for him, and it was not his good fortune to find many cowards among them.

As far as possible I have arranged in chronological order the incidents making up the story of our career. As they have come back to me, or have been com-

municated to me by my comrades, I have recorded them as nearly as possible in historical sequence; and if by chance the events are not always set down in the exact order of occurrence, the essential accuracy, nevertheless, has been preserved.

No claim to historical adequacy is made for what is contained in this volume. It is the desire of the author to be just and accurate in all statements; the truth about Mosby's Command is always as interesting as fiction. Eventually a complete history of the Command will be written, and its author will be the only man capable of doing it justice; the only man who saw everything and remembers everything is John S. Mosby himself. The purpose of the author is to write the interesting reminiscence of the Command; something that will crystallize the atmosphere of patriotism and romance that enveloped these men and their deeds during the period of their action, not only for the time being, but for all future; something that will make the younger generation of men, and the boys who love to read about fighting, wish they might have lived in those stirring times to have been a part of such a daring and a merry crowd; something that may contribute to the records of the Civil War certain facts that might not otherwise be preserved.

It is to be hoped that this volume will give to future generations a glimpse of the character that made it possible for John S. Mosby, the greatest and most daring "Raider" this country has ever known, to organize, command, and lead to innumerable victories,

the men and boys who became world-famous as "Mosby's Guerrillas."

Acknowledgment is hereby made to the editors of Munsey's Magazine for their courtesy in allowing the author to use, as a small portion of the present work, and in another form, the substance of a brief series of articles published in that periodical in 1904.

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Washington. D. C.
June 23d 1904.

Mr. Jno. W. Munson:

Dear Munson.

I have your letter saying that you had engaged to write some War reminiscences.

From your intimate relations with my battalion & to wh. you belonged, & your experience as a Soldier from its organization to the close of the war you ought to be able to write some valuable & interesting history. As an actor in the scenes you will describe you can as truthfully say as Aeneas did when he related to Dido the story of Troy - Quorum pars magna fui.

Very Truly
John S. Mosby

# A MOSBY GUERRILLA

## CHAPTER I

### THE BIRTH OF THE RANGERS

THERE were many regiments and brigades and divisions in the Confederate armies known only by their respective commanders' names; rarely by their numbers. Our little body of men was called Mosby's Men, and Mosby's Command, and this was largely due to Mosby himself. He took great pride in speaking of us as "my men" and "my Command," but never as "my battalion," or "my troops," or "my soldiers." The Yankees referred to us, as did also the Northern papers, as Guerrillas, in an opprobious manner, of course, but the term was not applied to us in the South in any general way until after the war, when we had made the name glorious, and in time we became as indifferent to it as did the whole South to the word Rebel.

My story will cover, partially, our movements during the entire years 1863 and 1864, and that part of 1865 extending to the close of the war. I use the word, partially, because I could not hope to record all of the adventures that befell our Command in a work of much less dimensions than the Encyclopedia Britannica; and then only if all the old fellows would

contribute all their recollections. These were the years when the Northern and Southern armies were most industriously occupied in the conflict that seemed to grow fiercest just before it ceased.

I will endeavor to bring the reader as close to Mosby as I was during the struggle, and to relate, with as careful regard for details as is possible, the most stirring and interesting incidents which I can recall, referring but rarely to the ponderous documents that have been accumulating in Washington ever since Grant said "Let us have Peace."

John S. Mosby, around whom these recollections will be woven, was born in Powhatan County, Virginia, in 1833, graduated from the University of Virginia in 1852, was admitted to the bar in 1855, and practised law in Bristol, Va., until 1861. At the breaking out of the Civil War he joined the First Virginia Regiment of Cavalry as a private and later became its Adjutant, holding a Lieutenant's commission. He participated in constant and strenuous service before his connection with the Partizan Rangers began. That organization came into existence early in 1863, under a statute passed by the Confederate Congress as the Partizan Ranger Law, a statute said to have been framed by Major John Scott of Virginia, who tried unsuccessfully to put it into operation. Other commands were organized under the same act, but Mosby's was the only one, with a single exception, that survived during the entire course of the war.

In 1862 a reorganization and consolidation of many regiments in the Southern army took place, as graveyard gaps had to be filled up, and a number of com-

missioned officers were thrown out as a consequence. When Fitzhugh Lee was made Colonel of the First Virginia Cavalry Regiment, Mosby resigned his commission as Lieutenant and Adjutant, and Lee accepted it. Finding himself once more in the ranks, he became attached to the headquarters of General J. E. B. Stuart, for whom he acted as a scout. His hour had arrived; opportunity knocked at his door and he grasped it. He knew he had found his proper sphere, and General Stuart was soon made aware of it. It was not very long before the Northern army also made the discovery.

Mosby's first notable scouting expedition — one without a parallel in the history of the war — consisted in making a circuit, entirely unaided, in the rear of General McClellan's army, which was lying in front of Richmond, in the early days of June, 1862. When Mosby proposed the daring feat to Stuart, the General at once gave it his hearty approval, for he seemed to know his man; but others made side remarks about the risk of one man's attempting such a feat and its almost certain failure.

When he returned from his expedition, during which he found it necessary to exercise all his energy and courage and ingenuity, he brought back a knowledge of the country and of the position of the enemy which enabled him safely to escort Stuart and his cavalry command over the same route. Thus it transpired that up to that time Stuart made the first and only recorded cavalry raid completely around an enemy's army; and Mosby rode in front of the column.

Mosby had no previous knowledge of the ground

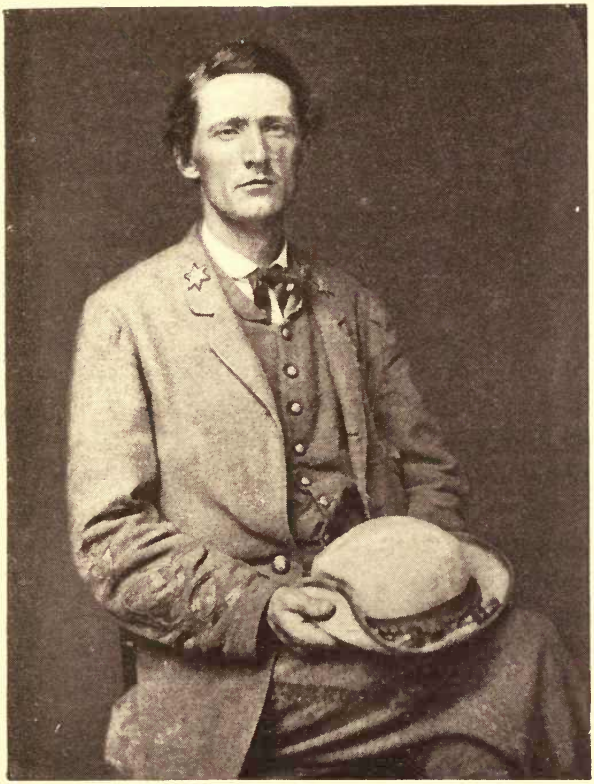
over which he made his first scouting expedition, and much of the route was covered in the night. Federal soldiers were swarming around him in every direction and danger lurked in every step of his way. The exploit pointed out the way to his military future, and General Stuart realized, perhaps as soon as did Mosby himself, that the route of the Raider was stretching before the young Virginian who mapped out the way around McClellan's forces.

There was no more picturesque, romantic nor gallant cavalry leader; no more typical, courageous soldier on horseback in either army, than "Jeb" Stuart; but I question if he could have duplicated or even originated Mosby's scouting expedition. Mosby was not only fitted for scouting, but he developed into a remarkable leader also, a statement which I shall try to do my best to demonstrate.

Mosby's first actual command of the Partizan Rangers began early in February, 1863, when General Stuart gave him a detail of fifteen men from his old regiment, the First Virginia Cavalry. His instructions were to take his little band into Northern Virginia and "operate inside the enemy's lines," as Stuart put it. A Captain's commission was given him soon after.

The step was an irrevocable good-bye to regular army life and to camps, bugle calls, drills and picket duty. It meant the abolition of winter-quarters and the end of idleness. There were to be no more rations, clothing, boots, nor equipment from the Government. Not a single round of ammunition nor a weapon for self defense. To "operate inside the enemy's lines" meant if necessary to cut off all com-

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*From a Photograph taken in 1863.*

COLONEL MOSBY,

IN THE UNIFORM OF A MAJOR IN THE CONFEDERATE STATES ARMY, TO WHICH RANK HE WAS PROMOTED IN APRIL, 1863, AFTER THE FIGHT AT MISKELL'S BARN.

munication with the lines that were friendly. It meant being in closer touch with Washington than Richmond, and not a man in Mosby's little band misunderstood the terrors that loomed before him. There was the earth for a couch, only the quipment with which each man started for protection, and the right to fight the enemy and, by sheer force, wrest from him the requisites with which to maintain the Command as a fighting force.

Few who saw this first handful of men move into the wilderness, singing the songs of war, ever expected any part of it to return.

It is perhaps justifiable and reasonable, at this juncture, to state that Mosby's Guerrillas were not highwaymen, bushwackers or ruffians, and that they did not war upon any element other than that commonly recognized as the enemy. A very large percentage of them were well-bred, refined gentlemen and some of them had traveled widely; they regarded Mosby's Command as the proper channel through which to express their feelings on a subject that made action of some sort necessary. They were men of firm convictions, for which they were anxious to fight and willing to make sacrifices.

One may derive a fair impression of them by looking over the roster of those who survived the war. They will be found in the various professions in all parts of the Union; many of them leaders in social, political and commercial life. That there were a few adventurers among them there is no doubt, but as a whole they will compare favorably with any other body of men North or South. Since the war not one

of them has been known to do anything to bring discredit upon the old Command.

Dr. A. Monteiro, a very prominent physician and surgeon, of Richmond, Va., who was a surgeon of Mosby's Command during the last few months of the war, says in his published memoirs: "I am enabled to say, after three years of active field service in the regular army, that I have never witnessed more true courage and chivalry, or a higher sense of honor, blended with less vice, selfishness and meanness, than I found during my official intercourse with the Partizan Rangers."

Mosby's original detail of a few men from the First Virginia Cavalry was the nucleus around which he built up the Forty-third Virginia Battalion of Cavalry, composed of eight companies at the close of the war, and at the last numbering, perhaps, six hundred men, of whom, owing to the large number constantly in prison or disabled, never more than about three hundred and fifty were available for any raid. The battalion was regularly enrolled in the Confederate Army, and was subject to the same regulations, and protected by the same laws, that applied to the army of Northern Virginia, of which it was a part. Mosby made his reports to Generals Lee and Stuart and worked in harmony with them. The particular mission of the Partizan Rangers was to keep the Confederate Generals informed of the enemy's movements while "worrying and harassing" the Federal forces as much as possible.

Every man in Mosby's Command understood that he was expected to follow his Commander without

question, and the result was a blind unwavering faith in their leader. Mosby never asked a trooper under him to go where he would not go himself. This example spread itself and made its influence felt throughout the entire Command, and I recall an occasion where Lieutenant Ben Palmer, of Richmond, Va., who was only a boy, during a fight, ordered one of the men, Bob Jarman, to get down and open a gate so we might dash through it at the enemy. The man was shot down as he touched the gate. A second man, Ben Iden, was ordered to open it, and he also suffered a similar fate. Then it was time to show, by example, what it meant to command and to obey, and Lieutenant Palmer jumped down and opened the gate and, remounting his little grey thoroughbred, led the charge to a brilliant victory.

In after years I commented to the Colonel on our invariable willingness to go where he directed, without being in any way informed of the work to be done, or the purpose or the reason for it.

" Munson," he replied, " only three men in the Confederate army knew what I was doing or intended to do; they were Lee and Stuart and myself; so don't feel lonesome about it."

Very soon after Mosby entered upon his career as a Partizan Ranger the fame of his exploits began to spread through both the South and the North. Each day the newspapers told of this daredevil Southerner. Sutler's trains and wagon trains were raided; bridges were burned; ammunition and arms and supplies were taken; pickets disappeared as if swallowed up by the earth; scouts and stragglers from the Northern army

were plucked from the landscape by invisible hands and camps were raided and broken up. From a radius of fifty miles we began to hear of short, sharp and bloody engagements, and throughout Northern Virginia the cry echoed that "Mosby's men had been raiding" at this, and at that point. They seemed to have the power of striking at a half dozen places simultaneously.

In every Confederate regiment enlisted men began to display an interest in Mosby's movements. To be transfered to his Command from any other force in the field was almost an impossibility. Desertion from the army to him he would not permit. He recognized every claim that the regular army had on its soldiers, and punished deserters with a quick return to their regiments, if needs be under special guard. The discipline of the regular army was a law unto Mosby that was never broken.

These restrictions opened opportunities to civilians and ex-officers, so that Mosby soon found himself surrounded by the pick and bloom of the South. His recruits were some of the very best blood the Confederacy had to offer on the altar of faith. There were young fellows just coming into manhood, some of them mere boys; retired army officers anxious to return to the field; an occasional foreign soldier of fortune; a titled adventurer here and there, a hot-headed patriot just turning the shady side of life and ready as any dervish that ever invited Maxim bullets in the name of Mohammed to kneel down and receive death for his beliefs.

What Mosby liked best was youth. He agreed with

Napoleon that boys make the best soldiers. There was in his Command a young fellow from Richmond, one John Puryear, handsome, daring, reckless, and actually frantic for fight all the time. Puryear had no admiration for cautious people, no sense of fear in his composition and not the slightest judgment in a crisis. All that he knew about war was what he gathered in each mad dash though the ranks of the enemy, with his long black hair flying in the wind and his revolver hot with action. He rode his horse like a Centaur, and no enemy ever existed that this boy would not engage hand to hand, hip and thigh. Nevertheless John Puryear lacked judgment, and the prospect of his acquiring it was extremely remote. After one of his most daring and brilliant rushes Mosby once said to him,

"Puryear, I am going to make you a Lieutenant for gallantry."

Puryear swept his plumed hat in a bow that was royal in its grace.

"But," said the Colonel, "I don't want you to ever command any of my men."

Puryear, not the least abashed, but evidently conscious of the compliment, repeated his courtly salutation as if the leadership of Mosby's Command was being conferred on him. It was the Partizan Ranger's way of showing his appreciation for a brave man. Boy that I was at the time, I understood that Mosby wanted Puryear to fight for him, but not to think for him.

What I have said of John Puryear will apply to fifty other boys of the Command. He was a fair

sample of the younger element. When they were not fighting, they were generally playing. While on a raid they were as light-hearted as school boys at recess, and I have seen them chasing each other up and down the line of march oblivious of any discipline or of any approximate danger. It was fine sport for them to see how well a new recruit could ride, and this was ascertained by playing tricks on his horse to make the animal kick or buck.

One of our men had been shot in the mouth and his tongue healed with a big ridge on top, which made it quite an interesting organ. Every boy in the Command knew about this tongue of " B's," and often, when they were having fun on a raid, they would ride to him and offer to pay him if he would poke his tongue out for five minutes.

Mosby's correct estimate of men, his absolute freedom from jealousy and selfishness, his unerring judgment at critical moments, his devotion to his men, his eternal vigilance, his unobtrusive bravery and his exalted sense of personal honor, all combined to create in the mind and hearts of those who served him a sort of hero worship. Long before I ever set eyes on him I looked forward to the day when I would be able to take my hat off in his presence, and offer to follow him.

## CHAPTER II

### JOINING THE RANGERS

WHEN the Civil War broke out I had just passed fifteen years of age, and I spent most of my time wondering what it all meant. One Sunday in the early Spring of 1861, a report came to Richmond that the U. S. gunboat Pawnee was coming up the James river to attack the City. The whole population was worked up to a high pitch of excitement. The Governor at once ordered out all the local troops. Dignified old citizens appeared on the streets armed and equipped with weapons that had upheld the cause of the colonies against the invasion of the British in the Revolutionary war. A schooner laden with pig-iron was ordered sunk in the channel of the river below the city. The local cavalry company of Richmond was known as the Governor's Guard, and it was ordered to proceed down the river and capture the Pawnee and bring it up to town. The old Governor probably had an idea that it could be hauled out on the river bank like a skiff and brought to town on a farm wagon.

Military companies in those days each had one or two markers, boys who carried little flags and whose duty it was to run out in front of the company to a given point, and stand there like statues, while the company marched up to and around them. I went

down the river road that Sunday afternoon with the Governor's Guard, as marker, and we slept out of doors for three nights, for the first time in our lives. The Pawnee did not pass Norfolk, and at last we marched back to Richmond, covered with the dust of the campaign. A boot-black offered to "shine" some of us, and he came near being mobbed for the indignity. Every grain of that dust was precious to its possessor; we had been to the front and were real soldiers at last, and not militia.

This was my first soldiering of the war, and I believe it was the first that was done in Virginia.

Once in a while at night after that, when I was lying abed in Richmond all a-tremble for fear the war would not last long enough for me to get into it, the snarl of a snare drum would echo up and down the street, followed by the steady tramp of the regulars coming and going. It was tremendously alluring to me, as it was to every other boy living in that period. After a time, however, we became accustomed to seeing the men in grey and, as the country began to experience the agonies that grew out of the conflict, the romance faded out of the situation.

Then it was that we began to hear about Mosby and his men. To my mind Mosby was the ideal fighting man, from the tip of his plume to the rowel of his spur. Stories of his wonderful achievements came into Richmond from every direction. Joan of Arc never felt the call to go to battle any stronger than I felt it to join Mosby. I had not any doubt of my desirability, and figured out that all the Partizan Ranger required of his men was willingness to get shot, as oc-

casion might require, and sleep out of doors in any kind of weather. Accordingly I curbed my appetite and discarded all the comforts within easy reach, assuming that suffering, starvation and self-inflicted misery would in time season me to undertake the rigors of a campaign with the Rangers. Whenever any other information came in concerning Mosby's movements I added new discomforts to my daily existence, looking forward to the time when I could stand before my hero, whom I had never seen, and let him discover, with his own eyes, that I was a seasoned man, no stranger to hardships, and altogether a valuable addition to his band of Guerrillas.

One day I got wind of his whereabouts. As a rule he was a hard individual to locate, although a great many men in the Union army were engaged in looking for him; on the other hand a great many of the same army found him when they were not seeking him, and were surprised to see him so unexpectedly. News that came to me from several sources made it pretty certain that I could locate him in upper Fauquier County, Va., near the Blue Ridge Mountains, about one hundred and fifty miles from Richmond. I had nothing else in my mind but to make my way to him and that as soon as possible. Horses were scarce and hard to get and, besides, my departure on horseback in any direction out of Richmond would have caused remark among my young friends, and aroused curiosity, and I was nursing my patriotic zeal in secret.

There was nothing left for me to do but to set out ingloriously on foot.

In fitting myself out for the Guerrilla life, I figured

on rapid physical development, and selected a dingy grey suit cut for a man about six feet tall. I also had my hair cut close and this added nothing to my favor. The blouse of my suit was a sickly yellow shade of grey, and it came down half way to my knees. I was perhaps the most unpromising looking candidate for military glory ever turned out of Richmond. For some reason that has never been satisfactorily explained, I had not so much as a pocket-knife for a weapon. A large crop of freckles spangled my sunburned face, and a retroussé nose that never entirely lost its tip shone red with fire gathered in the open air. I left Richmond under cover of night, fearful lest some inquisitive neighbor should see me making my initial dash for the front, a calamity that would have been tragic in case I should have the ill luck to be rejected by Mosby.

Ten days afterward, having passed through a country that was not too well supplied with luxury, I tramped into the foot-hills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, near Markham Station, where Mosby and his men were supposed to be. Arriving late in the afternoon, it took about two hours of my valuable time to scout out their whereabouts. As a matter of fact anybody in that neighborhood could have directed me to him in five minutes after I arrived; but that did not seem the proper way for a prospective Mosby man to set to work. The Guerrilla leader was fresh from one of his successful raids, and the admiring country people were vying with one another to do him honor and to throw their homes open for the convenience and entertainment of his Partizans. I finally located him

at the residence of Mr. Jamieson Ashby, a Southern sympathizer, with a large heart and a house always open to his friends; an old time Virginia gentleman, living in an old time Virginia mansion, and entertaining in the traditional manner.

Tired and footsore I came toward the building and, through the trees surrounding it, dimly saw some of Mosby's men moving around on the lawn and the wide veranda. Nervously I swept my eyes over the band in search of a big man with a showy uniform, a flowing plume and a flashing saber. Gradually there had come into my mind on my tramp from Richmond an ideal figure that seemed to represent Mosby. I associated him in my imagination with Generals Lee and Jackson and Stuart, and I am not sure that I did not liken him to Robin Hood or Richard Cœur de Lion. By the time I set foot on the steps leading to the wide porch I was beginning to be disappointed at my failure to see and recognize the tall commanding warrior whose leadership I burned to follow. Where was Mosby? Suddenly I felt a tug at my elbow and, in the hushed silence that seemed to almost smother me, I heard a voice saying,

"There he is. Look!"

The moment I had longed for had arrived. I followed the direction of a finger that was thrust past my freckled nose, and the shock was something considerable. I beheld a small, plainly attired man, fair of complexion, slight but wiry, standing with his arms behind his back, talking quietly to one of his men. A military belt girded his waist, from which hung two Colt's army pistols.

The visions of splendor and magnificence that had filled my mind were swept away. The total absence of visible might, the lack of swagger, the quiet demeanor of the man, all contributed to my astonishment and chagrin. He did not even strut.

I stood rooted to the spot, speculating as to whether it was best to engage him at close range, or to take the road back to Richmond. The raiment that flapped about my person began to expand, or possibly I was shrinking.

The stalwarts grouped near Mosby, or sitting idly along the veranda, were not calculated to lighten the humiliation that was crushing me. They were fully up to the standard of the real live Guerrillas that I had come so far to see.

My eyes sought out Mosby again. What a pity! He had not grown an inch, nor emitted a single war whoop; and his voice was so low that not a syllable of his conversation reached me.

At this juncture Mr. Ashby appeared on the veranda, smiling, and announced that supper was ready, inviting Mosby and his men inside. They heard him and, one by one, disappeared indoors with alacrity. I learned later that the Guerrillas always carried their appetites with them on a raid, as well as elsewhere. Mosby was borne in with the rush, and I was left standing outside, with a confused idea that perhaps it would be necessary for me to start back to Richmond without even my supper.

"Come in, Sir, and sup with us, and you will have a chance to meet Mosby."

I looked up and saw Mr. Ashby standing in the

doorway, extending his right hand in greeting, while his left pointed the way to the feast.

I lost no time in thanking him and accepting the invitation.

Whether it was by chance or intention I never learned; but Mr. Ashby placed me in a chair by Mosby's side. He was busily engaged upon the appetizing meal when I took my seat by him, and he did not notice me. From my position on his immediate right I saw only the profile of his face. It was as clean cut as a cameo, and the lips were straight and firm. His nose, with a slight suggestion of the eagle's beak, was finely chiseled. He was the smallest man at the table, weighing at that time about one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and was but a little more than five feet eight or nine inches in height.

Sitting by his side I measured our differences in build with my eye. I was nearly three inches taller, and weighed twenty pounds more than he.

After what seemed to me an eternity, during which I did not eat a mouthful, Mosby appeared to realize that there was a human being, a stranger, beside him. He turned upon me suddenly, meeting my full glance. At that instant the secret of his power over his men was disclosed. It was in his eyes, which were deep blue, luminous, clear, piercing; when he spoke they flashed the punctuations of his sentence. He looked at me intently for at least half a minute, the expression in his eyes merging from searching inquisition into astonishment, and from that to amusement. He took in every inch of me, from my cropped head to the baggy trousers that disappeared under the table.

I had reckoned that the yellow blouse I wore would make a hit with him, but he displayed no perceptible interest in it.

When he spoke to me every man at the table stopped eating and looked in my direction.

"Who are you?" was his first question.

"John W. Munson," I replied, with a clumsy attempt at a salute.

"Where are you from?"

"Richmond, sir."

"What do you want?"

I keyed myself up to the grand declaration.

"I want to join the Partizan Rangers under Mosby."

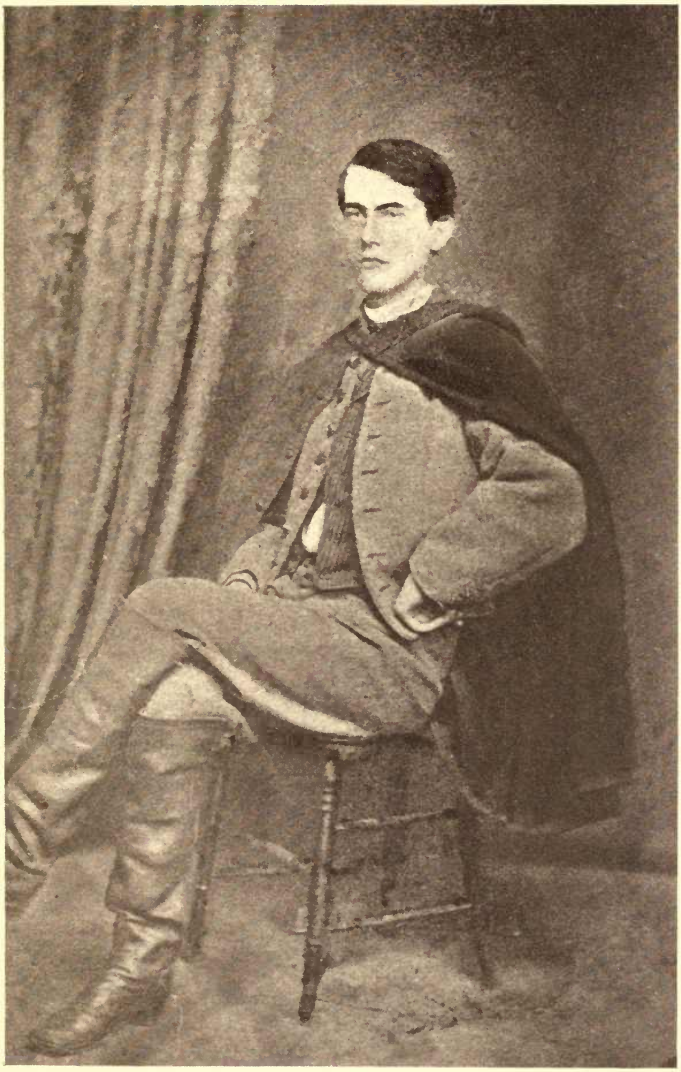
The sentence escaped from my lips with accumulating force, exploding with renewed energy at the conclusion. I expected to hear some laughter from the men around the table. Instead, however, they all took on a serious look, and gave me their close attention. Mosby threw his arm over the back of his chair and continued.

"Are you equipped?"

"I have only my clothes," I answered.

In this particular I was somewhat over equipped, but I was woefully shy of arms and ammunition. The full magnitude of my audacity now burst upon the guests at the Ashby table. One man whose chair was turned away from the table, and who had lighted a cigar (captured) began to laugh. Mosby turned upon him, and with one look silenced the disturber. Of all the favors for which I am indebted to Colonel Mosby, none was ever more appreciated than this.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA



JOHN W. MUNSON,
AT THE TIME OF HIS ENLISTMENT IN MOSBY'S PARTISAN RANGERS.

"Can you get a horse anywhere?" he resumed when quiet was restored.

"Certainly, sir," I answered with grave doubts as to my ability in that direction.

"All right; meet me at Blackwell's tomorrow morning at sunrise, and I will talk to you again."

He then returned to his meal and finished it in silence and, from any outward indication on his part for the rest of the evening, he completely forgot my existence. After this I proceeded leisurely with my supper, for I was not disturbed by a word addressed to me by anyone at the table. When we were finished and, one by one, the men went out of the house, I followed some of them to the stable, and found two of them saddling their horses. I asked them the way to Mr. Blackwell's, and learned that it was about ten miles distant. I did not want them to know that I was particularly anxious to get there, so I crawled into the hay-mow and went to sleep.

Long before daylight next morning I was awake and thinking of the horse that I had promised to secure. Striking out alone across the country, in the direction I had been told Blackwell's lay, I stopped at a farm house about sunrise, and spoke to a farmer who was going towards his barn. I told him who I was and where I was going, and asked him if he could tell me where I could capture a horse. Looking at me in some surprise, and suspecting that I was joking, which I was not, for I would really have been a horse thief if I could have secured a good animal, he told me he had a horse to spare and would sell her to me on credit. This proposition struck me at the

time as manna falling in the desert, and I gladly agreed to his terms for the purchase of his mare, and borrowed his saddle and bridle.

Not very long after sunrise I rode, well mounted, but perspiring, into Mr. Blackwell's yard, and greatly to my astonishment found that Mosby and a few of his men had arrived there several hours previously.

I threw the bridle of my mare over the hitching post and, in addition, tied a good strong rope around her neck and fastened it to a tree nearby for fear she might get homesick, and strode into the house to announce my arrival. At that early day, only twelve hours after being ushered into the august presence, I began to feel my oats. Mosby turned and looked at me as I entered, and I think he recognized my yellow blouse or my freckled nose or possibly my reserve. In those days I had reserve. At any rate when I told him I had got a horse he smiled and put his hand on my shoulder as he asked me if it were a good one. Somehow I got the idea that he thought I had been on a lone scout and captured it from some picket. Youth can be buoyant in imagination. At any rate I shall not forget his merry humor nor the twinkle in his eye.

From that moment my clothes began to fit me better. I followed Mosby around the room and out on the porch and, after talking to him for ten minutes, somewhere or somehow a pistol came into my possession, with a belt and holster for it, and I was received into the ranks of the Mosby Guerrillas, all ready for action.

## CHAPTER III

### HOW WE LIVED

THE life led by Mosby's men was entirely different from that of any other body of soldiers during the war. His men had no camps nor fixed quarters, and never slept in tents. They did not even know anything about pitching a tent. The idea of making coffee, frying bacon, or soaking hard-tack was never entertained. When we wanted to eat we stopped at a friendly farm house, or went into some little town and bought what we wanted. Every man in the Command had some special farm he could call his home.

The people in that part of the state which was designated "Mosby's Confederacy," embracing in a general way the counties of Fauquier and Loudoun, were loyal to the South, though frequently outside the lines of the Southern army, and they were glad to have Mosby's men among them, not only to show their sympathy with the South, but also to have the protection which the presence of the Partisans afforded them.

During the war all local government in that country was suspended. There were no courts nor court officers. The people looked to Mosby to make the necessary laws and to enforce them, and no country before, during or since the war was ever better governed.

Mosby would not permit any man to commit a crime, or even a misdemeanor, in his domain. One of our men, in a spirit of deviltry, once turned over an old Quaker farmer's milk cans, and when Mosby heard of it he ordered me to take the man over to the army, which was then near Winchester, and turn him over to General Early, with the message that such a man was not fitted to be a Guerrilla.

As a Command we had no knowledge of the first principles of cavalry drill, and could not have formed in a straight line had there ever been any need for our doing so. We did not know the bugle-calls, and very rarely had roll-call. Our dress was not uniform in make or color; we did not address our officers, except Mosby, by their titles; in fact, we did not practice anything usually required of a soldier; and yet withal there was not another body of men in the army under better or more willing control of their leader. Two things were impressed upon us well, however; to obey orders, and to fight.

We carried no sabres, being in no manner familiar with the weapon's use. My keenest recollection of the value of a sabre takes me back to the time when a large curved blade, sheathed in clanking steel, was brought in with some captured Union man. None of us dared swing it at arm's length, for fear of killing a neighbor, but we subsequently found it was a splendid weapon with which to bat a refractory mule over the back. When a captured mule received the sabre treatment with the flat side, he forged ahead and stayed in front of the procession from that time on.

The jingle of the steel against his sides or back seemed to frighten him more than all the black-snake whips in the Union army. Once only did I see this deadly engine of war in bloody action, and that was when young Emory Pitts of my Company playfully drove its point into the body of a Thirteenth New Yorker who had fired at him and then dodged under an army wagon to escape.

Contrary to a popular impression we did not carry carbines at any time during the war. Each of Mosby's men was armed with two muzzle-loading Colt's army revolvers of forty-four caliber. They were worn in belt holsters. Some few who could afford it, or who had succeeded in capturing extra pistols or who wanted to gratify a sort of vanity, wore an extra pair in their saddle-holsters or stuck into their boot legs. These weapons were extremely deadly and effective in the hand-to-hand engagements in which our men indulged. Long and frequent practice had made every man in the Command a good shot, and each was as sure with his revolver as every cow-boy is with his six-shooter. As a general thing our real fights were fast and furious and quickly over, one or the other side withdrawing at a dead run when the pistols were empty. At the present time the question of discarding the sabre in the United States army is being discussed very generally by officers, and I believe before long they will be relegated to the museums and the junk piles. I received a letter from an officer of one of the crack cavalry regiments asking me for a more extended opinion of the sabre than I had ex-

pressed in my published reminiscences, and with hesitation, I told him how poor an opinion Mosby and his men had of the blade. I said that an Irishman with a shillelah in a close-quarter fight, would make the average cavalryman ashamed of himself. I never actually saw blood drawn with a sabre but twice in our war, though I saw them flash by the thousand at Brandy station.

The Federal cavalry generally fought with sabres; at any rate they all carried them, and Mosby used to say they were as useless against a skillfully handled revolver as the wooden swords of harlequins. As the Mosby tactics became better known, scouting parties from the Northern army began to develop an affection for the pistol, with increasing success, I might add, in the later engagements. In stubborn fights I have seen the men on both sides sit on their restless horses and re-load their pistols under a galling fire. This was not a custom, however; someone generally ran to cover after the revolvers were emptied. We both did this a good many times, but I believe, without bragging at the expense of truth, that we saw the back seams of the enemy's jackets oftener than they saw ours. I attribute this largely to the fact that we attacked them unexpectedly oftener than they attacked us.

Revolvers in the hands of Mosby's men were as effective in surprise engagements as a whole line of light ordnance in the hands of the enemy. This was largely due to the fact that Mosby admonished his men never to fire a shot until the eyes of the other fellow

were visible. It was no uncommon thing for one of our men to gallop by a tree at full tilt, and put three bullets into its trunk in succession.

This sort of shooting left the enemy with a good many empty saddles after an engagement.

The standard uniform simply meant "something gray." It has been said that we wore blue to deceive the enemy, but this is ridiculous, for we were always in the enemy's country where a Southern soldier caught dressed in a blue uniform would have been treated to a swift court-martial and shot as a spy. I never knew, nor did I ever hear, of any man in our Command wearing a blue uniform under any circumstances, and moreover I never heard of one of our men making any use whatever of a blue uniform or ever taking a blue uniform from a prisoner. We had no reason to use a blue uniform as a disguise and, in fact, never used anything for a disguise, for there was no occasion to do so. Many of our attacks were made at night, when all colors looked alike, and in daytime we did not have to deceive the Yankees in order to get at them. On the other hand the men who were known as "Jesse's Scouts" in the Northern army were always dressed in gray, and my experience with them justifies me in saying that they seemed to fully appreciate the risk of their disguise if they fell into our hands.

"Something gray" was the one requisite of our dress and the cost of it mattered little. Much of it was paid for by Uncle Sam out of the money we got from him directly and indirectly. Like gamblers we

took chances with fate. We had ups and downs; but after our successful raids we were the best dressed, best equipped, and best mounted Command in the Confederate army. There were meek and lowly privates among us, of whom it might truly be said that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed as one of these. Union army sutlers supplied us with a varied assortment of luxuries, and I cannot recall an instance when we rejected what they had on hand on overhauling their stock, or when we threatened to take our trade to some competitor.

If we wanted anything that we could not take by force of arms we sent North for it and paid for it with money that was not Confederate.

Some of the Command were extremely fastidious in the matter of dress and affected gold braid, buff trimmings, and ostrich plumes in their hats. After the "greenback raid" when we captured General Sheridan's paymasters with a hundred and seventy thousand dollars in crisp new Government notes, each man received as his share more than twenty-one hundred dollars. The result was that all had clothes and accoutrements such as had never gladdened their hearts before. At all times, whether things went well or ill, the Guerrillas were as vain a lot of dandies as one would wish to see; blithe in the face of danger, full of song and story, indifferent to the events of tomorrow, and keyed up to a high pitch of anticipation; mingled with this was the pride that goes hand in hand with repeated victories and the possession of spoils.

I was soon possessed with the desire for finery, and forthwith sent North by a sutler for gray corduroy with which to make a full suit, as well as the necessary gold braid, buff trimmings, gilt buttons, high top boots, gauntlets, a soft hat, and three ostrich feathers to match. I made up my mind to dress for the part if it took my last dollar, and such was the case, for when the goods and baubles arrived, I found that the honest merchant wanted about two hundred in cash from me. I made a few trades, juggled my possessions around a little, and got the money together, adjusting the account in a measure, by charging the sutler five dollars a pound for some tobacco that I happened to have, which he wanted badly. I was quite a swell for a time until the fellow who had laughed at me at Mr. Ashby's house, on my first appearance, tackled me one afternoon, and we both showed the effect of the argument.

Mosby encouraged the men in their vanities, although personally he favored the neatest and plainest of attire. Only when he came in touch with the Generals, which he did once in awhile, did he make any attempt at display in his dress. On these occasions he always wore a new suit of the best the tailor could procure, a red-lined cape, gold braid, and ostrich plume in his hat, as gayly as did his men. I have always believed that he did it for the purpose of impressing the regulars with the importance of his Partisan Rangers, in whom he took the greatest pride. He wanted the army to think, when they saw him in his finery, that he was a fair sample of the entire band. In a fight

a conspicious uniform, a waving plume, a flashing sabre, or a white horse, always attracted the fire of the enemy, and Mosby never went into a fight that his actions were not so conspicious and his red-lined cape so prominently displayed that he drew on himself a concentrated fire. I believe he enjoyed such special attentions; not that he was reckless, for recklessness is not always bravery, but he was unconsciously brave, and loved war for itself; it was never "Hell" to him, as it was to Sherman, but on the whole he rather looked on it as a sort of martial picnic. If he had lived in France at the time of the Empire he would have been a Field-Marshal. If he had been at Balaklava he would have led the Six Hundred. In his own little circumscribed fighting grounds,

> Where'er wild war's sirocco breath
> Its deadliest impress made,
> And revelled midst its feast of death,
> There flashed his battle blade.

or, more correctly, there flashed his smoking Colt, for he had positively no use for a blade of any kind.

Whenever we made a successful raid, we made it a point to repay the farmers and country people whose bounty we enjoyed, in live stock and supplies. The return from a sutler's raid was a holiday occasion, for everybody got something. On one occasion we captured about two hundred and fifty fat cattle from General Sheridan's supply train, and we gave our country friends half of them, dividing them among all the people living within range.

On one occasion, we got into some sutler's stores at Duffield depot on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the goods were so tempting that I concluded to carry an assortment back to our lady hostess and her household. I loaded up a sack with all sorts of useful and ornamental goods, and fastened it to my saddle securely. Then, going back into the store and looking around, I spied some hoop-skirts which the sutler had no doubt bought for some special order from an army officer's wife. I took these and strapped them to my saddle. Then I made another and final round of the store, and began stuffing my many pockets with notions, such as buttons, hair pins, thread, hooks and eyes, and the like; finally I found a lot of papers of needles, and I thrust a handful of these into my trousers' pocket.

Just then some one poked his head into the door and cried:

"The Yankees are coming."

We made a break for our horses and galloped away with our plunder, and our prisoners; keeping up a pretty fast gait for some miles for fear our burdens would slacken the usual speed we practiced when we were retreating. I had not gone a mile before my papers of needles began to come undone in my pocket, and at every jump of my horse a newly released needle would remind me that I had captured it, until at the end of our run I had dozens of needle marks on my anatomy, and two or three points were left inside, to work upward or downward, or out, as they severally saw fit.

I recollect that I delivered all my presents safely to my kind friends, except needles, and I made no reference to these in my account of the raid. In all my later raids on sutler's stores I contented myself with things that were not likely to prove troublesome, or stick into me, such as boots, and gloves, and furnishing goods; but I ignored needles.

While there was more or less risk in sleeping in houses inside the enemy's lines, our losses were comparatively small from this cause, as our men were always on the lookout for reprisals from the night raiding parties, who had learned that part of our tactics and were continually on our trail. We knew the country a great deal better than the Union soldiers did and, in time of danger, it was a simple matter to shift our quarters. Whenever there was an over-supply of raiders in the neighborhood we took our blankets or robes and slept in the woods or orchards or fields till the danger was past. Mosby not infrequently slept alone in such places, but as he and I each had a fine buffalo robe it was my happy privilege frequently to snuggle up to him between these two robes, and "dream of battle-fields no more."

Mosby sometimes did his scouting alone, but generally he was accompanied by one or more men, selected because of their intimate knowledge of a certain part of the country to which he was going. Under cover of the night he would move with the stealth that would have put an Indian to shame. No sabre was ever worn on such a trip and if a spur or a curb chain jingled it was taken off. A neighing horse would

have been murdered on the spot. Our animals seemed to know instinctively that they must keep still; at any rate they always did so.

Mosby was the fastest "scouter" I ever knew, and in the saddle could cover a dozen objective points, over a course of fifty miles from sunset to sunrise, gathering information of vital importance at each halt. He would send out messengers whenever necessary from any point wherever it seemed advisable to do so, regardless of the hour of day or night, or the proximity of friend or foe. I never knew one of his messengers to go wrong. No one ever heard of one of Mosby's dispatches being captured.

Horses, of course, were indispensable to Mosby's men. On whatever else we were obliged, or chose, to stint ourselves, it was necessary to have good horses. Nearly all the men kept at least two, and many of us who rode constantly had more. The work was too hard for one horse. I have known the Colonel to have six at one time, all of them fine animals, but generally half his stud would be temporarily disabled from hard riding or wounds. When we started on a scout or a raid, his old colored groom, Aaron, would take up from pasture one or two of his horses and begin to get them into shape for him by the time he returned. Thus he always had a fresh horse to depend on. Each man kept his horses at the farm-house where he made his home, and there was not a barn or corral owned by our friendly allies that did not contain one or more of Mosby's cavalry horses, waiting to be saddled for a long, hard ride.

When a raiding party came through our neighborhood and the men were at their respective homes, each would mount a good horse and take the rest off to hide in the woods till the raiders passed by. If we happened to be away the farmers would hide our horses for us, and instances were not rare when the ladies and children of a household would do the kindly office.

Mosby's old negro, Aaron, was fanatical on the subject of his own importance, and had an unconquerable fear of the Yankees. He used to tell us when we chaffed him that it was not "Mars Jack" that the Yankees came up there looking for, but it was "Aaron," and that, if they could catch him and take him to Washington, President Lincoln would have him handed around on a big silver waiter for all the people in the world to gaze at. The moment the report, or even the rumor, came to headquarters that the Yankees were coming, old Aaron would start off with his horses for the mountains and we would not see or hear from him till after dark, when he would sneak in at the back door and ask the first one he met, "Is dey gone yet?"

Once, as a joke, Johnny Edmonds and I galloped into the barnyard where Aaron was currying one of the Colonel's horses and closed the big gate behind us. We fired our pistols and yelled to him to look out for the Yankees. Without waiting an instant he mounted his horse bare back, jumped the gate and flew for the hills. At each jump we fired a pistol and yelled to him to stop, but he kept on and we did not see him

again till next morning. He never quite forgave us when he found out the facts.

Aaron accompanied Mosby in the regular service before the Command was organized. There was a fight near Barbee's cross-roads in Fauquier county in which Mosby was engaged, and old Aaron accompanied him at an entirely safe distance, leading one of his extra horses. He sat down on the porch of an old house to listen to the noise of the firing, "sniffing the battle from afar," and waiting for his master to come back and give him orders. Suddenly, and without warning, a misdirected shell swept high over the old building and burst in the air, a part of it striking the roof and scattering splinters all over Aaron.

He jumped upon his horse, leading the extra and much needed animal, galloped away and did not stop, or make any perceptible slackening of his speed, until he reached the old Mosby plantation, about one hundred and fifty miles away. It was three months before he could be persuaded to return to the army.

When my captain, "Billy" Smith, was killed in January, 1864, I was anxious to possess his favorite horse and I purchased him from Mrs. Smith, but it was necessary for me to sell three pretty good ones of my own to raise sufficient money to pay for him. I never complained of the price, and was never sorry I bought him, for there was not a better known horse in Stuart's cavalry, nor a better war horse in the whole army. My captain had been orderly-sergeant of the "Black Horse" troop, and used to ride old "Champ" in the regular service; and from Stuart

down to the humblest private he was well and favorably known.

Norman Smith was killed while riding him in one of our fights, in August, 1863, and his brother, captain "Billy," was also killed on him in January, 1864. When the war ended I turned him over to a third brother, Captain Towson Smith, in whose possession he died. Some time after the war, the captain wanted to drive to church, and hooked up old Champ to the family carryall and got into it. The old horse looked around at it and, with a far-away look in his eyes, apparently more in sorrow than in anger, kicked the old carriage into splinters.

On one occasion Colonel Mosby took me with him on a trip to Richmond and we stopped at General Stuart's headquarters, then in Orange county, and left our horses with him. His own horses were pretty badly used up and we asked him to ride ours in a fight which he was to have early the next day. When we returned a few days afterwards, the General asked me if I would put a price on Champ. I told him he would honor me by letting me give the old fellow to him, but he would not consent to such an arrangement; therefore, as he would not allow me to give him the horse and I would not let him buy, he reluctantly saw me ride back to Northern Virginia. He told me he had never enjoyed riding a horse in a fight as much as he did old Champ.

The horse was absolutely controllable in the hottest sort of action, and never lost his head; but, as he had been badly shot twice, once in his head and the next

time in his hip, he knew the sound of flying bullets and would shake his old head and apparently dodge when he heard them going by; but he did not know that dodging was unnecessary.

Mosby would send his men out in different directions on individual scouting trips with orders, perhaps, to meet him at a designated point fifty or more miles away. In this way he kept an eye on the enemy all around the circle and when, acting on one of his men's reports, he decided to strike a blow, he would take the necessary number of men with him or have them meet him at some point near the scene of the expected attack and, after verifying the man's report by his own actual observation, the trouble would begin. It was his constant care not to take his men into any place that he could not bring them out of, and they felt perfectly safe in following him. His instructions to the various detachments of his battalion frequently covered three days ahead, and the instances were very rare when he did not keep his appointments to the hour. He knew the theatre of war so well, and was so complete a master of his own work, that it was impossible to confuse him. He never lost his self-possesson; never got rattled. If he could make a raid at midnight it pleased him greatly, as he held that sleeping men are easy to surround, and that it required at least five minutes for an awakened soldier to get into shape to fight. That is the explanation why so many of Mosby's performances were planned and came off at an hour of the night when most good people were in the land of dreams; it also explains how it fre-

quently happened that our men attacked many times their own numbers. Seldom did Mosby return empty handed from a raid. On the march he was usually very quiet and uncommunicative; riding by himself a little ahead of the Command, apparently plunged in the consideration of some future problem, the germ of which had already begun to formulate in his brain. On a raid, however, when his mind was fully made up, he was the gayest of us all, joking and laughing with the men and looking forward eagerly to the clash of arms. On these occasions he would direct one of the boys near him to ride back down the line and bring Jim Sinclair to the front to tell us all about the confusion of the mule drivers; or to another one he would say, "Go back and ask Captain Bill Kennon to come up here and tell us a good lie." Captain Bill could charm the birds off their nests with his wonderful romancing.

Mosby never took anyone into his confidence. When he got an idea that he thought worth while, he immediately worked toward its development. I do not remember ever hearing anybody ask Mosby where he was going or what his plans were. One instance of his taciturnity will suffice. We met one afternoon in Upperville, Virginia, where the Colonel told Major Richards to take the Command to a designated place in Fairfax county and await his coming late that night. Turning to me he said:

"Munson, get on your horse and come with me."

He was off at a trot. I followed him down the Little River turnpike and caught up with him, where

we trotted and galloped, boot-leg to boot-leg, for twenty miles. Not once did he look at me, nor one word did he utter in all that ride. He was planning one of those sensational raids of his, which, before the next sunset, startled Washington, and kept the Federal commanders in a flutter for many days afterward. I thought my tongue would become paralyzed from long disuse.

Finally we drew up at a farm-house, where the Colonel reined his horse with the remark: "Let's stop here for a cup of coffee." His ideas had crystallized and he was normal again. In that silent gallop he had planned a victory. Not long ago, he told a friend of ours in New York, Mr. Frank Pemberton, that he liked to ride with me during the war because I did not talk.

Mosby maintained a discipline that was remarkable, considering the kind of men who made up his Command and the character of the service. Young men, especially, chafe under too much restraint; yet he made rules that were never broken and established rewards which, when won, were as highly prized by his followers as the medal of honor by the heroes of Austerlitz. He divided all captured horses by lot, among those who figured in the particular raid in which the animals were secured. Sutler's supplies, army equipment and personal property belonged to the man brave enough to take the risk of capturing it. Men who went alone, or in small groups, on scouting parties divided their spoils as they saw fit. "To the victor belonged the spoils" was a satisfactory

doctrine for Mosby, but during the whole war he never appropriated to himself as much as a halter-strap. The very horses he rode and the old colored body-servant who accompanied him throughout the campaign, came with him from the Mosby homestead.

Once only did I know of any departure from this strict rule of his independence, and that was an occasion when all his horses were in a bad way, and the men purchased and presented to him a splendid charger which had belonged to one of his officers. He protested a great deal, but the men insisted.

The men always assembled at a designated place to go on a raid, but it did not make any difference to Mosby where they disbanded when the purpose of the raid was accomplished. For instance, he would give notice to a few men whom he might meet, to notify a given number of the Command to meet him at a certain cross-roads, or blacksmith's shop, or a village. If more of the men assembled than he wanted, he would dismiss such as he did not need, sometimes sending them on a scout under one of the officers, or letting them return to their homes; and, taking his force, would go on his raid. When the purpose was accomplished, he did not care how many of the boys left him, or what became of them, so long as enough remained to take care of the prisoners and horses and bring them out safely. I have returned with him from a raid that covered two or three days of almost constant riding, only to be told to get ready to start on another expedition at once.

In such cases we would take a hurried bath, put on clean clothes, get a fresh horse from the stable, pocket a few extra cartridges, eat something if it was ready, and gallop away. I used to think it was glorious sport in those days.

Every affair in which Mosby and his men figured had in it something novel, something romantic, something which is worth the telling; and many of those in which I took part, or with which I am at all familiar through the stories of others or the traditions of the Command, will be mentioned in the following pages. I would like to tell of some individual act of each man in the Command, and record the hundreds of brave deeds I witnessed or knew of, but I can only repeat what I once heard Mosby say when he was writing one of his reports to General Stuart. I said to him, when he told me he had put my name with three or four others, in his report of a fight, "Why don't you say something about —— and —— and —— and ——?" He replied:

"I can't call the roll in every fight, Munson."

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CAPTURE OF GENERAL STOUGHTON

THE only way I have of fixing the date of Mosby's first operations as an independent Ranger is his report to General Stuart, which is dated February 4, 1863, in which he says he arrived in Fauquier county about one week previously and had been quite actively engaged with the enemy, capturing twenty-eight prisoners with their horses and equipments. He signed the report "John S. Mosby." General Stuart endorsed the report on February 8, as follows:

"Respectively forwarded as additional proof of the prowess, daring and efficiency of Mosby (without commission) and his band of a dozen followers."

General Stuart made a little raid about Christmas time 1862, to Dumfries, and took Mosby with him. When he left there to go on to Fairfax he sent Mosby ahead and, when they reached Loudoun county and rested for a day before returning, Mosby got permission to remain there with nine men of the First Virginia Cavalry. Among them was Fount Beattie who, from that day till the war ended, was one of the best known men and one of the best men in the Command. He was Mosby's most intimate companion and friend, for they had enlisted together when the war broke out and were never separated.

With these nine men Mosby once went down into Fairfax county and in two days captured twenty Yankees with their horses. He took his men and prisoners back to Stuart's headquarters at Fredericksburg and the General was so pleased with the result of Mosby's experiment that he promised to let him go back again with fifteen men. This really was the beginning of his Partisan career, for later when he started North with his fifteen men he never again went back to regular army life. These fifteen men were not members of Mosby's Command for, shortly after he took them, some were ordered back to their regiment. The fact is that, strictly speaking, Mosby had no Command of his own until June 10, 1863, when he organized his first company, "A." Up to that time the men he had in all his brilliant engagements were volunteers. He utilized every man who came to him. A hospital at Middleburg served him as a recruiting station. The convalescent men, some of them on crutches, others bandaged and patched up in other ways, would go with him on a raid, make havoc among the Yankees, and return to the hospital and get into their beds. When the raiding parties who followed Mosby up to that part of the country would see these poor wounded rebels in their beds in the hospital, they never suspected them of being "Guerrillas pro tem." On February 27, Mosby had twenty-seven of these new recruits with him in one of those Fairfax county raids, and although the post he attacked was defended by a force of fifty cavalrymen he captured five men and thirty-nine horses. He

killed the lieutenant commanding, and three of his men.

Out of these early volunteers a number remained permanently with Mosby and became actual "Mosby men," but until his first company was formed he never could count, with any degree of certainty, upon any given number of men responding to his call for a meeting. Many of his volunteers were dismounted cavalrymen from Stuart's division who came over to Mosby to get horses and who returned to their regiments after the horses were secured and he never saw them again. At every meeting held for the first few months of his Partisan career entirely new faces would appear ready for the fray, and most of those with which, in a measure, he had become familiar on previous raids would be missing.

One of the first men of any importance to join him was John Underwood, a native of Fairfax county. Two of John's brothers, Sam and Bush, joined him later and served with him to the end of the war, but John was killed a few months after becoming a "Guerrilla."

These Underwoods knew that country better than the wild animals that roamed over it by night or by day, and they were Mosby's guides on many of his scouts and raids and never led him astray. By night or by day any of these boys could thread his way through any swamp or tangled forest in Fairfax county, and personal fear was a thing unknown to them.

Another early recruit was Billy Hibbs, a blacksmith

of Loudoun county, who had two grown sons in the regular army. By general consent he was known throughout the entire Command as "Major" Hibbs, a title bestowed on him in a joke by Mosby who, however, had great respect for the "Major's" loyalty and courage and ability. Another early acquisition was Dick Moran. Mosby used to say that these few men actually started his Command into being and that the real recruits came to his standard only after it bore their names.

Not because the capture of General Stoughton was the first affair of importance which Mosby accomplished in his career as a Partisan Ranger, is it recorded here, but because the name of Mosby inevitably couples itself with the event. It was typical. While many other of his exploits far exceeded it in importance to our side and in loss to the enemy, there was nothing in boldness or originality which surpassed it during the entire war; nor did anything reflect more credit on the little Command or create any more notoriety than his capture. It seems to me that this exploit gave Mosby more deserved fame than any single achievement of any officer or Commander in either the Northern or Southern army during the war, and I desire to tell it more in detail than do the official records.

The following official report, which is given verbatim, of the United States Provost Marshal at the Post, makes a good preface for my story. His report is much more accurate than was usual under such circumstances, and the exaggeration of our number from

thirty to three hundred, was not at all an exceptional case.

PROVOST MARSHAL'S OFFICE.
FAIRFAX, C. H., Va., March 10, 1863.

*Colonel Wyndham, Commanding Cavalry Brigade and Post.*

SIR: On the night of the 8th instant, say about two, or half past two, A. M., Captain Mosby, with his Command, entered this village by an easterly direction, then advanced upon my outer vedette, when he challenged (no countersign out). The rebel picket or scout advanced presenting at the same time two revolvers to his head and threatening to blow his brains out if he said a word, demanding his arms, etc., when the force came up and captured every man on patrol, with horses, equipments, etc., until reaching the Provost Marshal's stables, when they halted and entered the stables, taking every horse available with them. They then proceeded to Colonel Stoughton's stables, captured his guard, took his horses and those of his aides; they then proceeded to Colonel Wyndham's headquarters and took all the horses and movable property with them. In the meantime others of Captain Mosby's command were despatched to all quarters where officers were lodged, taking them out of their beds, together with the telegraph operator, assistant, etc., etc.

They searched the Provost Marshal's office, and finding him absent went to the post hospital and there made diligent search for him, offering a reward for him. The Provost Marshal had just left the street, say ten minutes before they entered, and went across some vacant lots to ascertain from one of his vedettes if he had caught any horses or horse thieves. Another party ten in number, proceeded to Colonel Stoughton's



THE HOUSE WHERE GEN. STOUGHTON WAS CAPTURED.

headquarters, taking him and one of his aides named Prentiss, who afterwards escaped prisoners. They then proceeded to Colonel Wyndham's headquarters and took Captain Barker of the Fifth New York Cavalry, and also Baron Vardner, who was stopping at the Colonel's. In the meantime another party of them entered the residence of Colonel Johnston and searched the house for him. He had, previous to their entering the town, heard of their movements, and, believing them to be the patrol, went out to halt them, but soon found out his mistake. He then entered the house again, he being in a nude state, and got out backwards, they in hot pursuit of him. He, however, evaded them by getting under a barn and had scarcely concealed himself when a guard of three men were placed upon it. It is supposed that they entered our lines between Frying Pan and Herndon Station, taking a diagonal course to come in at the lower end of the village. On leaving they went out by way of Colonel Wyndham's stables (southwest) and proceeded towards Centreville, cutting telegraph wires as they went along. I am told by parties who had seen them that they were some three hundred strong.

I have the honor to remain,

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

LIEUT. D. L. O'CONNOR,
*Provost Marshal.*

The following are some of the details, and I am indebted for them to Mosby's report of the affair to General Stuart, in the Confederate War Records, to his account of it, written many years ago for publication, and to the traditions of our Command, which are the priceless heritage of all its members.

Mosby started on his Partisan Ranger career early

in February, 1863, with fifteen men not members of his Command, for he had no Command. They were members of his old regiment, the First Virginia Cavalry, and were loaned to him by General Stuart. On the twenty-fifth of the month, a deserter from the Fifth New York Cavalry, then stationed at or near Fairfax Court House, named Ames, came up to join Mosby. Little attention was paid to him by any of the men except by Walter Frankland, who had no horse, and who had joined Mosby a few days previously. Ames told Frankland he could lead him back to his camp at Germantown and get horses for both of them and, on the twenty-eighth they started on foot for the camp, reaching it at midnight on the night of March first. They entered the camp, talked to the sentinels and, in their presence, saddled two of the finest horses and came back safely to their starting point. One week afterwards, Mosby took his little Command of only twenty-nine men and, with Ames as guide, started from Aldie in Loudoun county, to enter the camp at Fairfax Court House. What will be difficult for the general reader to believe is that Mosby, from the first meeting with the deserter Ames, had confidence in him and used him to pilot himself and his little band into the very jaws of the enemy, not communicating his intention of going to the commanding General's headquarters to any of the men except to Ames. I have already spoken of Mosby's correct estimate of men and of his unerring judgment in critical moments. This case of Ames was an illustration of it, for he

proved worthy of Mosby's confidence, became one of the safest and best soldiers in our Command, was later made a Lieutenant for gallantry and efficiency, and was finally killed in a fight at close quarters.

At the time Ames came to him, Mosby had already determined to make a raid on Fairfax Court House for he had gathered information to warrant it, and this Ames verified. This was only a month after Mosby had started upon his career as a Partisan Ranger and at the time he had made only a few experimental dashes at the enemy. Here was a very serious proposition to tackle. Fairfax Court House was invested and surrounded by thousands of soldiers — infantry, cavalry and artillery. At Centreville a few miles away there was a brigade of mixed troops with heavy artillery in the works. Another brigade of cavalry was located near Fairfax Court House on the pike. The adjacent railroad was heavily guarded and cavalry outposts completely encircled the town for miles, extending to the Potomac river. The headquarters were girdled with soldiers. There was only one weak spot in the entire line of outposts, and that was weak only in comparison with the rest. No man could have passed through any part of the lines by daylight, without being seen by hundreds of Union soldiers.

Mosby knew where that weak spot was and, after midnight, in a darkness so intense that he could hardly see a man ahead of him, took his twenty-nine men through it. Not until he was within the lines and almost at the headquarters of the officers, did he tell his men what he was doing and where he was going.

At that early day there was already grounded in them the blind faith in their leader which continued until the end of the war, and which with me continues to this day. Just before reaching the headquarters he explained the situation to one of his men, Hunter, and touched upon its danger. The little band rode into the town and stopped at the Court-House Square, challenged now and then by a picket who was immediately quieted, and still they did not know what the program was nor where they were.

The men were divided into squads, each with its separate duty to perform. Some went to the stables to get the best horses; others to the officers' quarters to capture them; all of them with orders to return to the square when their allotted tasks were completed. General Stoughton and Colonel Wyndham, the latter commanding the cavalry, were the principal game sought by Mosby. He had been annoying the troops about Fairfax in the few weeks he had been operating in that country, and Wyndham had sent him some impudent messages. Mosby was anxious to take him out of his bed, but the Colonel had gone by rail to Washington the afternoon before, and so Mosby missed him. When Ames with a few men went to Wyndham's quarters and found that the bird had flown they stripped his apartments of all his valuable effects and took all the fine horses in the stables. It fell to the lot of Ames to capture his former captain, Barker, of the Fifth New York. What the feelings of a deserter under the circumstances were must be left to the imagination, but he treated his old superior

with great respect and deference, and took special pleasure in presenting him to Mosby.

While the men were scattered about the town performing their respective tasks, Mosby, with a few men, had looked up Stoughton's headquarters and knocking at the door they were admitted by an officer, Lieutenant Prentiss, *en deshabille*. Mosby took him gently by the collar and, in a whisper, ordered him to show him where Stoughton was. On reaching the General's room that officer was found asleep in bed and, as time was precious, Mosby unceremoniously woke him up by spanking him on his bare skin. The General was properly horrified at such a liberty and, when asked if he ever heard of Mosby, quickly answered,

"Yes; have you got him?"

Mosby replied,

"No, but he has got you."

The General was made to dress in a hurry and, with his aide, Lieutenant Prentiss, taken down stairs and outside where two of our men were waiting, having in the meantime taken a lot of seven couriers and their horses. Hunter was given special instructions to guard the General at all hazards, and the little squad started toward the Court-House Square which was the rendezvous for the whole band.

All the squads had done their allotted work well and Mosby started off with one hundred prisoners and horses. In the darkness a few of the prisoners escaped. Passing a dwelling in the town the men were halted by a voice at a window inquiring, in an au-

thoritative tone, who they were. Two of Mosby's men, Joe Nelson and Welt Hatcher, were sent into the house to bring the man out, but he took the alarm and escaped by the back door in his night-shirt. It was Lieutenant Colonel Johnston, of the Fifth New York, and it was said that he hid under the floor of a house in the garden. In the morning he got his men together and started in pursuit of Mosby but took the wrong direction.

To get his men out of the trouble into which it had been so easy to get, was now Mosby's care, for he always looked after that part of his exploits. The troops in the town were apprised of his presence, but each man of them seemed to be looking out for himself, and there was no concert of action. Mosby started towards Fairfax Station to throw his pursuers off guard, and then suddenly turned off towards Centreville. To pass that point meant a great deal to him. The heavy guns looked down frowningly on him only a few hundred feet away, and the sentinels on the works, with "Who goes there?" halted him as he passed under them; but he made no reply. Silently the little troop passed along by the big guns of the forts with their prisoners, and vanished into the darkness. Captain Barker made a dash towards the fort but was shot at by one of the men and recaptured, just as his horse fell into a ditch.

One more serious danger confronted Mosby. Cub Run, just beyond Centreville, was overflowing. Back of the little band was the fort with its brigade of soldiers, soon to be, if not already, alarmed; in front of

them a raging torrent. There was not an instant of hesitation but, plunging into the mad stream, the whole party swam safely across, though many were carried down stream with the current. Once on the other side pursuit seemed impossible and, as the sun rose above the eastern horizon, Mosby breathed his first sigh of relief. Even at that hour he knew he had graven his name in history never to be effaced. He had performed another feat entirely new in the annals of war and one that has never been repeated. In time he reached Culpeper Court-House and turned his prisoners over to General Fitzhugh Lee, who was a class-mate of Stoughton's at West Point.

On the Federal side the result of this brilliant affair of Mosby's was the early resignation of Stoughton from the army. His reputation was gone. A General must not be captured in his night-shirt. Colonel Percy Wyndham was relieved and his successor, failing to wipe out Mosby, was soon transferred. Colonel Johnston soon retired from army life. On the other hand General Stuart issued the following General Order, and Mosby, about a month later, was promoted to a Majority.

GENERAL ORDER.

Captain John S. Mosby has for a long time attracted the attention of his Generals by his boldness, skill and success, so signally displayed in his numerous forays upon the invaders of his native state.

None know his daring enterprise and dashing heroism better than those foul invaders, though strangers themselves to such noble traits.

His late brilliant exploit, the capture of General Stoughton, U. S. A., two captains, thirty other prisoners, together with their arms, equipments and fifty-eight horses, justifies this recognition in General Orders. The feat, almost unparalleled in the war, was performed in the midst of the enemy's troops, at Fairfax C. H., without loss or injury.

The gallant band of Captain Mosby share the glory as they did the danger of this enterprise, and are worthy of such a leader.

J. E. B. STUART,
*Brigadier-General, Commanding.*

The Chantilly fight, which occurred on the twenty-third, scarcely two weeks later, while Mosby still had only these migratory volunteers with him, was as well conducted as though it were the work of veterans. He had gathered about fifty of them together and taken them down into Fairfax county to "do something." His previous attacks had so aroused the camps in that part of the country that everyone was on the lookout for him. He tried to get through their lines into their rear, in order to surprise them, but they were too wide-awake. The men he had with him wanted to fight, but they were more eager to capture some horses. The magnet of spoils attracted every man to Mosby's standard in that early day.

> Sweet is revenge, especially to women;
> Pillage to soldiers, and prize-money to seamen.

Rather than disappoint his men by returning home he concluded to try to draw the enemy out on the pike and trust to getting a running fight. He sent a few men

out in sight, and the ruse was successful. They drove in the pickets and were immediately chased back up the pike, in which several of them were killed and captured. The noise of the firing brought out the reserves, and Mosby hurried over to head them off and prevent being cut off himself, for he knew re-enforcements would soon arrive. He retreated up the pike in a trot, and was followed by the Fifth New York. When he came to a little piece of woods he halted his men and faced his pursuers. Just as they came in sight he ordered a charge and his men dashed into them. Utterly astonished and confused, they turned and, rushing back down the pike, ran into their re-enforcements, who in turn also retreated. It was a senseless, inexcusable rout, for they were four to Mosby's one.

His men never questioned the safety or the danger of the charge: Mosby ordered them to charge an attacking force, and that order was sufficient, for they had seen him win in every affair in which they had been engaged and they believed he could do no wrong. He never stood still and accepted an attack. His men chased the flying enemy several miles, leaving a number of killed and wounded in the road, and bringing out thirty-six prisoners and fifty horses. His men were happy, for there was a horse for each man; and Mosby was the happiest of all, for his little band, to a man, had behaved gloriously, and he had not lost one. "Major" Hibbs was uncontrollable in his joy and, to emphasize it, Mosby publicly proclaimed him the "hero of the fight," in the presence of all the men,

and gave him a fine horse as a reward. By turns he laughed and cried and finally he said: "Well, Captain, I knew the work had to be done, and that was the only way to do it."

When the affair was reported to Stuart, he sent back this reply:

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY DIVISION,
ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA, March 27th, 1863.

CAPTAIN: Your telegram announcing your brilliant achievement near Chantilly was duly received and forwarded to General Lee. He exclaimed upon reading it: "Hurrah for Mosby! I wish I had a hundred like him." Heartily wishing you continued success, I remain your obedient servant,

J. E. B. STUART,
*Major-General, Commanding.*

Captain John S. Mosby, Commanding, etc.

No man was prouder of Mosby's achievements than General Stuart. Not two months before that time Mosby the scout had left headquarters with a little handful of borrowed men on a dangerous experiment. Now he was a Captain and a proved success as a leader. Stuart took part of the credit for making it possible to develop such a raider.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FIGHT AT MISKELL'S BARN

THE capture of General Stoughton so early in Mosby's career as a Partisan Ranger whetted the appetite of the people for more of his brilliant achievements and when, three weeks later, they heard of his fight at Miskell's barn, there was no limit to their amazement and enthusiasm. Like the Stoughton affair it was never repeated for he never permitted the possibility of it to occur again. It took place on April 1, 1863, appropriately enough, for it proved to be a sad April fool joke upon the enemies who had planned Mosby's capture.

On the previous day Mosby, at that time a Captain, had been scouting through Fairfax and Loudoun counties with his men, arriving at Miskell's farm near Dranesville at ten o'clock at night, tired, hungry and utterly exhausted. Supper was eaten by some of the men fortunate enough to get it, and the horses were unsaddled and unbridled and tied, some in the barn, and others to the fences that surrounded it. The men tumbled in upon the hay and under the eaves outside the barn, falling asleep instantly. Not one of the horses was saddled or bridled, and the thought of fighting was far from all.

Early the next morning some of the men noticed the

Federal troops across the Potomac river signaling and called Mosby's attention to it. It is strange that a Command usually so alert should have been taken so completely by surprise, but it is true that before Mosby could express an opinion about the signals, Dick Moran, one of our men who had been in the neighborhood with friends and who was doing a little looking out on his own hook, galloped into the barn-yard, yelling at the top of his voice, "Mount your horses; the Yankees are coming."

Moran's voice served to awaken some of the men who were still sleeping when the alarm came. Before they could arouse themselves or throw a saddle on a horse, in fact before most of them had lifted their weary heads from the ground, two hundred of the First Vermont Cavalry, under Captain Flint, charged through the farm gate which opened into the road and surrounded the barn-yard, pouring their fire in volleys into Mosby's men. It looked as though the light and life of the Guerrillas must be swept from the face of the earth. Never before or after had the Federal troops such another chance to secure Mosby and wipe out his men. They were three or more to his one, and they had him corralled in a perfect trap, as perfect as they could possibly have made it. The first shots brought every member of the Command out of the barn half awake, wondering what had happened.

In an open space in the barn-yard stood Mosby on foot: in each hand holding a smoking Colt. As soon as a handful of his men gathered around him he or-

dered them to mount and "Charge 'em: charge 'em, and go through 'em." A movement of his hand indicated that he did not care just where the charge was made, only that he wanted his men to get into the open where he could handle them. He made no reckoning of the numbers of the enemy; he gave it no thought; he only knew that he and his men were in a trap and he did not intend they should be murdered like a lot of sheep in the shambles, if grit and ammunition held out. No thought of the disparity in numbers nor of their apparently desperate situation checked the impetuosity of the little band for an instant. They knew only one word: "Fight." The next instant Mosby was in the saddle. Harry Hatcher, seeing him on foot, insisted on giving up his horse, which Mosby at once mounted; and the Mosby yell to which no person has yet been able to do full justice, rose on the wings of that memorable morning.

Under the furious fire of the Vermonters most of the men saddled and bridled their horses, and mounting them, made a dash for Captain Flint's men. Like an avalanche the Guerrillas, with Mosby at their head, rushed through the barn-yard gate and into the thick of the enemy, plying their revolvers with deadly effect. Every shot seemed to drop a Yankee from his saddle, so fast did they fall. In the panic that followed Mosby's unexpected and audacious countercharge, Flint's men retreated to the gate leading into the turnpike and became jammed in a mass at the exit. Most of Mosby's men, being mounted by this time, poured a withering fire into the struggling, curs-

ing, howling mob packed at the gate. When an opening was made Flint tried gallantly to rally his troopers but fell mortally shot in the effort, his body pierced by six bullets; fitting tribute to his courage, and evidence of the Mosby tactics, which always was to try to kill the man in command.

Nothing could now gather the remnant of the panic-stricken troop together, and the rout began. Mosby following some of the flying Vermonters for miles down the pike, while others scattered in different directions. By all the rules of war, Flint's men, numbering more than three to Mosby's one and completely surprising him, should have annihilated his entire force. The Rangers were completely entrapped in a corral with only one exit; not a single man with the exception of Dick Moran was mounted, and most of them were asleep. Notwithstanding these facts one sentence sums up Mosby's report, the report of a miracle. "Our loss was four men wounded; one of whom died later." The enemy's loss required more space in the report in summing it up as follows: "Ten killed and fifteen mortally or dangerously wounded and left on the field and counted by us. Eighty-four prisoners and one hundred horses captured; among the prisoners a number were found to be wounded."

William H. Chapman, who afterwards became Lieutenant-Colonel of our battalion and second in command to Mosby, was a volunteer that day. He held a commission as Captain of artillery and was in our part of the country on recruiting service. He was

one of the first to get into action although he had to rush from the farm-house to the barn to saddle his horse. Through the cracks in the barn he could see the Yankees surrounding the side of it and, though the temptation to pick off a few of them was great, he thought Mosby's men should put on a bold front, and accordingly he mounted and galloped out of the barn, and with a few others who were mounted, dashed through the gate which was held open by John Farrar, who was on foot.

He was in the midst of the fray immediately and encountered his first man at close range. The pistols were not a foot apart. The Yankee's pistol snapped but Chapman's did its deadly work. He fired six shots and emptied five saddles.

On one occasion I begged him to tell me about that fight. He had nothing to say about his own behavior, and I was forced to hear it from others. Explaining Flint's awful mistake and the poor showing his men made under fire, he said, however, that our men were fresh from a good night's sleep on comfortable, sweet smelling hay, while Flint had been marching all night from Dranesville to Miskell's in the face of a cold wind, which was so benumbing that some of the men could hardly use their pistols. Chapman should have been named Charity. Our men were probably just as numb when they woke up that morning as were Flint's, and if the cold night had not made them so the sight of that crowd of blue-coats around the barn-yard fence was enough. Furthermore, Mosby had given his men a march of forty miles the day before through mud

and snow and slush, and a night's rest had done very little to restore them to their normal condition.

Sam Chapman, a brother of William H., was another conspicuous figure in the fight at Miskell's barn. I can not refrain from inserting here an extract concerning him, from Colonel Mosby's pen:

"There was with me that day a young artillery officer, Samuel F. Chapman who, at the first call of his state to arms, had quit the study of divinity and became, like Stonewall Jackson, a sort of military Calvin, singing the psalms of David as he went into battle. I must confess that his character as a soldier was more on the model of the Hebrew prophets than the Apostles, or the Baptist in whom he was so devout a believer. Before he got to the gate Sam had already exhausted every barrel of his two pistols and drawn his sabre. As the fiery Covenanter rode on his predestined course, the enemy's ranks withered wherever he went. He was just in front of me. He was generally in front of everybody in a fight. At the gate, it was no fault of the Union cavalry that they did not get through any faster than they did, but Sam seemed to think it was. Even at that supreme moment in my life, when I had just stood on the brink of ruin and had barely escaped, I could not restrain a propensity to laugh. Sam, to give more vigor to his blows, was standing straight up in his stirrups, dealing them right and left with all the theological fervor of Burly of Balfour. I made him a Captain for it."

On the following day United States troops were sent up to Miskell's to bury the dead and gather up the

wounded. A hospital was established there to care for those who were so seriously injured that their removal was impossible. The surgeon reported to Washington that a large number among those who escaped were found to have wounds.

Major General Julius Stahel, U. S. A., commanding a cavalry division, in reporting this fight to Major-General Heintzelman, wrote as follows:

"Captain Flint took his men through the gate and fired a volley at Mosby and his men, doing slight damage, and then ordered a sabre charge which was also ineffectual. Mosby waited until his men were checked by the fence, and then opened his fire on them. The men here became panic-stricken and fled precipitately towards the gate through which to make their escape. The opening was small and they got wedged together.

A fearful state of confusion followed, while Mosby's men followed them up and poured into the crowd a serious fire. I regret to be obliged to inform the Commanding General that the forces sent out by Major Taggart missed so good an opportunity of capturing this rebel Guerrilla. It is only to be ascribed to the bad management on the part of the officers and the cowardice of the men. I have ordered Colonel Price to make a thorough investigation of the matter, and shall recommend those officers who are guilty to be stricken from the rolls."

Mosby reported the affair promptly to both Generals Lee and Stuart, and General Lee issued the following order:

HEADQUARTERS, April 4, 1863.

MR. PRESIDENT: Major John S. Mosby reported that he was attacked early on the morning of the 1st inst., near Dranesville, by about two hundred Vermont Cavalry. He promptly repulsed them, leaving on the field twenty-five killed and wounded, including three officers, and brought off eighty-two prisoners with their horses, arms and equipment. His force consisted of sixty-four men, and his loss was four wounded. I had the pleasure to send by return courier to Major Mosby his commission of Major of Partisan Rangers, for which I am obliged to your Excellency.

I am with great respect

Your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General.*

To His Excellency, President Davis,
President Confederate States of America.

At the time that this fight occurred Mosby had not been quite two months engaged in Partisan Ranger warfare, but he had amply demonstrated to his Generals that he was the man for this peculiar work.

Two such achievements as the capture of Stoughton and the victory at Miskell's, with a mere handful of newly acquired men and within three weeks of each other, stamped him as a phenomenal leader; a man with magnetism to attract to himself the right sort of followers for his unique work and to impart that force to them when once they had come under his spell. I cannot conceive of any of the noted Generals or Colonels of either army carrying through successfully, with a detachment of men, two such affairs as these.

They were both to become classics in Partisan

Ranger warfare though entirely different in kind, and Mosby's men, flushed with their victories redoubled their energies, and for two years following made history that will last when the stories of big battles and retreats and victories are forgotten. There were hundreds of regiments and brigades and divisions, but there was only one Mosby's Command.

In the official report of the fight at Miskell's the Federal officer said, "Lieutenant Grout mortally wounded; will die to-morrow." But Lieutenant Grout did not die. In 1896, on account of this wound, he was nominated as Republican candidate for Governor of Vermont. At the time of President McKinley's first inauguration Colonel Mosby saw by the papers that Governor Grout, his family and his staff were at the Arlington hotel. Sam Chapman, who took such an enviable part in the Miskell fight, was with Colonel Mosby in Washington at this time, and together they called upon Governor Grout at the Arlington, sent up their cards, and soon the Governor, his wife, son and staff received them most cordially.

Not long after that Colonel Mosby was badly injured in Charlottesville, Va., by a horse and, while lying in bed, received a very kind letter from Governor Grout. He reminded the Colonel of something which he had forgotten. After the fight at Miskell's was over Mosby went into a house into which all the wounded had been brought, and Lieutenant Grout, severely wounded, asked him to let two of his Vermont soldiers remain there as nurses. Mosby let him select two from among the prisoners who remained.

## CHAPTER VI

### WARRENTON JUNCTION AND CATLETT'S STATION

ON a bright spring morning, May 3rd, 1863, Mosby took his one hundred men down to Warrenton Junction, on the old Orange and Alexandria railroad, now the main line of the Southern, and ran into a hundred or more of the First Virginia Cavalry, Federal. I say we ran into them, but the fact is we slipped in and found the Yankees lolling around the station, some asleep, some idling, all unprepared for the suddenness with which we rushed them. There was a wild scattering in different directions, but the main body took refuge in a large building nearby and refused to surrender, defending their position with a shower of bullets fired from cracks and windows. Finally Mosby decided to smoke them out, and ordered that the building be set on fire, but some of our men under cover of the trees got near the entrance, made a bold dash for it, and broke the door down. The whole crowd capitulated at once and Mosby gathered them in as prisoners.

In the meantime the Fifth New York, and the First Vermont Cavalry, encamped at Cedar Run a short distance away, had heard the firing and came up on the run. This overwhelming force turned the tables on us with a vengeance. They

chased us in a running fight towards Warrenton, recaptured most of their prisoners and horses, and made it generally disagreeable for the Partisan Rangers. They killed a scout named Templeton, a member of the regular army who had volunteered with our Command that day. We also lost about twenty of our men wounded and taken prisoners. The killed on the other side were Major Steele, of the First Virginia and one private. Ten of their men were wounded. Of the Fifth New York, Captain Krom was severely wounded, and Lieutenants Frank A. Monson, and McBride were wounded, but not dangerously. Our men succeeded in getting away with ten prisoners and their horses. Among our wounded and captured was Captain Sam Ducheane, a soldier of fortune, who had served under Walker in his Nicaragua expedition before the war. Another was Dick Moran, who gave the alarm to Mosby at Miskell's barn on April 1st, just one month before; and still another was Tom Richards who captured Major Forbes in the fight at Mount Zion Church on July 6th, 1864, and who became one of the most conspicious members of our Command and was made Captain for bravery.

This engagement was a most disastrous one for Mosby. The loss of twenty men wounded and captured, where only one hundred were engaged, was something serious and unprecedented.

While writing the account of this fight at Warrenton Junction I had a letter from Captain Elmer Barker, of the Fifth New York, suggesting that I

get Captain Frank A. Monson, of the same regiment, to tell me something about the fight from the other side. I opened a correspondence with Captain Monson, who is a business man of New Haven, Conn., which has resulted in the following interesting story:

"Sunday morning, May 3rd, 1863, found the Fifth New York Cavalry encamped about one quarter of a mile north of Warrenton Junction. For four or five days previous to the above date we had scoured the country for many miles looking for Mosby's men, having been to Upperville, Salem, The Plains, Rectortown, Aldie, and Middleburg without finding them.

"The First Virginia Federal Cavalry was encamped at Warrenton Junction. Both regiments were taking it rather easy after the five days of scouting. Many of the horses were grazing in the field. It was about six o'clock and we could hear the booming of the guns at Chancellorsville. There was some cheering up at the Junction. At first we thought there was good news from the battle but the shots that followed told us that the First Virginia had been attacked.

"We jumped for our horses, which were unsaddled, and in less time than it takes to tell it the First Virginia horses came on a stampede through our camp, stampeding many of our horses. Two of my horses got away. I put the saddle on a horse and had only time to buckle one girth. The other, as well as the breast strap, girth and throat strap, were hanging. We started out from the Junction with only



Mosby Planning an Attack on a Federal Convoy.

forty men in line. More joined us after we got into the fight. Major Hammond led the men, Captain Penfield, Captain Krom and myself were at his heels.

"As we approached the house at the Junction we divided, one-half went one way and one-half went the other. Mosby had captured the whole First Virginia regiment, which he had drawn up in line and was about ready to march them off as prisoners. A running fight commenced. Mosby had to abandon the First Virginia boys. We followed them to Warrenton, about ten miles. A little way south of the Junction, one of Mosby's men was a little behind the others and was shooting at me all the time. I thought I would have him, so I put spurs to my horse and was alongside of him in a minute and ordered him to surrender. He turned on me and we both fired; my revolver missed fire; his bullet whizzed past my head. I had to turn and run; he followed me. I lay over on the side of my horse out of his aim. He put a ball through my boot leg. Captain Penfield came to my assistance and captured the man.

"About a mile south of the Junction one of Mosby's men introduced a piece of cold lead into my left shoulder which made me go to the rear. I did not get quite back to the Junction before I fell from my horse from weakness from loss of blood. When I recovered consciousness two hours later I was in the Junction house with other wounded, among them Captain Krom of the Fifth and Major Steele of the First Virginia. Major Steele did not recover."

In the latter part of the same month General Stuart

sent to Mosby, at his request, a little Howitzer, but nobody dreamed then what a hot and meteoric career it was destined to have. The old Orange and Alexandria Railroad was used for the transportation of all the supplies of the Union army which was then on the Rappahannock and, as a consequence, it was heavily guarded at every weak point. It's trains were all protected by sufficient troops to prevent an attack from our men, and cavalry patrols were constantly on the move from post to post along the whole line. This condition made it a mark for Mosby, as it was his mission to annoy the enemy, and the fight at Catlett's was one of the blows he struck.

On the 29th of May he had the Command, about one hundred men, meet him at Patterson's, and the wonderful little Howitzer was run out for inspection and criticism. Some of the men thought it a bit too large to carry in a holster, but not big enough to be called a cannon. Sam Chapman was one of the few men in the Command who knew the difference between a Howitzer and a saw-log, and Mosby told Sam to show some of the boys what to do with it. He was an officer in the Dixie Battery when he came to us. He spent a few minutes instructing the men in the artillery tactics, showing them the difference between the muzzle and the touch-hole, and finally reported to Mosby that his battery of one twelve-pound gun was thoroughly and efficiently manned.

Mosby then started for the railroad, stopping at Greenwich for supper, and camping not far from there for the night. Early on the morning of the 30th

the Command was pushed on towards Catlett's Station, where the gun was to have its baptism of fire. When they reached the railroad a section of the track was torn up and the telegraph wires were cut. A train, heavily guarded, soon came up and stopped before it reached the torn-up rails. Sam Chapman turned his Howitzer loose upon it, and the men charged it and scattered the guard. The train of eleven cars was plundered of its contents and then burned. The boys got all sorts of good things and a lot of miscellaneous supplies that were of no earthly use to them, but which they could not resist the temptation to carry off. Among these latter were big bundles of sole leather and a lot of fresh shad.

Cavalry camps were near by on each side of the station and the firing of our guns and the pistol shooting that followed attracted their attention; relief parties were at once sent out.

Colonel Mann was in command of the cavalry at Bristoe Station, and he immediately started Captain Hasbrouck with a detachment of the Fifth New York cavalry to intercept Mosby, while he followed along the railroad with his own Seventh Michigan and the First Vermont. Mosby had only gone a few miles when the men of the Fifth New York faced him, having cut across from their camp. Chapman used his Howitzer again and sent a shell into them which stopped them, and Mosby then proceeded. Colonel Mann came up very soon with his Seventh Michigan and First Vermont, and the odds were too great for us.

It was decided to make a last stand. Sam Chapman placed his little gun to the best advantage near the residence of Mr. Green not far from Greenwich, and when Captain Barker of the Fifth New York charged him, Sam cut loose with a charge of grape and canister, and killed three or four and wounded seven of them; but, though our men repulsed them and drove them back, we finally had to retreat and lost the gun. The pursuit was not kept up.

The enemy admitted a loss of five killed and fifteen wounded. Our loss was five killed and about twenty wounded and captured. Sam Chapman was desperately wounded and left at Mr. Charles Green's house, presumably to die. Captain B. E. Hoskins, an English army officer serving with us, was also badly wounded and taken to Mr. Green's house where he died, and was buried in the little family church-yard at Greenwich, where over his grave, there is now a beautiful monument placed by the kindly hands of Mr. Green at the request of Captain Hoskins' father, who was an English rector.

Captain Hoskins had served in the Crimean war and had won the Crimean medal as a Captain in the English army, and was a splendid specimen of the gentleman adventurer, which our Command attracted to its ranks. He sold his commission and joined Garibaldi in one of his campaigns, and later came to America for adventure. I am indebted for a very fine photograph of old Greenwich Church and Captain Hoskins' tombstone, to Mr. Douglas Green, a New York broker, son of Mr. Charles Green. He was a

boy at the time of our fight, but remembers it distinctly, and says he gave up his room and his bed to our two wounded officers, Hoskins dying in his bed. Sam Chapman went down at his gun, and Fount Beattie and Montjoy were captured trying to save it.

It was of this fight that Major Boutelle, a retired army officer now living in the State of Washington, wrote me he thought the bringing out and handling of our gun that day was one of the most romantic affairs of the war. The Major was a Lieutenant of the Fifth Cavalry at the time of the fight and had his horse killed under him by a shot from Sam Chapman's little cannon at close range. He suggested that I write to Major Barker of Crown Point, N. Y., who led his men against us so successfuly that day, and get him to give me his version of the fight, which I did, and got the following interesting story from him, which I here insert with his permission.

"The morning of May 30th, 1863, found detachments of the First Vermont, Seventh Michigan and Fifth New York Cavalry, in which latter regiment I was then Second Lieutenant, guarding the railroad near Bristoe Station. A train came out from Washington and, stopping at our camp, left papers and supplies and passed on. It had gone but a few moments when we heard an artillery shot from its direction. We knew Mosby had never had any cannon, and so supposed it must be General Stuart who had attacked the train. Colonel Mann of the Seventh Michigan, in command, ordered Captain Hasbrouck, in command of the detachment of the Fifth New

York, to strike across the country and get in the rear of the enemy, he himself taking Lieutenant-Colonel Preston with the First Vermont and the Seventh Michigan directly to where the train was attacked.

"Our detachment started out and met Mosby's Command face to face in the road. He immediately put his gun into position and sent us his compliments by way of a shell, which killed Lieutenant Boutelle's horse. Captain Hasbrouck, instead of charging as he should have done, marched his men up on a hill and allowed Mosby to march by us in good order. I rode up to Captain Hasbrouck and asked him what he intended to do, and he replied that he could do nothing with his small command. This made me very angry. I was nothing but a boy anxious for a fight and I turned around and gave the order, 'By fours from the right, trot, march,' and started after Mosby, most of the Command following me. We had gone three or four miles on the run, tracking the enemy by the shad and other things which they dropped, which they had captured from the train, and were pretty well strung out when, going around a turn in the road in a small piece of timber, we suddenly ran into their rear guard.

"It proved to be Mosby himself, Captain Hoskins of the British army, and three others. Corporal Wooster of Company H, Corporal Jenkins of Company F, and myself were too near to halt and ran right into them. At the first fire Wooster and Jenkins were both wounded and their horses shot. Colonel Hoskins was mortally wounded, and one of Mosby's

men killed. This left me alone with the other three for probably one or two minutes (it seemed hours). I fired all the shots in my revolver, and then drew my sabre, they trying to shoot me, crying ' Surrender, Yank,' and I trying to kill them.

" Hiram Underhill was the first of my men to get up to us. He undoubtedly saved my life. I have seen an article written by a Confederate officer stating that Mosby was slightly wounded on the arm that day by a sabre. It must have been my sabre, as I hit some one, but did not know then who it was. They got away but we soon caught up with them. They had their gun posted on a knoll in a lane, and as we came up they fired a shell into us. I said to the boys, ' I think we can get that gun before they can fire again,' and they all said, ' Let's go.'

" We got very near to the gun, probably within twenty feet, when it was fired, killing the gallant Corporal Drake, poor brave fellow, a grape shot passing through his head. Two others were also killed and a number wounded. Two graps shot entered my left thigh, one carrying off my stirrup and the sole of my boot, and four or five entered my horse.

" At this time Colonel Preston came in with the Vermont men and we took the gun, the brave Lieutenant Chapman fighting to the last, though mortally wounded. I then rode back about one mile and met Doctor Edson of the First Vermont. I got off my horse and laid down under a tree, having lost considerable blood, and feeling rather weak. The doctor took off my boot and found one ball in it and the

other he cut out of my leg. At this time a Mr. Green, a quiet elderly gentleman, came out with an ox team, some ice water and a bottle of brandy, the contents of which revived me amazingly. He kindly invited me to remain at his house until I convalesced, but I declined, with thanks, as it was in the enemy's lines. I waited until they sent to camp for an ambulance, in which I rode back to camp, arriving about dark, and remained in the ambulance all night.

"Official reports say that we lost four killed and one officer and seven men wounded out of one hundred and seventy-one engaged. Mosby's Command numbered about two hundred men, but I am unable to give his loss."

General Stahel in his report of June 3rd, said:

"The advance of the Fifth New York, led by Lieutenant Elmer Barker, came up with the enemy first. . . . with his small detachment dashed up the hill and when within about fifty yards of the gun received a charge of grape and canister, which killed three and wounded seven of our men and several horses; the enemy had then charged upon us, but were met with a stubborn resistance by the Lieutenant and his men although the Lieutenant had received two grape shot in his thigh. We were, however, overpowered and driven back a short distance. Just then Colonel Preston of the First Vermont, came up at a full charge upon their flank and was again received with a discharge from the Howitzer of grape and canister. Our men pushed on, until they came to a hand-to-hand conflict, when the enemy gradually fell back."

On the day of the fight Colonel Mann reported very promptly to General Stahel, commanding, a very graphic account of the affair, and on the following day, after returning from a visit to the grounds, he reported to Major Baldwin as follows:

"Returned at dark, bringing in one cannon and all our dead and wounded. The wounded number fifteen on our side. It was an extremely hot affair for a small one. Many of the wounds very severe. Our captures of the day are ten prisoners, including Captain Hoskins, an English officer of seven years' service, now in the Confederate service, and Lieutenant Chapman, who had charge of the artillery. Both these officers so severely wounded could not be removed and were paroled. I sent in prisoners by train today. The enemy lost heavy in wounded, as they received a terrific fire from revolvers at close range, followed by a determined sabre charge. Many were severely cut by sabre, but clung to their horses and fell back into the thicket. [Not a man of Mosby's was so much as scratched with a sabre. The Colonel had been misinformed. J. W. Munson.] Lieutenant Barker had two grape shot through his thigh, but is quite comfortable. He crossed sabres with them and fought desperately after this wound."

## CHAPTER VII

### DRANESVILLE AND ELSEWHERE

WHEN the two armies under Lee and Meade were coming back from the disastrous Gettysburg campaign, Mosby's little Confederacy was overrun with troops, and his men, at the time only one company, were kept on the alert; but they were well paid for the annoyance Meade's army gave them. Singly and in groups, men were picked up and gathered into the Mosby fold and as it was impossible or, more properly speaking, inconvenient, to carry them out of the enemy's lines to turn them over to General Lee, a temporary camp for them was established in the Bull Run Mountain, where they were as securely kept, though in full sight of their own passing troops, as if they were in Libby prison.

By the 21st of July, Mosby had captured forty-seven men, two sutler's wagons and a headquarters wagon. To retain them, however, was an annoying task, for Mosby wanted every available man for active service. Tom Lake, with seven men, was detailed to carry the prisoners out, much to Tom's disgust, for the boy was eager to stay where he could participate in the fighting. The sutler's wagons proved a treat to the boys, for they contained all sorts of good things. From the appetizing contents of one, Lake

prepared a supper of canned turkey and hot corn bread with a bottle of wine. That was Tom's idea of a feast. He invited his chief to share the meal and during its progress he was ordered to carry out the forty-seven prisoners. Three wagons were burned and the captors and captured started along the mountain side to worm their way toward the Southern army at Culpeper.

A few days later Mosby sent the following report to General Stuart:

I sent you in charge of Sergeant Beattie, one hundred and forty-one prisoners which we captured from the enemy during their march through this county. I also sent off forty-five several days ago. Included in the number, one Major, one Captain and two Lieutenants. I also captured one hundred and twenty-five horses and mules, twelve wagons (only three of which I was able to destroy), fifty sets of fine harness, arms, etc., etc.

Beattie carried these prisoners out safely with a guard of only seventeen men, and when they were approaching our army it is said that the alarm was given that Meade was making a flank movement on Lee. Beattie was so completely lost to sight among his men in blue that our troops could not distinguish any of our men and supposed it must be a flank movement or a daring raid.

The first night that Tom Lake and his forty-seven prisoners were on their journey South, he ran into Hancock's column not far from Warrenton and, remembering that Mosby once carried two prisoners

safely through an entire regiment of the enemy, he struck out boldly with his little crowd and piloted them through without a challenge or the loss of a prisoner. It was then not yet dusk, and immediately afterward he went into camp for the night at the home of one of the Blackwells. He resumed his march the next morning, escaping a raiding party who had heard of his being there half an hour previously. Not content with the number of prisoners he already had, he gathered in several of Hancock's men as he passed through that column. At three o'clock he turned his prisoners over to General Longstreet, at Culpeper Court House and started back to the Command. This daring journey was made entirely by day.

Charley Hall was one of the seven men detailed to accompany Tom Lake, and the mere mention of his name recalls enough incidents connected with him to fill a book. I reluctantly resist the impulse to chronicle them at length, but as he is one of our dead heroes I must make suitable mention of him. Though he was a mature man, thirty years old, as I recall him, he was companionable with the younger set, and especially popular with the dare-devil element. At times he drifted away from the truly exemplary paths of the regular Mosby Guerrillas and went off on wild adventures with Nick Carter and Charley McDonough, two brevet-outlaws who accompanied us only by tolerance of the Colonel. When these three started out on a business trip there were always results. Colonel Mosby would not permit Charley and Nick to indulge in reprehensible actions when they were with us, but

I think he had a sneaking admiration for their bravery, for neither of them knew what fear was. There was a reward for Charley McDonough's apprehension, and once he was chased by a raiding party near Middleburg. His horse having fallen the boy realized that he was to be taken prisoner, and accordingly emptied all but one load of his pistols into his pursuers, and the last into his own brain.

Nick Carter belonged to one of the oldest and most artistocratic families in Virginia, but he accumulated such a load of undesirable responsibility and notoriety during the war that he thought it best to leave the country mysteriously at its close.

Charley Hall was always picturesque. He was a particularly handsome man, and always went faultlessly mounted and equipped; in fact he was one of our pronounced dandies. I have seen him emerge from a fight, brushing the dust from his clothes and smoothing out his ruffled plume as though nothing unusual had occurred. There was a story current in the Command that, in the "Greenback Raid," he had relieved a cattle dealer of more than five thousand dollars, in addition to his share of the greenbacks captured from Sheridan's paymasters. The cattle dealer was a Government contractor.

Charley and John Puryear were riding down the Snickersville turnpike one dark night and, as they crossed a little stream, they stopped their horses to let them drink. While they stood there two men rode up alongside of them and also stopped their horses. Not a word was spoken for a moment and then Pur-

year whispered softly: "Charley, they are Yankees." Knowing full well that the newcomers were the extreme advance of a raiding party and that any attempt to run would only hasten their own capture or their death they quietly drew their pistols and, each selecting the nearest man, fired. There were cries of pain; a splash in the little stream; two riderless horses dashing by them down the pike; and the clatter of hoofs back of them. That was all. War is not play.

On the 20th of February, 1864, two days before the Dranesville Fight, frequently referred to as "the other Dranesville fight," because Miskell's was not far from Dranesville, and they used to call that the first fight at Dranesville), Colonel Mosby, Johnny Edmonds, Jake Lavinder and I were seated at breakfast in Mr. Blackwell's home in the Blue Ridge foothills; the same house at which I joined the Partizan Rangers the year previous, and which I had made my home ever since. It was known by all our men and by the citizens generally, as Mosby's Headquarters, for he was there more than anywhere else when not in the saddle. Before we had completed our meal Jimmy Edmonds, Johnny's little brother, burst into the room panting from his long run and yelling: —

"The Yankees are on the pike: it's just blue with 'em."

We saddled our horses at once and galloped out to the pike to see how much of it they occupied, as such action seemed like trespassing on our preserve. To compliment a faithful follower, the Colonel had

appointed Lavinder Ordnance Sergeant of the Battalion; in fact he had created the office to give it to Jake, and incidentally to please Jake's sweetheart, who was a sister of Mrs. Blackwell. The Colonel was ever a gallant, and had a warm spot in his heart for lovers.

During Jake's term of office he had gathered, though from what source no ever knew, two carbines and a few rounds of cartridges which, at a pinch, might be used safely, if not effectually. We laughed at his arsenal, preferring our pistol to anything else, but Jake halted long enough to seize his collection before he galloped after us. I recollect how encumbered he appeared as he followed in our rear, carrying his guns in every possible position, and hanging on to them in the face of our ridicule.

When we reached the pike not far from Piedmont Depot, on the old Manassas Gap Railroad, we discovered a raiding party of about two hundred and fifty men. They proved to be Cole's Maryland Battalion and they were looking for trouble. We four were so absolutely out of proportion to their number that the Colonel sent a messenger off to spread the news and gather the Mosby clans. While we were waiting for enough of our men to gather for an attack, we could do nothing except ride along in the wake of the enemy and keep a sharp watch on their movements. Meantime some one was riding frantically from house to house, crying out: —

"The Colonel is down on the pike with only three men, trying to hold a whole Yankee column: hurry

over to him and send to him all the men you can! Spread the news!"

And so on to the next farm, a sort of Guerrilla Paul Revere.

It soon became evident that Mosby's men were what the Yankees were looking for. Shortly after we came in sight of them they turned back on the route upon which we first saw them. Presently they dropped down a little hill and stopped for a moment at a creek that ran at its base. This was the moment for which Jake had been waiting . He passed us the two carbines and insisted that now was the time to try their range and effectiveness. Colonel Mosby did not care to use a strange and suspicious looking weapon, and I was equally reluctant, for I had never fired a carbine in my life, and I did not want to be killed by a bursting gun. Jake insisted and finally talked us into it. We selected a couple of shells that seemed to fit into the guns without their sticking or dropping through all the way and, after warning Jake to stand back out of danger if anything unusual happened, we blazed away. A horse and a man, far apart, dropped dead in the road. Jake let out a whoop and pressed us to try it again, but we knew when we had enough, especially as a rain of bullets from Cole's men fell around us. It was never known which of us killed the man and which the horse, for neither of us aimed at either, but I claimed the animal as my prize because it had on a bridle and saddle which I wanted for a friend. The dead man was carried off by his men.

This carbine shooting woke things up. Some of our men, rounded up by the messengers, began to appear; more joined us along the pike as we started after Cole's men, whom we pursued for miles into Loudoun county in a running fight. Just as we passed through the town of Upperville, the boys' school was dismissed for recess. One very fat boy took in the situation at once and, jumping on his pony with his McGuffy's Third Reader for his only weapon, which he waved aloft, he dashed into the chase with us, whooping and yelling and never stopping until we all quit the chase. That day was the boy's last at school, for he insisted on joining the Command and, until the end of the war, was one of the gamest and best soldiers Mosby had. He was Cab Maddox, known to every man in the Command and to everybody in that country, as a fighter.

One man, McCobb, was killed, and a few captured, among them Bartlet and John Bolling, who were at their father's home when Colonel Cole pounced down upon them. The Command was called together the next day to attend the funeral of our dead comrade. We gave our dead Christian burial whenever possible and they sleep today in many an unmarked grave in northern Virginia.

While we were gathering for the funeral at the house of Mr. Jeffries, one of our scouts brought in the report that the Yankees were about. We jumped into our saddles, leaving McCobb's body to be buried by others, and rode away at a stiff gallop in the direction where our scout had last seen the enemy.

We had about one hundred and fifty men and Mosby was in command. Late that same afternoon we overtook the raiders and ascertained that they were a part of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry under Captain Reed. They had about two hundred men which included a number of Californians belonging to a California battalion that formed part of the Massachusetts regiment.

We followed them quietly all the afternoon and when they camped at nightfall, not very far from Dranesville, we camped on their trail. They were joined that night by another party of the Sixteenth New York Cavalry under Major Frazer, but the next morning Frazer and his men quitted them and went to his camp by a road in our rear which left us between the two forces.

The outlook was exceedingly promising for a pitched battle on a small scale. Mosby was in a very cheerful mood, looking forward to a fitting celebration of Washington's birthday, which was to fall upon the morrow.

Most of us "retired" to our saddle blankets on the frozen ground later than usual as the imminence of a splendid fight made sleep impossible to many. The hot-headed youngsters among us wanted to begin at once. We were astir about sunrise the next morning, saddled up and mounted quickly, and moved over to the Dranesville pike, a mile or so below town. Colonel Mosby split his force, placing the two divisions two or three hundred yards apart, near the pike. From the two sections he selected fifteen men

whom he stationed, dismounted, in the pines immediately beside the pike. Down the road he placed three men, Frank Rahm and two others, to attract the attention of the Yankees when they came along and to draw them out. Mosby gave strict orders that not a shot was to be fired by any man until he gave the signal, which was to be a sharp blast from a whistle, and, taking with him Companies A and B a little way below where he had stationed the fifteen men, he left Chapman in charge of Companies C, D and E above the fifteen men. All were near the road but hidden from view.

Presently some of Reed's men saw Frank Rahm and the two men down the pike and started for them, passing our first division under Chapman concealed in the woods. Not a shot was fired and the enemy following the pickets rode blindly into the trap. Our men, who had been ordered to remain quiet and await the signal, were tremblingly eager to begin firing, but a command from Mosby was not to be disobeyed. We could see the Yankees moving cautiously along the pike, but inevitably into the jaws of death. After a time the advance column came opposite our fifteen dismounted men, and a shrill blast came from Mosby's whistle. Instantly fifteen pairs of six-shooters were emptied into the enemy's ranks. They halted and wavered, some of them throwing up their hands as if to ward off a sudden slap in the face. Almost simultaneously our mounted detachments, right and left, on the pike, descended like wolves on the fold, with the unearthly Mosby yell spreading terror and

confusion everywhere. Our attack seemed to be a complete surprise, although they were out "looking for Mosby."

The whistle had been blown just a little too soon, for what we supposed was the main body of Reed's men and had fired into proved to be only an advance guard and, when Chapman charged upon the pike, he was abreast of the main body which had turned and begun retreating. When Mosby appeared on the pike with Companies A and B none of the enemy were in front of him and we had to gallop up the pike to catch up with them. When we reached them Chapman and his men were already there, and all of a sudden it became a hand-to-hand affair. It was soon evident to Reed that he was in for a whipping, and his men began breaking through the fences and into the fields, but fighting all the while. His Californians, especially notoriously good fighters, were standing up to the rack like men, dealing out to us the best they had. They rallied at every call on them and went down with banners flying. The road was rapidly filled up with dead and wounded men and horses, and riderless horses were galloping in terror everywhere. We chased the flying men in every direction, constantly emitting the Mosby yell to give speed to their heels. Many of them were driven into the Potomac river, and dead and drowned bodies were found around the neighborhood for several days afterwards.

No man in the Command was nearer to the thick of that fight than Mosby himself. There was no room, after once we got started, to lead a charge, and the

Chief got right in the middle. I saw him weaving in and out of the fighting mass like a ferret, fighting hand-to-hand with every man who would stand before him. His fine mare was shot early in the action, and he sat her firmly throughout the entire fight, though she was on three legs only.

There was in our Command one Baron von Massow, a Prussian officer, whom came to us with letters, looking for adventure and desiring to study our tactics, like the Austrian officer of whom I shall speak in my account of the Greenback Raid. Since 1865 he has been identified with the German army and has had part in every war since. Today he commands the crack cavalry corps, the Ninth, of the Imperial German Army, and as I write these lines his photograph is before me, showing his breast covered with medals of honor. He was one of the handsomest men I ever saw.

That morning, at Dranesville, the Baron rode into the fight in the squad in front of me. A long red-lined cape was thrown back from his shoulders exposing his glittering uniform. From his hat waved a big ostrich plume and he dashed into the fray with an old German sabre flashing in the light. I have not the slightest doubt that he was mistaken for Mosby, for he was a very conspicuous figure and drew a perfect rain of bullets and sabre thrusts from the enemy. He saw Captain Reed and charged him. Reed threw up his pistol hand and surrendered to the Baron, who passed him by to charge on the next man. When his back was turned Reed shot him

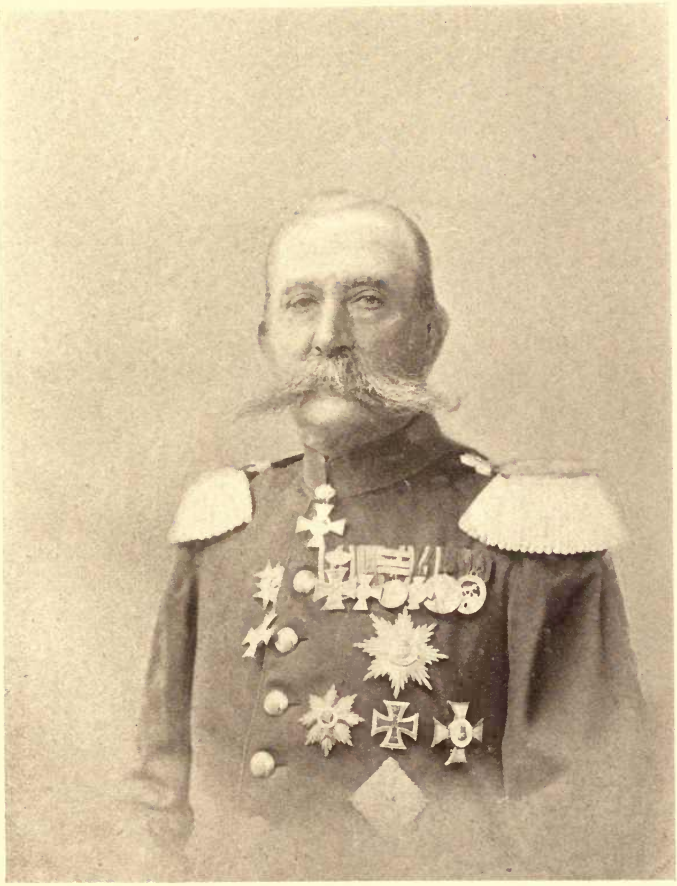
through the body. Seeing Captain Wm. H. Chapman rushing towards him to avenge the deed, he started on a run but was immediately overtaken by Chapman who shot him through the body, falling dead near the Baron who was lying in the road where he was shot. I was near enough to see him hit and remember he tried to raise his weapon for another shot, found his strength going, and plunged forward on his face dead.

I saw the Baron lying in the road with his martial cloak around him, magnificent in his colors, and looking every inch a hero. I had no time at that moment to stand in contemplation of the real military man among us, so I jumped my horse over him and rode on. The brave German pulled through after a long and hard siege, and made up his mind to return to his native land; the following summer he bade many of us an affectionate farewell, and left us. Some of our old Command correspond with him to this day. I got the facts of Captain Reed's death from Colonel Wm. H. Chapman.

Before we went into the action that day I loaned one of my pistols to a new man who had none, which left me but one for my own use. I did fairly well until the end of the action, when I got the drop on a Californian with my last shot. He threw up his pistol and exclaimed, "I surrender."

I took it for granted he meant what he said, and rode past him, firing at a man beyond who was trying to work his way through a wedge of his men, on the roadside. Then the man who so readily surrendered

Univ. of California



BARON ROBERT VON MASSOW,

PRIVATE IN MOSBY'S COMMAND, AND NOW GENERAL OF NINTH CAVALRY CORPS, THE CRACK CORPS OF THE GERMAN ARMY.

turned and shot me in the back as I passed him. I don't blame him in the least, for I ought to have had the sense to take his pistol from him when he held it up. Lud Lake, who was an eye witness to his attempt on my life, shot and killed him. When the bullet struck me only a half inch from my back bone, I felt a numbness coming over my legs first and then my body. One of our men reached out and held me on my horse. At that instant Harry Sweeting was shot at my side and the same man reached out and seized him, too: but Harry's wound hurt him so badly he pulled away and fell from his horse into the road. He managed to drag himself to a little stream trickling along the roadside, where he bathed his wound in the cold water and stopped the flow of blood. He recovered.

My friend who held me on my horse (I never learned his name), succeeded in getting me into a nearby house and placing me on a lounge, after which he rushed off to finish his engagement with the Yankees. The wounding of a man in our Command was of little moment and my friend never thought enough of the incident to look me up later and receive my thanks. Shortly afterward, when the fight was over and the men started home, some of them, seeing my horse tied to the fence, came in and found me trying to amuse myself by counting the clock ticks, and took me away.

At the beginning of the fight the family had run out of the house and gone to the woods for protection and I was alone when the boys found me. I must

have been an attractive object, for I had put my hand back of me to ease my pain and got it smeared with warm blood, and then wiped my face with my bloody hand. My wound kept me out of service for a few weeks, but I had gentle nursing by Mrs. Edmonds and her daughters and the best of medical care from Dr. Dunn, who, having no nitrate of silver, used to dress my wound with burnt alum; he had me on a diet of bacon and cabbage till he could get my stomach strong.

The result of the fight on our side was the loss of one man, Chappalier, killed, and eight wounded, five of them seriously. The Federal loss was fifteen killed, twenty-five wounded, seventy-five prisoners and one hundred horses captured.

The Yankees had been piloted on their raid by Charley Binns, a deserter from our Command. When the first shot was fired Charley started to run and was never heard of by the Californians or our men. It was said that he stopped for one night in Winnipeg to get a bite and then went on towards the North Pole. His name became a by-word in Mosby's Command.

There is another incident of this second Dranesville fight, that is entitled to a space in these recollections. Johnny Edmonds was my "bunky" in Mosby's Command. Mr. Blackwell, at whose house we lived and where Mosby made his headquarters, was Johnny's brother-in-law. The whole family resided in the neighborhood. The day before when we started from Mr. Blackwell's to go to McCobb's funeral, Johnny's mother insisted that he should take a little pocket

Bible along with him. "You can't tell how soon you may need the good book, my son," was her parting advice. She was a very devout Episcopalian, and, while her heart was in the cause for which her sons were fighting, she had an abiding faith in the supreme strength and wisdom to be gained from the word of God. Johnny took the book, thrust it into his trousers' pocket and forgot all about it. In the fight the next day he fired at a man at close range and missed him, something he did not do often, and the Union man fired back and hit Johnny with a forty-four caliber slug which ploughed through the little pocket Bible, lodged against Johnny's thigh-bone and put him out of the game. Had it not been for the Bible, however, the bullet would surely have shattered the bone. We were taken home in the same carriage from the fight, and both were nursed back to strength at Mr. Blackwell's home by his mother and sisters. Mrs. Edmonds bent over her boy when they brought him in all covered with dry blood and I heard something about a Bible as they embraced each other in tears.

Johnny went to Texas after the war ended and he had finished his education, became a leading attorney, and was elected mayor of Sherman; he went to the Spanish-American war as a Colonel. His old wound began to bother him in Texas and, in 1896, he went to St. Louis, where the X-ray located the bullet in his thigh. He had it cut out and now wears it on his watch chain as a cheerful reminder of the good old days. My own sons sat at his bedside in the hospital after the operation and heard him tell of his

experiences with Mosby when he was my "bunky." When he got well enough to go out, the boys went to see a game of base ball with him. John L. Sullivan sat near them and was creating some annoyance by his hilarity. Edmonds did not know who he was and did not care, but told him to "shut up," or he would "fire him out." I suppose he thought it was the old Mosby days when the size of a man made not the slightest difference.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A NARROW ESCAPE

ON July 3rd, 1864, the Command was assembled to make a raid into Maryland and, marching north through Loudoun county, reached the Potomac river opposite the Federal post at Point of Rocks, on the morning of the Fourth of July. We had a small cannon with us and we opened fire on the troops on the opposite side, and then, the whole Command under Mosby's lead, forded the stream. Mosby had dismounted a few of the men who had carbines, which they had picked up somewhere, and started them in ahead of the rest to wade the river and act as a sort of long-range advance guard. The higher the water came up around them the more exasperated they became, especially as sharp-shooters on the other side were trying to pick them off. There was one standing on the bridge that crossed the canal on the Maryland side, where we could see him loading and firing, and every shot striking annoyingly near our men. The Colonel rode up to one of our dismounted men, Emory Pitts, and asked:

"Pitts, can you stop that Yankee over there from sucking eggs?"

"I'll try," answered Pitts; and standing there with

the water up to his breast, he raised his carbine and fired; the sharpshooter fell.

Reaching the Maryland side we found that the bridge across the canal had been torn up, but repaired it so the men could cross. We attacked the garrison, drove it out, captured the camp and a lot of stores, destroyed all the Government property, burned a freight-boat, cut the wires, helped ourselves to everything we could handle, and came back to the Virginia side in safety, bringing our prisoners with us.

All this Fourth of July celebrating was decidedly annoying to the enemy, and it kept us busy all forenoon. The afternoon was spent in getting things straightened out after the frolic and late the next day, after operating along the Potomac in sight of the enemy all day, hearing that Major Forbes, with the Second Massachusetts Cavalry was somewhere in the neighborhood and looking for us, we started towards Leesburg and stopped for the night. A scouting party that had been sent by Mosby towards the town returned after nightfall and reported that Major Forbes's Command, together with some of the Thirteenth New York Cavalry were encamped near Leesburg, that the Major knew of our raid at Point of Rocks, and that he had spread the report among the residents of Leesburg that he had Mosby's men in a tray which he would spring the next day, July 6th.

This was not the pleasantest thing that could have been said to us just then and, for better safety, the men were ordered to saddle up; in the darkness we moved in a wide circle around the town towards

Waterford and camped for the remainder of the night. Whenever I use the expression "camped for the night," I mean only that we unsaddled and laid down on the ground among the horses, with saddles for pillows and the starry firmament for bed clothing.

We had about one hundred and fifty men at this time, for a number had gone back home after the Point of Rocks raid. Undisturbed by the presence of Major Forbes in our vicinity, with no thought of his making an attack on us at night, and with the desire to have it out with him by daylight in a fair field, the Colonel and the men slept soundly all night. Early the next morning we were up and in the saddle, singing cheerfully. We followed our leader into Leesburg where we learned that the Major's Command had moved towards Aldie, a few miles south. We followed, trying to cut him off at Ball's Mill, but he had already crossed the ford when we arrived and was headed for Mount Zion church. We took a straight cut to reach the turnpike east of Mount Zion, so as to get in between Forbes and his headquarters, which were at or near Falls Church in Fairfax county. We knew that he had heard of our movements and began to suspect that he was not half as anxious to get us into his trap as he was to keep out of Mosby's. When we broke into the pike a mile and a half below Mount Zion, Forbes had not yet come in sight, so we took time to plant our cannon in the middle of the road and arrange to receive him.

Presently Forbes and his two hundred men came into view near Mount Zion. The Major did not see

us until he got started down the pike again. Our artillery squad which was more or less afraid of the little twelve-pounder, yanked the lanyard and a shell went howling up the road only to burst well out of range without doing the slightest damage. The two Commands were then several hundred yards apart and Major Forbes instantly crossed with his men into a field on the south side of the road, passing through a gap in the fence. Here he drew his entire Command up in line to await our attack which he knew was about due.

In order to get at him we had to move along the road in his front and take the concentrated fire of his men. Mosby ordered us to hold our fire until we could get into the field and we went along the pike rather leisurely, not giving our horses full rein until we got through the gap in the fence. Forbes had not the same idea about where the fight should begin. His men began raking us along the road and were ready with more ammunition when we wheeled and sent up the yell which was so much a part of our tactics. That we had better horses than our opponents there is not any possible doubt. At any rate we swept into their line like a hurricane, each man with a drawn six-shooter. At first Forbes' men made a good fight, but they could not stand the rain of our pistol balls. We split their front rank asunder and broke their spirit. Half of them, in a mad and helpless scramble, got into the next field, where they rallied around Major Forbes and fought as gallantly as any men could fight. We crashed into them again

and the battle became a hand-to-hand conflict, revolvers against sabres and revolvers, Mosby's men discharging their weapons into the very faces of Forbes's troopers. It was a mass of struggling, cursing maniacs, each striving to slay his antagonist. Some of this same Second Massachusetts Cavalry were the men we had met at Dranesville on February 22 previously.

Major Forbes occupied the centre of the action, standing in his stirrups with sabre drawn, fighting desperately. He thrust his sabre through the shoulder of Captain Tom Richards who had marked him for single combat. Richards snapped his pistol in the Major's face, but it failed to explode. In that instant a bullet ripped into Forbes's horse, and he went down under the dying animal, pinned helplessly, and had to surrender. One of his officers, Lieutenant Amory, now a prominent citizen of Boston, fell side by side with his Commander, while his men were flying in every direction. To show how we were interwoven with the enemy it may be mentioned that one of our boys, Willie Martin, was so closely surrounded by Forbes's men that they were obliged to club him into insensibility because there was no room to fire a carbine with safety to their own men.

When Forbes and Amory fell, their men were getting into full rout with Mosby at their heels. The flight and the pursuit were strung out from the scene of the first engagement to old Sudley Church, a distance of ten miles. I followed Colonel Mosby and Johnny Edmonds over the entire stretch and when we returned we found dead and wounded men and horses

all along the road and in the fields. We found a man kneeling near the fence by the roadside, with his head bent forward touching the ground in front of him and his left hand clutching a gaping wound in his side. I was ordered to go to his assistance, but when I dismounted and tried to raise him or ease his position, I found a corpse.

The fighting and the rout lasted until late in the afternoon, and there were so many wounded men to help, and so many prisoners to look after, that we did not start homeward till long after dark.

Our loss was seven wounded, one of whom died later. Forbes had twenty men killed on the field and forty wounded, about fifteen of them mortally; a very handsome tribute alike to their staying qualities and the accuracy of Mosby markmanship. Forbes also lost sixty prisoners and one hundred horses.

Colonel C. R. Lowell, Jr., commanding the brigade of which the Second Massachusetts was a part, said in his official report of the fight that only forty-five men got back to camp alive.

Although Tom Richards did his best to kill the Federal commanding officer in this fight, I am pleased to record the fact that we captured him alive, which was a much more satisfactory achievement, because Major William H. Forbes returned to Massachusetts after the war, and up to the time of his death, a short time ago, he was one of the most influential, beloved and respected citizens in that commonwealth. I called on him several years ago in his Boston office and we fought the war over again with all the zest at our

command. In the course of our conversation he put his hand on my knee and said: "Tell me, Munson, how is my old friend, Tom Richards?" Surely to recall Tom Richards as his friend was enough to convince any listener that the North and the South are again united.

Charley Dear sent me the following story of a little side issue which fits in very well with the story of the Mount Zion fight:

On the evening of the Fourth of July, 1864, after Colonel Mosby had captured the Point of Rocks and the Command had returned to the south side of the Potomac river the Colonel ordered Wat Bowie to take ten men and recross the river and to cut the telegraph wires and to stir up the Yankees. The men who composed the scouting party were Jim Wiltshire, Charley Dear, Steney Mason, Bush Underwood, Carlisle, Jim Lowndes, Ned Gibson, Clay Adams, Monroe Heiskell, and Kane. They crossed the Potomac river at Edwards's Ferry, swimming the river part of the way. After they crossed they cut the telegraph wires and went down the river on the tow-path. When they came to the aqueduct at the mouth of the Monocacy river they found it guarded by some of the troops of the Eighth Illinois. They charged down the tow-path in single file, Bowie leading the way. They went over the flag-stones at a dead run, the enemy on the other side of the canal firing at them. If a man or a horse had been wounded there it would have been death to him, with the river on the right, twenty feet below, and the canal on their

left; but fortunately the Yankees did not hurt any of them. Bowie ordered Heiskell and Kane to stand on the aqueduct, and fire at the enemy, while our men charged down the tow-path and came on the road under the aqueduct, where they found some of the enemy disputing their way. Wiltshire, Dear and Mason each dropped a man and then charged down the road to the store where they found four canal boats tied up, which they burned, and also captured a few horses. After loading down their horses with goods they started to return, as they had stirred up a hornet's nest. Up the towpath they went at a dead run, with calico streaming, shoes scattering in every direction, and hoop-skirts, of which they had captured a goodly number, flying in the air, the Eighth Illinois, from their camp at Muddy Branch, a mile below, coming after them, as they could see by the dust.

Cole's battalion had returned to the Point of Rocks, and were coming down to cut them off from Edwards's Ferry. Wiltshire called to Bowie to look behind at what was coming, as the dust seemed to be nearing them. Bowie said: "Yes, they are in front, too; we are between the devil and the deep sea." Cut off from Edwards's Ferry, with the Potomac on one side and the canal on the other, death or capture seemed to be inevitable.

Among the prisoners was a negro about fifty years of age. Wiltshire said: "If you will show us the way out of here we will turn you loose and give you a horse and money and goods." To their surprise he said they were close to a riffle, where they

could ford, and that he would take them across, which he did. The dust from both directions was coming nearer and nearer, but the old negro got them over safely; soon after they entered the brush the enemy met in the tow-path, but our men were in old Virginia again.

Jim Lowndes was so much delighted with getting home that he embraced the old negro and blessed him; he and Heiskell began to sing "I am going back to old Virginia shore," and all joined in. The boys gave the old negro what they promised him and, after he received his reward, he raised his hat and said: "Mars Bowie, when you and Mars Dear and Mars Wiltshire and the other gentlemen come again, let me know and I will help you out: I am rich." The boys had made him rich indeed, and as they rode off he was waving his hat to them.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE BERRYVILLE FIGHT

ON the 7th of August, 1864, Major-General Philip H. Sheridan assumed command of the Middle Military Division of the Federal Army, with headquarters at Harper's Ferry, Virginia. Colonel Mosby set to work on a large scale to "annoy" Sheridan. On the 13th Mosby took three hundred of his Command, the largest number he had ever had in any single engagement up to that time, and marched from Upperville in Fauquier county over into the valley. We went into camp about midnight not far from Berryville in Clark county a maneuver which consisted of unsaddling our horses and lying down on the landscape to sleep. Scouts sent out to look the situation over presently returned with the information that a wagon train was moving up the pike a few miles distant. While John Russell, our most prominent valley scout, was reporting to the Colonel, I was engaged just at that moment in trying to spread my saddle blanket among the rocks and tree roots, so it would resemble a curled hair mattress as nearly as possible. I stopped for a moment to listen to John's report, hoping secretly that it did not mean any change in the camping program, but my hopes faded away when the Colonel said:

"Saddle up, Munson, and come along with me."

Taking a few more of us, we started off for the Valley turnpike, leaving the rest of the Command to get some much needed sleep. We struck out in the direction whence, in the stillness of the night, came the rumbling echoes of the heavily laden wagons. In olden times, when the stages were run up and down the valley turnpike, it was said that the rumbling of the coach on the hard, rocky road could be heard for miles on a still night and, on this quiet August night of which I am writing, we heard the wagon train long before we came in sight of it, which we did in an hour after Russell reported to the Colonel. We found a long line of wagons winding along the road and stretching away into the darkness as far as the eye could reach. We rode among the drivers and the guards, looking the stock over and chatting with the men in a friendly way. I asked one of the cavalrymen for a match to light my pipe and he gave it to me, and when I struck it, revealing his face and mine by its light, he did not know I was pretty soon going to begin chasing him. It was too dark to distinguish us from their own men and we mingled with them so freely that our presence created no suspicion.

Colonel Mosby asked them whatever questions he chose to, and learned that there were one hundred and fifty wagons in the train, with more than a thousand head of horses, mules, and cattle guarded by about two thousand men, consisting of two Ohio regiments and one Maryland regiment, besides cavalry distributed along the line; all under orders of Brigadier-General Kenly, commanding. Having

pumped the men dry of all the information he needed, the Colonel withdrew us from their line into the field, one by one, and sent me back to our sleeping comrades to arouse them and bring the full force up in a hurry. Just as day was beginning to dawn Chapman and Richards, with the whole Command of about three hundred men and two pieces of light artillery, twelve-pounders, came out of the woods on a run and met the Colonel, who was impatiently awaiting them in full view of the wagon train. I believe it was one of these little guns that made so much noise and did so little harm at Mount Zion Church on July 6, but I am not sure.

In the hurried rush through the woods to get to the Colonel, or immediately after it was fired, I don't remember which, one of these guns commanded by Lieutenant Frank Rahm of Richmond, was disabled and drawn out of the way. The other was posted on a little eminence looking down on the turnpike along which the wagon train was moving. A streak of light broke in the east, and our force was hustled into position, Mosby giving his instructions to the Command. His trouble seemed to be to keep the men from charging before he was ready. Three hundred against over two thousand meant carefulness. The flush of the morning began to blow over that beautiful valley landscape,— there are few lovelier spots than the Valley of Virginia around Berryville,— and down on the pike we saw a cloud of dust rising as though a giant serpent was creeping along towards Berryville from Harper's Ferry. The entire train was soon in



Mosby Attacking the Federal Convoy at Berryville in August, 1863.

sight, all unmindful of our presence. From our position on the low hill, while we watched them in breathless suspense, Frank Rahm sent a twelve-pound shell over the train. It exploded like a clap of thunder out of a clear sky, and was followed by another which burst in the midst of the enemy. The whole train stopped and writhed in its centre as if a wound had been opened in its vitals. Apparently its guards did not see us and we got another charge into the little twelve-pounder and let it fly, and then; oh then! What on earth ever possessed them I am unable even at this date to say. Two thousand infantry and a force of cavalry all at sea, but, as with one mind, and without making the least concerted resistance, the train began to retreat. Then we rushed them, the whole Command charging from the slope, not in columns, but spread out all over creation, each man doing his best to outyell his comrade and emptying revolvers, when we got among them, right and left.

The whole wagon train was thrown into panic. Teamsters wheeled their horses and mules into the road and, plying their black-snake whips, sent the animals galloping madly down the pike, crashing into other teams which, in turn, ran away. Infantry stampeded in every direction. Cavalry, uncertain from which point the attack came, bolted backward and forward without any definite plan. Wounded animals all along the train were neighing and braying, adding to the confusion. Pistols and rifles were cracking singly and in volleys.

Colonel Mosby was dashing up and down the line

of battle on his horse, urging the men by voice and gesture. I never saw him quite so busy or so interested in the total demolition of things.

Before the attack he expressed the hope and the belief that his men would give Kenly the worst whipping any of Sheridan's men ever got, and it delighted him to see the work progressing so satisfactorily. At several points along the line Kenly's men made stands behind the stone fences, and poured volleys into us but, when charged, they invariably retreated from their positions. The conflict was strung out over a mile and a half, which was the length of the wagon train when the fight was at its best. Our men were yelling, galloping, charging, firing, stampeding mules and horses and creating pandemonium everywhere. It was not long before we had the enemy thoroughly demoralized and were able to turn our attention to the prisoners and the spoils.

Mosby gave orders to unhitch all the teams that had not run away and to set fire to the wagons, and very soon smoke and flames filled the air and made a grand picture. Among the wagons burned was one containing a safe in which an army pay-master had his greenbacks, said to be over one hundred thousand dollars. We overlooked it, unfortunately, and it was recovered the next day by the enemy, as we always supposed; but there is a story afloat in the town of Berryville that a shoemaker who lived there at the time of the fight got hold of something very valuable among the wreckage of our raid and suddenly blossomed out into a man of means, marrying

later into one of the best families of the Valley. He never would tell what his new-found treasure was. Maybe he got the safe and greenbacks.

By eight o'clock in the morning the fight was over, the enemy ours, and the wagons burning. Then a serious problem arose: how were we to get three hundred prisoners, nearly nine hundred head of captured stock, and the other spoils of war out of Sheridan's country into our own? News of the raid had gone in every direction and we were threatened with an overwhelming assault at any moment. I should have said the problem was serious to the men only. Mosby solved it very promptly by saying: "We will go directly to Rectortown and take all the prisoners and animals and booty with us." There was not anything more to be said on the subject. Rectortown lay twenty-five miles to the south, back in Fauquier county. Stonewall Jackson's forced marches were not in it with this one of ours. Our disabled cannon had to be taken care of. When Mosby asked Frank Rahm what he proposed to do with his broken-down gun, Frank promptly replied; "I'm going to take it back home on the other gun, if I have to hold it there," and he did.

We fastened the loose harness as best we could and, herding the animals into one drove, started at a trot down the pike towards the Shenandoah river several miles away. It was the most extraordinary procession that ever headed for that historic stream; our captives were on foot while we were mounted, the victors and vanquished chatting freely together

and speculating on the trip before them. A number of the Rangers, in a spirit of gayety, had decked themselves out in the fine uniforms found in the baggage of the Northern officers. Some of the coats were turned inside out so as to display the fine linings. From one of the wagons we had resurrected a lot of musical instruments and the leaders of the mounted vanguard made the morning hideous with attempts to play plantation melodies on tuneless fiddles.

No more motley throng ever came back from a successful raid. There was a song on every man's lips and those who had yelled or sung themselves hoarse waved captured flags. In the midst of the nondescript legion the nine hundred head of stock, bellowing, neighing, and braying, wallowed along in the hot dust of that August morning, the steam rising from their bodies and the saliva dripping from the mouths of the fat steers, of which we had nearly two hundred and fifty head. Down the turnpike into the rushing Shenandoah, regardless of ford or pass, dashed the whole cavalcade; some swimming, some wading, others finding ferriage at the tail of a horse or steer. The orchestra in the lead scraped away bravely at their fiddles. Only the unhorsing of some of the worst of the performers saved them from bodily violence at the hands of their justly indignant comrades. In a short time, dripping but refreshed, we emerged from the stream, struggled on up the road and began the ascent of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Strange to say, not a man nor an animal was lost in the passage. We crossed the mountain at a break-

neck pace, made a rapid descent into the Piedmont Valley, and at four o'clock that afternoon, with all hands present, the captured property was divided at Rectortown, twenty-five miles from the scene of the action fought on the morning of the same day!

Our loss in the affair was two killed and two wounded; the number of the enemy's casualties we could not ascertain, but Major Wm. E. Beardsley of the Sixth New York Cavalry, reported from Winchester on the day after the fight, to Colonel Devine, commanding the second Brigade of the first cavalry Division, as follows:

We were attacked by Mosby at daylight yesterday morning at Berryville, and a disgraceful panic ensued, resulting in the entire destruction of the reserve brigade's train and a portion of our's, with battery forges, etc., the running off of nearly all the mules, the capture of a large number of prisoners, the killing of five of our men, with many wounded.

We brought out more than six hundred horses and mules, more than two hundred and fifty head of fat cattle, and about three hundred prisoners, destroying more than one hundred wagons with their valuable contents.

After dividing the horses and plunder among the men we sent the mules and a large number of cattle to General Lee for the use of the army. They were driven through Fauquier, Rappahannock, Culpeper and Orange counties, as far as Gordonsville. On my return to the Command from carrying reports and

despatches of this affair to General Lee, I could follow the trail of the captured animals by bits of broken harness, here and there, for nearly the entire route. By six o'clock that afternoon everything was in order where a short time before all seemed to be tumult and confusion. The horses were divided, the mules and cattle corralled ready for their long drive, the guards to take the prisoners over to Gordonsville had been detailed and given their instructions and the Command was disbanded, and each member was starting home with his share of the spoils, when the Colonel came to me and said:

"Munson, don't you want to see your sweetheart?"

I was willing. We rode together to our headquarters at Mr. Blackwell's, a few miles distant, where I got a bath and a clean outfit and a good supper and a fresh horse and, with the Colonel's written despatches, got in the saddle and galloped to Warrenton, twenty miles away. As I was about to leave, the Colonel put his arm around my shoulder and said: "Don't let the Command suffer while you are gone." That meant, that if occasion should arise, and I found the opportunity to brag any about our Command, or to tell any Munchausen stories, I was to lie like a gentleman. My instructions, however, did not include these details, but were to ride as far as Warrenton that night, go to church the next morning and drive with the young lady referred to, who is now and has long been the happy wife of a much handsomer member of our Command, and then gallop on to Culpeper Court House, twenty-five miles, and take

the cars there for General Lee's headquarters, then near Petersburg. I was so utterly worn out by my long ride of two or three days and the loss of sleep that, by the time I had galloped and trotted fifteen miles, I could stand it no longer; I unsaddled and tied my horse to a sapling on the roadside and laid down on my saddle blanket at my horse's feet where I slept till sunrise, when I got up and galloped into Warrenton as fresh as a lark.

At General Lee's headquarters I broke in on that ragged crowd like a vision. I think I was the only well-dressed man in his army at that time. I had on my best, and it was the best that money could buy in the North. My boots came half way up my thighs, and my spurs were hand-made with silver rowels. My entire suit was gray corduroy trimmed with buff and gold lace, my hat had a double gold cord and an ostrich plume on it, and I carried a pair of high gauntlets carelessly in one hand, while with the other I toyed with a handsome enamelled belt and a pair of Colt's revolvers.

And I was only an humble private of Mosby's Guerrillas, and not nineteen years old!

If any officers or men around the headquarters of the Army of Northern Virginia failed to be impressed with my appearance or with the stories I related of our Command and its doings, it was certainly not my fault. I tried to obey the Colonel's injunction not to let the Command suffer, and when I left there I believe every man who saw and heard me thought I was only a fair sample of our entire battalion.

The result of this raid was shown by the rapidity with which Sheridan at once fell back to his old position down the Valley, where three days later he received the following telegram from General Grant:

"When any of Mosby's men are caught, hang them without trial."

No one who is at all familiar with Grant's admiration for a fighter will be surprised to learn that a strong friendship sprung up between the two men after the war; that Mosby stumped the state of Virginia for Grant in 1872, against Greeley; that, when he became President, Grant offered appointments to Mosby which were declined and that the last autograph letter ever written by General Grant was a request to Mr. Huntington to appoint Colonel Mosby to a good position in the law department of the Southern Pacific Railroad when he returned to California from his Consulship at Hong Kong. Grant meant it when he said "Let us have peace."

Sheridan's reply to Grant's telegram was as follows:

"Mosby has annoyed me and captured a few wagons. We hung one and shot six of his men yesterday."

There was no truth in this statement that he had hung one and shot six of our men that day.

In the busiest part of the Berryville affair, when teams were running wild in every direction and the confusion was at its worst, Colonel Mosby saw a splendid four-in-hand team of big bays attached to a heavy portable army forge which had become upset

on the pike and from which the horses were struggling in vain to free themselves. Turning to me he ordered me to take a man and extricate the team from the tangle they were in, and bring them out safely. That sounded just as easy as if he had said, "Take a cigar," but I did not find it so. I took with me a young fellow who had joined the Command only a few days. When we galloped up to the struggling team and began to untangle them we were fired upon by a lot of infantrymen hidden behind a stone fence. When the rain of bullets flattened against the metal forge it sounded as if there were a thousand of them and my young companion, this being his first engagement, toppled over in the road in a dead faint. It was no time just then to look after a sick man, for our horses were frantic with fear and excitement, and I had to hold both of them when the boy fell. I let him lie where he was and in time got my team untangled and tied securely; I was just ready to lead them out, when, very opportunely, my youngster revived. Getting up in a surprised way he jumped on his horse and galloped off, leaving me to mount my half mad charger and get my team out as best I could. That boy developed into one of the best soldiers in the Command and, until the end of the war, was up near the front in every engagement. It was his baptism of blood, and his confirmation followed immediately after it. This was one of the ways a beginner had to be initiated into our service.

While I am in the neighborhood of Berryville I recall a fight Captain A. E. Richards had only a few

days after the foregoing affair, and almost on the same ground, while he was scouting with a small squad of men in the Valley. He ran into a body of Yankee cavalry and killed the commanding officer, Lieutenant J. S. Walker of the First United States Cavalry; wounded and captured Lieutenant Philip Dwyer of the Fifth United States Cavalry, and captured all the rest of the squad but one. When Richards reported to Colonel Mosby on this affair the Colonel replied that he was glad one man got away so he could tell Sheridan what had happened to the rest of them.

## CHAPTER X

### TURNING THE TABLES

THE neighborhood of Harper's Ferry was very warm in that month of August, 1864. Sheridan was much irritated by the persistent annoyance of Mosby's men. In fact the relations between us and the other side were daily growing more bitter, and General Grant's telegram would have been obeyed if the Federals had captured any of us.

Among others who wanted to have a tilt with us was Captain Blazer, of Crook's Division. The result of his uncontrollable desire is set forth in two war despatches subsequently published by the Government. The first, dated August 20th, 1864, is from General Sheridan to General Augur, and reads:

"I have one hundred picked men who will take the contract to clean out Mosby's gang. I want one hundred Spencer rifles for them. Send them to me if they can be found in Washington."

Captain Blazer was to command these one hundred men who stood ready to "clean out Mosby's gang." The second despatch is dated at Harper's Ferry, November 19, and is from General Stevenson to General Forsythe. It follows:

"Two of Captain Blazer's men came in this morning, privates Harris and Johnson. They report that

Mosby attacked Blazer near Kabletown yesterday about eleven o'clock. They say the entire Command with the exception of themselves were either captured or killed."

It may be interesting to know just what developed between the dates of the two telegrams. Captain Blazer thought, and General Sheridan agreed with him, that the Northern army could find some work for a husky little guerrilla band of its own to fight the devil with fire, as it were. The Captain was put at the head of one hundred picked men, selected by himself from Crook's entire division, and there is no doubt he succeeded in getting some fine material. He was provided with his Spencer rifles and, shortly after the 20th of August, started to work. He began under very favorable conditions, as Colonel Mosby was busy with bigger game than Blazer all during the summer and autumn of 1864, and paid little heed to the buzzing of the new Captain's wings around our doors. Blazer went to work at once, coming after us in our own territory, surprising a few of the Rangers here and there and generally whipping them. His first official report was that he had captured one Mosby man after chasing the Guerrillas three miles.

Early in September while on a scouting expedition in the Valley of Virginia, he surprised one of our scouting parties under Lieutenant Joe Nelson and gave it a good whipping, killing two men, wounding five and taking five prisoners. Blazer reported one killed and six wounded in the engagement. If he only had one man killed we knew where to locate the

fatality, for in the running fight a Blazer man rode up alongside of Emory Pitts, of our company " B " and snapped a pistol at his head but it missed fire. Pitts greatly surprised to find his brains were still intact used them with rapidity. He leaned from his saddle, seized his antagonist by the scruff of the neck with his left hand, lifted the man from his saddle almost over on to his own lap and with his right hand held a revolver under his captive's breast and fired a bullet through him, dropping the corpse to the ground as he galloped away. The soldier happened to fall on one of our men who had been unhorsed and who was lying, half hidden among the rocks, playing possum. He reported that the body that dropped from Pitt's grip after the shot was fired never so much as quivered. Death came on swift wings to that poor fellow. But that is war.

I don't remember ever hearing Mosby mention Blazer's name or make any reference to his movements, until he finally ordered Major Richards to go over to the Valley and wipe him from the map. Mosby treated his forays into our territory merely as incidents of our regular life as Partisan Rangers. To him, Blazer and his men were " a raiding party of Yankees." We made no special attempts to capture him, nor any special pains to keep out of his way. During those three eventful months in our history we were after bigger game, and the stakes were always higher than " a Captain and one hundred picked men." In fact they were General Phil. Sheridan and his Army; and nobody knew better than Sheridan how

often we won part of the stakes. Nevertheless, he was a foe to be reckoned with, and the boys who had felt his hard knocks remembered it against a day of reckoning.

On the tenth of November, Captain Montjoy took his Company to the Shenandoah Valley and, early the next day, attacked a company of Federal Cavalry on the pike between Winchester and Newtown. He defeated them, capturing about twenty of them with their horses, and recrossed the river near Berry's Ferry. All but thirty had started for their homes when suddenly Blazer's hundred men made a fierce attack. In less time, almost, than it takes to tell it, they recaptured the prisoners and horses, killed two of our men, wounded five others and galloped away, while Montjoy and his badly whipped men sought much needed cover in the direction of the river.

It happened that, at the time the news of this affair reached Colonel Mosby, Companies A and B of our Command had nothing special to do. The Colonel summoned Major A. E. Richards and told him to take some of the men of each company over into the Valley and, "Wipe Blazer out! go through him." He did not think it necessary to go in person to command the men of A and B for, whenever he told Richards to do anything, no matter how difficult, and especially if A and B went along, Richards was sure to do it. Mosby has claimed full credit for the victories achieved by his officers when they worked by his direction. He argued that he had the judgment not only to dictate the work, and the manner of doing it, but also the

discrimination to pick the officers best suited to the work. And every officer of the Command was glad to have our Colonel get the honor.

Major Richards started on the seventeenth of November with one hundred Rangers to look for Blazer. Most of his men were specially anxious to set eyes on the Northener who had turned the trick so neatly on Montjoy and Nelson. They were not picked men, however, but just plain, ordinary, every-day A and B Guerrillas. When he reached Castleman's Ferry he heard that Blazer was then on one of his raids, having fully made up his mind to finish the contract about which Sheridan had wired Augur nearly three months before. Our men located him in camp near Kabletown, a favorite stopping place of his, in Jefferson county, West Virginia. Major Richards preferring a daylight fight with him, where there would be no odds in our favor, camped near him. In the morning the men were so anxious for a final settlement of old scores with Blazer and his Command, that they did not wait for breakfast, but at sunrise charged into Kabletown only to find that Blazer had left but shortly before and was looking for them.

When both sides were out for scalps and each looking for the other, the end could not be far off, and it took only a few hours to find the blue column. Richards turned his men from the road to draw Blazer into the field but Blazer was busy taking down the fence and dismounting his men so as to use his carbines at long range. This was a good sign. If he had been spoiling for a fight he would have charged Richards in

the road but he was apparently just as careful as our Major. It also meant a carefully planned conflict if he could have his way. But Richards upset his calculations by dividing his men and starting off with half of them as if retreating. Blazer swallowed the bait and ordered his men to mount and charge. It puts a lot of courage into a cavalry company to see the enemy galloping away. When his men got entirely clear of the woods and into the open where there was nothing in the way of either party, Richards turned suddenly, and our two divisions charged simultaneously.

Blazer's men used their Spencer rifles until our men got close up to them when they dropped them and drew revolvers. Richards's attack was very much like a dynamite explosion at close range, inasmuch as it was entirely unexpected; for, while there is no doubt Blazer counted on a fight, and really wanted one, he had made no preparations whatever for a massacre, and that is what, all of a sudden, seemed to be imminent, for Richards and his men looked and acted like a band of Apaches. Blazer's men broke before our onslaught, defying all their Commander's efforts to rally them as they saw their ranks thinning, and, in a few minutes the flight became a panic and a rout. Richards was in their midst, each of his men apparently picking out a special victim. They were fading away before our deadly fire, and Blazer, catching the infection of retreat from his men, did the fastest riding of his life.

One of our men, Syd Ferguson, who rode one of the handsomest and best animals in our Command, marked

Blazer for his own and, touching his mare, Fashion, lightly with the spur, was soon at the Captain's side, ordering him to surrender. His pistols had been emptied in the fight and as the Captain did not, or could not stop, Syd knocked him from his horse as he dashed by. As soon as he could check and turn his mare he rode back and found his man lying apparently dead in the road but, thinking the blow of a pistol could hardly have killed a man, he got down to examine, when Blazer got up smiling and admitted who he was and that he was only stunned. He took his medicine cheerfully. His loss was more than twenty men killed, many more wounded, most of them mortally, and over thirty taken prisoners. General Stevenson's despatch of November 30, heretofore quoted, summed up the situation briefly and truthfully: "Two of Captain Blazer's men came in."

In this connection I cannot pass over an incident that, at the time of its occurrence, was widely discussed among our men. It involves the Richmond boy, John Puryear, that gallant dare-devil youth of whom I have written in the first installment of these recollections.

On the morning of the day we had balanced our books with Blazer, Puryear and Charley McDonough were ostensibly scouting for Richards but really looking up trouble for trouble's sake. They were approached by a few men dressed in gray who McDonough instinctively feared, believing them to be some of Blazer's men. He would not stay to decide the matter but turned and galloped away. John Puryear,

with his trust in everybody, stood his ground and heard them address him as they came near, "Hello Johnny," which completely disarmed any suspicion which he may have had. When they reached him they pounced on him in true Guerrilla style and disarmed him. Then they took him back to Blazer and he was turned over to the tender mercy of Lieutenant Cole, of Blazer's Command, who gave orders that steps be taken to extract information from the prisoner. He was brow-beaten, cuffed and threatened in a fruitless effort to loosen his tongue. Finally a halter was put around his neck and he was drawn up in the air, clear of his toes, several times; but Cole finally wearied of his attempt to make the boy tell anything and ordered him to mount the worst horse they had and follow Blazer and his men. The beast was so weary that Puryear had no difficulty in making it appear that movement was next to impossible, a state of affairs that justified him in requesting permission to dismount and cut a stick big enough to induce the animal to step lively. No objection was offered, and Puryear proceeded to get a club that was about right for the plans that were forming in his mind.

It was not long before Mosby's men came into view, and Blazer ordered the boy to the rear. This did not suit him at all, and he insisted on staying where he was, up near the front. There was no time to argue, for the long looked for moment had come. Puryear stayed. Richards told his men to watch him and try not to shoot him when they came together; and one of our men, Graf Carlisle, yelled encouragingly to Pur-

year to "keep his spirits up, for everything would be lovely by-and-bye."

At the moment Richards's men came swinging down on Blazer in two divisions, Puryear rose in his stirrups, let out his rebel yell and, with a swinging, back-hand movement, dealt his guard a killing blow in the face with his club. Then he slipped from his horse in the thick of the melee, stripped his fallen enemy of his pistols, remounted on the fellow's horse and lit into the ranks of Blazer's crowd which surrounded him with an expression of ferocity that it is impossible to describe. His black eyes literally blazed and, with the perspiration standing on his forehead, his jaws set, and his whole face livid, he started on his errand of vengeance.

Nearly every man in our Command saw him swirl into the fight. His rage was something terrible to look upon. Presently his eye found Lieutenant Cole and without delay he was after him. He chased that Federal officer around the old blacksmith's shop and overtook him just at the moment he was surrendering to John Alexander, now a prominent attorney of Leesburg, Va., who tried to restrain Puryear from wreaking his vengeance upon a man who had quit. But Puryear declared that Cole had ordered him hanged, and had abused him, a charge admitted by Cole. The next instant Puryear fired his pistol into Cole's chest and stood back to contemplate his work. Cole fell limp and gasping against Alexander's horse, sinking gradually to the ground. He was dead in less than a minute. Puryear burst out crying like a child, and collapsed, sob after sob shaking his body. He was

useless for the rest of the fight. Nature had given way to the strain.

When Alexander took Cole's pistols from his body he found them both empty. It is only fair to say, however, that Puryear did not know this till Alexander told him; in other words until he had wreaked his ghastly vengeance. Puryear at the time was not out of his teens.

In 1865, when most of our men went over in a body to General Hancock's headquarters in the Valley of Virginia, to surrender, Blazer and Syd Ferguson met and hugged each other like long lost brothers.

Blazer furnished a striking illustration of the difficulty of conducting Partisan Ranger warfare successfully. He possessed advantages greater than Mosby in some respects. He picked his men carefully from an entire Division, and had seen much hard service in West Virginia before coming to Sheridan, service of a kind to fit him for coping successfully with us. His entire Command was splendidly mounted, armed and equipped. He and his men were brave and hardened soldiers. He had a perfect country to operate in for guerrilla warfare. He had, singular to relate, rather the good will of the people, especially of the Valley, for he permitted no vandalism among his men and, whenever occasion arose, he was courteous and kind to them. He had the protection of Sheridan's whole army when he was " at home," while we never closed our eyes in sleep free from liability to be stirred out of bed by him. If his ranks were thinned he had thousands of the same sort to draw on. He need ride

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LIEUTENANT W. BEN. PALMER IN 1864.

only thirty miles from his base to be among us. The day he went down he had just as good a chance to whip us as we had to whip him. He had even more, for he was better armed to resist an attack than we. Seven shooting Spencer rifles are not to be despised in the hands of men who can stand still and receive an attack from charging horsemen. And yet, when he was put to the test of a fair, open, stand-up, hand-to-hand fight, with one of Mosby's boy officers, and only a part of Mosby's Command, he was simply annihilated.

## CHAPTER XI

### A CHAPTER OF PERSONALITIES

SAMUEL WAGGAMAN, who is now a prominent physician in Washington City, enjoys the distinction of being the only man who joined Mosby's Command in Richmond; he was duly enrolled there, and transportation given him by the War Department to Gordonsville. His uncle was a prominent officer in the Quartermaster's Department, and when Sam enlisted regularly in the Command this uncle fitted him out with gorgeous jacket and trousers and presented him to the Secretary of War. In the first fight he got into, which was the rather disastrous affair at Warrenton Junction, all his finery disappeared in some way and, when he reached Upperville, through the help of Ned Hurst, "the old reliable," he was picked clean. Ned Hurst seemed to be always on hand ready to help some youngster out of a hole. At the Warrenton Junction fight Sam's horse was shot while our men were retreating, and Ned helped him through. When the Colonel sent the cattle and mules we captured from Sheridan on August 13, 1864, over to the regular army, Sam was one of the detail to take them. At Culpeper Court House he turned them into an enclosure belonging to John Minor Botts, a prominent politician who had remained a Union man. Mr.

Botts objected to the use of his farm as a corral for rebel live-stock and, but for the timely arrival of General Stuart, they would not have gone into the enclosure. But Stuart ordered them in and told Mr. Botts he was the only man in Virginia who had a fence around his barn. So in they went. Stuart told Sam if it were not for Mosby all his wagons would have remained stuck in the mud.

Sam was captured in August, 1864, after he came back from Culpeper Court House in a house near Upperville, where he and Frank Darden had hidden in a garret. Frank Darden fell through the ceiling of the family living-room and lit in the bed with the lady of the house. Sam was in the dark, and when the enemy began firing he offered to surrender, but none of them would take him. There being nothing else to do, he began firing at them, and when both his pistols were empty he walked out and they seized him. He went to Fort Warren in handcuffs, and remained there till June, 1865.

John H. Alexander had a theory, or rather he had several, about our peculiar warfare. First, he believed the precarious life that we led made us vigilant, alert and self-reliant, so that in action each man was an independent, intelligent unit, and not a mere automaton to be manoeuvered by his officers. Second, he believed the enemy dreaded ambuscades, and that many of our escapes were due to their exceeding carefulness. And, third, he had an abiding faith in the advantage we had over the enemy in our experience with the pistol. He used to say, " There is a terrible difference

between shooting to scare and shooting to kill," and he thought it did not require so much nerve to charge a platoon which was to fire by volley according to Hardee's tactics; but men had a prejudice against riding towards the muzzle of a pistol which they knew was going to hit something when it went off. They just would not go up against it.

Now, allow these theories, and it takes all the miraculous out of his story of how he held up a whole regiment of Cavalry on an open highway, in broad daylight. Our Command had gone down to Fairfax on a raid the day before, and this young fellow who was convalescing from a wound which he had recently received, had been left behind. He had recovered so far as to be able to ride around and take notice of things; and this morning he had donned his best "blockade goods" and started from the Middleburg neighborhood to call on some ladies at Dover. Between these two points, at Macksville, the turnpike passes over a level plateau about two hundred yards wide. It is aproached from the Middleburg side by a rise about the height of a rider on a horse; on the other side the road dips into a considerable hollow, deep enough and wide enough to hide a regiment.

As he rode up the hill from one side, he saw the heads of four men abreast climbing the hill to the plateau at the farther side. His first impression was that they were some of our men returning from Fairfax. But as we never took the chances of letting men ride up on us whom we did not know, he halted on the brow of the hill and drew out and cocked his

revolver. As he did so the approaching party dashed towards him, yelling and shooting. This dispelled his doubts as to who they were, and he knew that he had to get away from there. As he wheeled his horse he concluded he would give them an intimation not to crowd him too closely on his morning gallop. They offered a beautiful shot as they came four abreast over the plateau, and he held his horse a moment until they got within good range and then let go at the nearest one. He saw his victim throw his hand to his head and reel from his horse. His companions yielded to that prejudice which I mentioned above, and the promptness with which they jerked up their horses provoked a laughing ring in the tones in which our Ranger called to them to come on. But other heads were bobbing up the eastern rim of the level, and away he went.

A hundred yards up the road a lane opened into the pike at an acute angle from the south. Ere he reached the mouth of it, he recollected that his horse had a shoe off, and the thought occurred to him that in a long chase up the macadamized road his steed would go lame and be overtaken. The lane would bring him back in some degree toward the enemy and subject him to a broadside; but he was familiar with the ground and knew that it would be but a short run to the protection of a hollow in a piece of woods.

So he took the chances of the dash. Sure enough some Yankees had dismounted on the plateau as they saw him turn into the lane, and the whistling of the bullets from their carbines, and their pit-pat on the rail

fence alongside him, made that one of the most exhilerating rides of his life. The occasion was enlivened, too, by an old negro, who happened to be mending the fence. As our rider passed him, the slapping of the bullets against the rails scared him nearly to death, and he fell on his back, striking arms and legs in the air and hallooing at the top of his voice that he was killed. The dash was over in a minute, and neither horse, rider nor negro got a scratch.

When he was out of range, in a hollow in the lane, Alexander held up his horse. He was about three hundred yards from the enemy and could not hear any signs of pursuit. He was unwilling to leave the vicinity without getting further information and, jumping over a fence into an adjoining field, he rode up on a hill. He saw the turnpike at Macksville full of cavalry.

As soon as he reappeared the long-range guns opened on him again, and a bullet which clipped his hat admonished him that there was a good marksman behind one of them. Yielding to an indisposition to furnish a living target for Uncle Sam's sharp-shooters to practice on, he waved an adieu with his hat and cantered off to a piece of timber at the far end of the field.

The Yankees evidently thought the Ranger was waiting for them on the turnpike, for when their vanguard first caught sight of him he was sitting still on his horse on the brow of the hill. His subsequent movements, which must have appeared as eccentric, to say the least, were interpreted as attempts to draw

them on. Assuming that he was a decoy, they naturally concluded that the woods into which he had ridden hid an ambuscade. And while he tarried under their shades he saw the regiment brought up and formed into a battle line, skirmishers deployed, and the whole array move in all pomp across the field toward him. He could linger but a short while, however, to view the striking pageant. He has assured me that one of the regrets of his life has been that he could not wait to witness their chagrin when they reached the woods and found that no more serious business awaited them than to scare the birds from the bushes.

The following contribution from Johnny Alexander I am sure will be read with interest after the foregoing article about him:

### A LIVELY RIDE BEFORE BREAKFAST.

Hugh Waters and I lived at his mother's home, which was situated about one mile south of Middleburg. Her house was on the far edge of a large body of timber, which extended more than half way to the village. On the east side of her farm, and within a quarter of a mile of the house, ran the road from the Plains to Middleburg; and about the same distance to the west was the road from Salem (now Marshall) to Middleburg.

During the winter of 1864–5, there was a heavy snow which laid on the ground for some weeks and became covered with a thick crust. One cold night

Hugh and I camped out in a rock-break on his mother's farm, within a few yards of the Plains road; but the rocky cliff, at the foot of which we made our bed and tied our horses, and the clump of trees about it, hid us from sight of the road. Indeed, we relied on the cold weather to keep our enemies at home, and the warning which we would get from the sounds of their traveling over the snow, if they should have the enterprise to turn out.

We slept the sleep of unconscious innocence. The next morning about sunrise we were awakened by Mrs. Waters's negro man, Edmond, with the information that a large body of Yankees had marched along the Plains road a short while before, had called at the house to pay their respects to us, and had gone on towards Middleburg. It is needless to say we made a very hasty toilet and did not stand much on the order of our going away from there. We left Edmond to take charge of our bedding, and hurried off towards Middleburg to take observations.

When we reached the Salem road we met Lieutenant Fount Beattie who had also been induced to rise early by a party scouting uncomfortably near his quarters. He assumed responsibility for our movements, and led us on toward Middleburg in pursuit of information and, incidentally, adventure. Well, we succeeding in finding both.

We followed the road to the top of a hill on the edge of the town and saw the streets filled with blue-coated cavalry. At the same time the wearers of the blue coats saw us, and hastened to exchange greetings with

us. We felt, however, that salutes at a distance were all that the occasion required of us, and retired with some precipitancy in the direction whence we came. The Yankees insisted on closer relations, and pressed their attentions with ardor.

We were making good our courteous purpose to leave them in possession of that neighborhood, and were getting out on the Salem road in fine shape, when we rose a little hill about a half a mile out. And there, coming towards us, and not more than two hundred yards away, was a road full of Yankee cavalry. On each side of us was an abominable stone fence, which, you know, very few horses would jump. As we pulled up, the enemy in front commenced paying us attentions. It did look like a hopeless situation.

But Beattie was not the man to give up as long as there was daylight between him and the toils. A short distance behind us we had passed a gap in the stone fence which would let us into a field and to the big woods beyond it; and our leader turned us back to it, as some of the Salem party sprung up the road toward us. The pursuers from Middleburg were scarcely within good range as the last one of us jumped through the gap, but a good shot gave pause to the foremost of them. Somehow, both parties of the Yankees found ways through the fence too; and in a moment the situation was this: we three, running by a straight line for the woods, the Yankees to the left oblique and Yankees to the right oblique, making after us with absolute assurance of running us down. If we should make the woods, they were barren of foliage

and almost as open as the field. But just within them was a hill, and just over it — well, the Yankees did not know what. And neither did we, for that matter; but the religion of a Mosby man was never to throw up his hands as long as he could stick to his horse, for he trusted much to that chapter of accidents which is in every book of Fate. It contained deliverance for us that morning.

The snow was at least a half foot deep and, as I stated, was covered with a thick crust, and it greatly affected the speed of all parties. I was riding a horse quite recently "acquired." I was soon dismayed to find he was falling behind and, what was worse, he did not seem to care if he was. The shooting and yelling and my rigorous application of the spur made no impression on him. Whether it was actual leg weariness, sheer brute stubbornness or the aroused affinity for his old companions, I do not know. But the cold fact is that, when Beattie and Waters rode into the woods, my horse slowed down into a walk and was a considerable distance behind them.

The pursuers were then scarcely a hundred yards from me, and were calling to me in jeering tones, between shots, "Come out of that overcoat, Johnny," and other pleasant salutations. The truth was, I had on a splendid new overcoat, one of the fruits of the greenback raid and their remarks about it made me feel sick. I verily believe it was my salvation at that moment, though. The heartless fellows were close enough to see that it was an unusually fine one, glistening with brass buttons and some other garish trim-

ming, and they evidently took me for an officer. Now, do not lose sight of that, for I think it was the key to what followed.

As my companions were riding away over the hill, in the woods, and I realized that my horse had flunked on me, in my desperation I involuntarily called out to them to stop and take me up. They wheeled and commenced firing.

The enemy doubtless heard me call to them to stop, without distinguishing what I said about taking me up. They saw my horse drop into a quiet, dignified pace, and did not understand that it was not due to my own management of him. And, attributing to the officer a most magnificent nerve, they assumed that I was rallying my men from the ambush into which we had decoyed them. The manly response of Lieutenant Beattie and Waters clinched the matter. And I pledge you my word of honor that the whole party pulled up within almost touching distance of me, and let me march in a quiet walk over the hill. I soon came up with my friends and we rode away unpursued.

I submitted the above to Lieutenant Beattie who fully corroborates it, and expressed his gratification that I wrote it for you.

Joe Bryan, of Richmond, who belonged to Montjoy's company "D," joined our Command about October, 1864, and his first raid was when we captured General Duffie in the Valley. Charley Dear says when a detachment of Company "D," which was sent out to participate in the capture, returned, he found Joe with

a lot of others chafing like a caged lion. In a sort of desperation he asked Charley how a man could make a reputation in Mosby's Command, and Charley was astonished at such a question, for just at that time the boy was standing among a lot of the best material in the Command. He told Joe, however, that it was easy enough and, as they were going to charge the Yankees in a few minutes, all he had to do, when the charge was ordered, was to break away from the ranks and ride at them full tilt. To Charley's surprise a moment later he saw Joe break away in the charge and go it alone, trying to lead all the rest. Harry Hatcher was standing near and heard the conversation. Turning to Puryear he said, "John, did you hear what Charley Dear told that boy? He must be trying to get him killed in the first round, before the water gets hot." The boys came back from the charge for there were too many for us.

After company "D" re-formed, Montjoy rode up to Charley and asked, "What is the name of that boy you brought up to company 'D?'" Charley told him he was Joe Bryan, and Montjoy said, "He'll do! he is one of the old blue hen's chickens and he has won his spurs in the first round. Let him ride in the first set of fours between you and Ned Gibson and fill out Louis Adie's place." Adie was killed in the Berryville fight only a short time before and was one of the gamest and best boys in Montjoy's company of all good ones.

Joe always sustained his reputation. A youngster who could keep up his end with Charley Dear and

Ned Gibson, and stay up at the front, had to be made of the right stuff, and Joe had proven what sort of stuff it was, for his career since the war has been constantly upward, until today he is perhaps as prominent as any man in Virginia.

Frank Angelo, a member of company C, was captured near Milwood in the Valley late in November, 1864, by five men of the Twenty-first New York. He was taken to headquarters and the officers had a lot of amusement out of him, for he was a very bright and witty fellow. Major Otis and General Tibbits became quite interested in him, and finally the Major bet his General that Frank would never be taken to Washington. The wager was a basket of champagne and the General lost. Frank was taken with a lot of others to Martinsburg and put in an old jail. The door leading into an adjoining yard was fastened by a railroad spike, driven into the floor, and he managed to get hold of an axe with which he loosened the spike so the door would open, and when the opportunity offered he marched out, taking several other prisoners with him, and all got safely out of the town. While in prison he made friends with a number of his guards. One of them, finding Frank was going to escape, and wishing to help one of his own friends who was confined for some offense, made Frank promise to take the imprisoned Yankee with him, which he did, and got him safely across the Potomac.

Frank found that escaping from jail was a small matter compared with escaping from the Valley, for the whole country was alive with camps and soldiers

were on the move day and night in every direction. After almost countless narrow escapes he reached Mosby's Confederacy at last, to be welcomed by the Colonel who told him he would take him on his next scout and give him the best horse captured as a reward for his troubles and losses. Before the Colonel could keep his promise he was badly wounded at Lake's house on the 21st of December, and Chapman let Angelo go home to Richmond on a furlough.

Frank was quite a mimic, and the gift served him well in his efforts to escape from the enemy. In trying to get out of the Valley on foot, he ran unexpectedly on a picket, stationed on the railroad and, seeing that he was discovered, he rolled down the embankment into a swamp; as he waded off in the dark he imitated a sow and pigs. The Yankee was heard to say; "Damn that hog: if it was daylight I would have one of them pigs, sure." His next obstacle was a wagon camp nearby, which he found himself in before he realized it. He unhitched and saddled a good mule, and rode out safely, and finally landed his mule and himself at home. Angelo is living in Washington at present, and is a welcome attendant at most of the reunions of the Command.

John McCue was one of our youngsters who had a trying experience, entirely unique. He joined the Command the day before the Berryville fight and saw one of his college mates, young Louis Adie, killed in that fight. His company was sent down with others to winter in Westmoreland county and, late in March, 1865, he went across the Potomac river with five others

on a private scout, lured by the prospect of capturing a quarter of a million dollars supposed to be deposited in Leonardtown, Maryland.

They crossed the river near Stratford, the birthplace of General Robert E. Lee, and finding it impossible to do anything at Leonardtown they went to Croom, in Prince George county, where the party separated, three going to their homes, while McCue and two others concluded to capture the Post office. I suppose "capture" is a good, harmless word to use, though the authorities said the Post office was robbed.

While John and his two companions were going through Uncle Sam's mail the door was suddenly opened and six detectives rushed in on them, firing their pistols at close range. John stood his ground but his companions bolted through a side door and, mounting their horses, escaped, finally getting back to Virginia. John killed one of the men, Detective Ryan, and wounded another, Jerry Coffron. Ryan had rushed the boy and was shot in the bowels by him, but the shot did not kill him and he grabbed John around the arms and while holding him received two more shots. The captors tied the boy and threatened to lynch him, but an officer coming up prevented it. They took him to Annapolis and from there to Baltimore, where he was tried by military Commission, and found guilty of murder, assault with intent to kill and violation of the laws of war. He was sentenced to the penitentiary for life, sent to the prison at Clinton, N. Y. and put at hard labor. In the following November a petition, signed by thousands of influential

Virginians, was presented to President Andrew Johnson asking for his pardon but not until General Grant had personally asked the President to release the boy was the pardon signed.

Raiding and scouting parties going into Maryland frequently had exciting experiences before they came back across the Potomac. This historic stream proved a dead-line very often, which it was dangerous to cross. John McCue undertook his scouting expedition as a sort of an outlet for his enthusiasm, which had been pent up all the winter.

Colonel Chapman took part of the Command down to the Peninsula to winter and save the limited supply of forage in Loudoun and Fauquier counties for that part of the Command which remained there under Colonel Mosby. While Colonel Mosby found plenty of work to do all winter, Chapman and his men were idle nearly all the time they were there. Boys like McCue fretted and chafed in their enforced idleness, and finally the six I have spoken of started out to accomplish something, with the result that five of them did nothing, and McCue did more than he expected. The boy only thought he got what was coming to him until they clipped his hair short, put him in chains and dressed him in stripes. "Capturing" a Post office is sometimes a serious affair.

Captain Montjoy was a Mississippian, and Mosby made him Captain for gallantry — but he created all the Officers for the same reason, for that matter. Montjoy, however, was conspiciously gallant: a sort of meteor that we could all see as he moved across

the horizon of war. He was a very handsome young man with black eyes and hair, and his manners were very fascinating and attractive to both men and women. In addition, he was fastidious in his dress and in his general equipment. I never saw him awry in any particular. He was one of our dandies and we were proud of him. He rode the finest horses that money could buy, and his accoutrements would have suited a General. Somehow or other, when Company "D" was organized, it seemed to contain nothing but dandies. Possibly the boys composing it took the example from Montjoy; but at any rate they were, so far as dress and equipment and general appearance went, the flower of the battalion; and, in order to sustain their prestige among their comrades, they became known to us all, and deservedly so, as game fighters. Nearly every Marylander in our Command was in Company "D" and everyone of them was a fire eater. Montjoy was as proud of his company of fighting dandies as the Colonel was of his entire Command of fighting Guerrillas.

The manner in which Montjoy met his death — a most serious loss to the Partisan Rangers — is worth recording. It occurred on the 27th of November, 1864. He was commanding his Company, on a raid into Loudoun county, where he was trying to round up a company of local Yankees known as the Loudoun Rangers. On the morning they came together Montjoy killed, wounded and captured about twenty-five of them, including among the latter two Lieutenants in command of their two squads. He scattered

them like chaff before the wind and they flew for their lives in every direction. Montjoy picked out one of them to follow, and was close on his heels when the man threw his six-shooter over his shoulder, pointed it backwards without aim and pulled the trigger. The bullet went straight into Montjoy's head. Every man of his company who witnessed the tragedy reined in his horse involuntarily and groaned. We never filled Montjoy's place. We never tried to. There was only one Captain Montjoy.

A few days later Colonel Mosby issued the following notice:

*Partisan Rangers:*

The Lieutenant-Colonel Commanding announces to the battalion, with emotions of deep sorrow, the death of Captain R. P. Montjoy, who fell in action near Leesburg on the twenty-seventh ultimo, a costly sacrifice to victory. He died too early for liberty and his country's cause, but not too early for his own fame. To his Comrades in arms he has bequeathed an immortal example of daring and valor, and to his country a name that will brighten the pages of her history.

JOHN S. MOSBY,
*Lieutenant-Colonel, Commanding.*

One of the men killed in the Blazer fight was Edward Bredell of St. Louis. He had been an officer in the regular army before he came to us, and his parents were very wealthy. Moreover, he was an only child. On the day of the fight the boys laid him to rest where he fell, but afterwards we brought his body over to our side of the mountain and buried it near

Oak Hill, the former home of Chief Justice Marshall. Before the war ended young Bredell's father came down to Virginia and took his dead son's body home. When he reached St. Louis, owing to the bitter feeling there towards the Southerners, he was informed that the body could not be buried in any of the cemeteries. He thereupon had a grave dug in his own handsome grounds, and his son's body found its final rest in the shadow of his old home.

At the close of the war, or rather two years after, I went to St. Louis to live, taking with me a letter of introduction to the father of Edward Bredell, whom I found to be an old Eastern shoreman of Maryland, and distantly related to family connections of mine. Upon my first visit to the old gentleman he took my hand and escorted me to the beautiful grounds in the rear of his house, where we two sat by the grave of the Partisan Ranger and talked of him as we had known him in the flesh. I called frequently at the Bredell home and I have not the slightest doubt that it gave the old man no little pleasure to hear me recount the exploits of his brave son, and to repeat, time and time again, the story of the fight in which the boy fell and died. Many a time I have sat near him in the shade of the trees that spread their limbs over the simple grave, and caught him gazing wistfully at the green mound that covered his son's body. He tried to take his sorrows philosophically, but I cannot forget his first remark as we stood together:

"Maybe it is all right to give your only boy to your country, but I wish I had mine back again."

## CHAPTER XII

### AN UNPLEASANT EPISODE

AS I have written before, the month of August, 1864, was one of the busiest in the history of our Command. Hardly a day passed without bloodshed. The Northern feeling against Mosby's men was intense and the opportunities to crush our Command were thrown away because of the enemy's anxiety to bring about instant annihilation. When concerted attacks were arranged, some hot-headed one, guilty only in judgment, would blaze away at us from ambush and sound the signal that enabled us to slip away in time. Mosby's men, it must be remembered, knew more about the country than did any of the visitors from the North, and we knew the game of guerrilla warfare thoroughly.

One afternoon in that busy month of August Colonel Mosby with about thirty or forty men of his Command, was riding through the woods in Fairfax county. He was not expecting immediate trouble. Suddenly bullets came singing through the trees from a party of Thirteenth New Yorkers who retreated in a gallop towards Fairfax station as soon as they had fired their volley. One of our men, George Slater, was wounded.

At the station the enemy was joined by some of the

Sixteenth New York, about one hundred men in all They came swinging back through the woods and prepared to attack us. Our scouts, scattered through the underbrush, heard their commander tell them to use their carbines in the preliminary rush and then charge with their sabres. Mosby heard the order and, realizing that sabres were utterly worthless against our six-shooters, smiled when he told us simply to "Go through 'em." There was no excitement, no alarm at their greater number, three or four to our one, no surprise at the Colonel's quiet order; everything seemed to be moving along in its usual way. The order was a common one to us. "There are the Yankees! Go through 'em."

What is there to write about? It was all over in a few minutes, and it was the same old monotonous story. We killed the commanding officer, Captain J. H. Fleming, of the Sixteenth New York and six of his men; we wounded Captain McMenamin, of the Thirteenth New York, a lieutenant and eight men, and we captured thirty prisoners and forty horses.

Why the Federal troopers so often went into battle with those clumsy, antiquated sabres was a mystery that none of Mosby's men ever found out. They might just as well have walked up to a battery of howitzers with billiard cues. A good healthy Irishman with his shillelah would make any cavalryman with his sabre ashamed of himself. In his report of this affair Colonel Lazelle said that "A board of investigation had been called to ascertain who was responsible." The one man who could have best en-

lightened the Board was dead, but it would not have been a bad idea to court-martial the officer who ordered the men to wear sabres.

There are some things in the lives of all of us that we can't refer to with pleasure, and the hanging and shooting of some of our men, by order of General Custer, and in his presence, is one of those which Mosby's men rarely refer to. Neither it, nor what followed as a result of it, are happy memories to any of us. We want to remember General Custer, and I believe we all do remember him, as the gallant martyr who went down at Little Big Horn, surrounded, almost covered up, with the dead bodies of his foes; his pistols smoking hot; his blue eyes flashing defiance; his voice ringing out in command of his brave companions. This was the real hero, the real Custer.

The Custer episode is part of our history, however, and its recital reflects nothing but credit on our Command. It was one of the important events of our career. Its effect was far reaching on both sides and I have no doubt that it was never generally approved throughout the North. The official records of the war will bear out my story of it.

At that time, August, 1864, Alger was operating in the lower Valley of Virginia, and we frequently exchanged shots with his men, picked off their sentries, chased them and were chased by them. One afternoon Lieutenant-Colonel Chapman of our Command, with a detachment of raiders, came upon some burning dwellings in the neighborhood of Charlestown, in Jefferson county. We learned from the recent residents,

huddled about their ruins, that General Alger's men had applied the torch. The entreaties of the women and children had been of no avail. The order had been given and the order was obeyed. The sight of those helpless non-combatants crouching in the rain, weeping over their burning homes, wrought up the resentment of the men and we started out to even things up in real guerrilla fashion. We passed the ruined and deserted homes of Mr. McCormick and Mr. Sowers and, learning that the burners were just ahead of us, went after them on a run, overtaking them at the residence of Colonel Morgan, to which they had just set fire. Our men were demons that day. Thirty of the burners were killed and wounded, mostly killed. We took no prisoners and gave no quarter. Forty horses fell into our hands and we retired without further concern. No more buildings were burned by the Federals in that valley.

In order to contrast this house burning with Mosby's idea and understanding of ethics I have only to recall the case of one of our men, recently recruited, who went down with us into Loudoun county, among the Quakers. He overturned an old Quaker's milk can. The fellow knew that all the Quakers were sympathizers with the North, at least not with us. Colonel Mosby had him arrested when he heard of it, and I was sent back with him to the regular army and instructed to turn him over to General Early, with the information that he was not sufficient of a gentleman to travel with Mosby's men and that he had a mistaken idea of the mission of the Guerrillas. I had other

prisoners to take on the same trip and, as I was starting, Colonel Mosby took me aside and told me to take the milk spiller along with me to help me guard the captured men and, when I got him to General Early's, to turn him over also.

When I reached the army and had unloaded my charges I reported to General Early's tent. The General and my father were great friends and he welcomed me. I told him all about the doings of Alger's men, how we met them at Colonel Morgan's and what we did to them, of course coloring the picture somewhat, as was my duty. He was so well pleased and so greatly interested in my recital and the result, that I did not attempt to restrain my talents, but added that we had killed every man that we could get at, and threw them all in the fire.

"I wish to heaven," he replied, "that you had thrown all of Sheridan's men in after them."

General Phil was worrying the old man greatly at the time, and I have not the slightest doubt that General Early meant just what he said.

The fight, or rather the onslaught, at Colonel Morgan's house, was not to be forgotten, however, for on the 23d of September, General Custer, still breathing fire and vengeance, captured some of Mosby's men and had some of them hanged and others shot with their hands tied behind their backs. This was in Front Royal, Va. Mosby's men have erected a handsome monument to them in that pretty little town, and the ladies look after it for the Command. These seven men had been taken prisoners in a fair fight and by

overwhelming numbers. They were captured doing the best they could and should have been sent to some northern prison like other prisoners of war. The men who did the work were, some of them, Alger's. I received only a short while ago a letter from a prominent business man living in the West who was a member of the Fifth Michigan. He said that affair was a disgrace to the army.

Reports of the unfortunate affair came very promptly to Colonel Mosby from many sources. One of our men, Frank Angelo, had cut down and removed the bodies of some of our boys who were hanged, and he gave all the particulars of it to us. There was at once a rumor set afloat that we were to fight thereafter under the black flag, and as a proof of it Custer's act was pointed to. Men examined their pistols more carefully. The price of good runners went up rapidly and, as the greenback raid followed the next month, and the men had money to burn, there were a number of fine horses bought. Where formerly the boys had slept with one eye open they now slept with both open, as it were. Mosby waited his time.

On the 6th of November following we got twenty-seven of these Michigan fellows in a raid. Mosby had them draw lots to determine which seven of them should be killed in retaliation for our men killed at Front Royal. It was an awful shock to the unlucky ones and a fearful suspense to all. Lieutenant Ed. Thomson was instructed to take the condemned men to a point across the Shenandoah river in the Valley and have them hanged or shot. It is safe to say he never

had a more disagreeable duty to perform in all his life.

On the march one of his prisoners escaped in the darkness. A little farther on, while crossing the mountain at Ashby's gap, Thomson met Captain Montjoy returning from a raid in the Valley with some prisoners. Montjoy had recently become a Mason, and was a very enthusiastic craftsman. He ascertained in the usual way that two of the condemned men were brother Masons, and that they would be glad to enjoy any fraternal assistance that might be available at the moment; so Montjoy took them from Thomson in exchange for two of his own prisoners, and passed on.

When Mosby heard of this transfer he called Montjoy to him and said, after delivering a lecture on discipline, "I want you to understand that my Command is not a Masonic lodge."

Of the seven men to be killed only three were hanged. Two of them were shot, but not killed, and recovered later; two got away. One of these latter, when the spot for the execution was reached, asked Thomson for time to pray, which was readily accorded; the lieutenant joining silently in the petition of the condemned. The whole job was illsuited to Thomson's inclination, but he was too good a soldier to disobey orders.

While the Michigan man was making his peace with his Creator he was incidentally "sawing wood" vigorously. With his hands clasped apparently in prayer, he slowly worked away at the cords that bound his

wrists, until they were free. His appeal to the Almighty was fervent in the extreme, and at the Amen which was uttered in a voice heavy with penitence, he turned to Thomson as if he were ready to have his head shot off. Instead, however, he planted a terrific blow with his right hand on Thomson's nose, knocked him flat on his back, jumped over his prostrate form and, without waiting to thank our men or tell them good-bye, disappeared in the darkness. I take off my hat to men who can do things like that.

Thomson, rather pleased at the celerity with which the Michigan man's appeal to heaven had been answered, picked himself up and finished his work.

To the clothing of one of the men he pinned the following note:

"These men have been hanged in retaliation for an equal number of Colonel Mosby's men hanged by order of General Custer at Front Royal. Measure for measure."

On November 11 Colonel Mosby wrote a letter to General Sheridan and sent it by John Russell. It read as follows:

*Major-General P. H. Sheridan,*
*Commanding U. S. Forces in the Valley.*

GENERAL: Some time in the month of September, during my absence from my Command, six of my men, who had been captured by your forces, were hung and shot in the streets of Front Royal, by the order and in the presence of Brigadier-General Custer. Since then another (captured by a Colonel Powell on a plundering expedition into Rappahannock) shared

a similar fate. A label affixed to the coat of one of the murdered men declared that, "This will be the fate of Mosby and all his men."

Since the murder of my men, not less than seven hundred prisoners, including many officers of high rank, captured from your army by this Command, have been forwarded to Richmond, but the execution of my purpose of retaliation was deferred in order, as far as possible, to confine its operation to the men of Custer and Powell.

Accordingly, on the 6th instant, seven of your men were, by my order, executed on the Valley pike, your highway of travel.

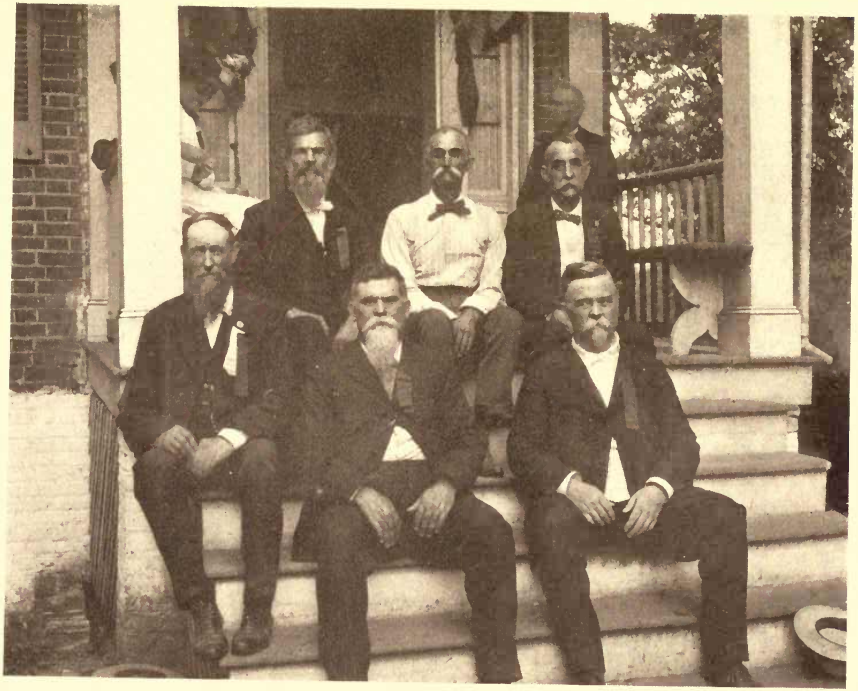
Hereafter any prisoners falling into my hands will be treated with the kindness due to their condition, unless some new act of barbarity shall compel me, reluctantly, to adopt a line of policy repugnant to humanity.

Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN S. MOSBY, *Lieut.-Colonel.*

On the 29th of October, Colonel Mosby had written a letter to General Lee, telling him of the practice of compelling helpless old men to ride exposed on the trains running over the railroads from Alexandria into Fauquier County, and of his intention to continue attacking such trains. He also told him of the murder of our men by Custer and Powell, and his intention to retaliate.

The first endorsement of Mosby's letter was as follows:

"Respectfully referred to the Honorable Secretary of War for his information. I do not know how we



LT.-COL. CHAPMAN. JOHN PURYEAR. LT. BEN. PALMER.
LT. ED. THOMPSON. CHARLEY DEAR. SYD. FERGUSON.

can prevent the cruel conduct of the enemy toward our citizens. I have directed Colonel Mosby, through his Adjutant, to hang an equal number of Custer's men in retaliation for those executed by him.

"R. E. LEE, *General.*

The third endorsement was:

"General Lee's instructions are cordially approved. In addition, if our citizens are found exposed on any captured train, signal vengeance should be taken on all conductors and officers found on it, and every male passenger of the enemy's country should be treated as a prisoner. So instruct.

J. A. SEDDON, *Secretary.*"

## CHAPTER XIII

### INCIDENTS

IN a raid we once made at midnight into the very heart of a cavalry camp near Fairfax Court House, where we were entirely surrounded by thousands of the enemy, it was necessary to go inside the stables to unfasten the horses. It was also necessary to keep absolutely quiet, for we were outnumbered a hundred to one. The pickets had been captured and ordered in whispers to follow us, and we made them unhitch the horses and help us to get them out.

Captain Wm. Chapman had by his side Baron Von Massow, of whom I have spoken previously. In whispers he explained to the Baron what we were doing, and how to do it artistically; incidentally, he told the Baron of the boldness and the danger of it. The Baron proved a very apt scholar but after awhile he whispered to Captain Chapman very quietly: "This is not fighting; this is horse-stealing." And who shall say he was wrong? But, before that job of horse-stealing was finished, and when each man had from one to five, or even more, haltered or bridled horses, and was starting to lead them out to safety, the alarm was given, the troops were aroused, firing and yelling began, and the wounded were groaning and dying. In the midst of the confusion the Guerrillas mounted

the captured horses and, leading others, dashed away to where their own horses were waiting, without the loss of a man.

This was one of the many affairs that read like romance when told in the newspapers. People asked how on earth Mosby could get his raiding party inside of a big cavalry camp and, once the camp aroused, how on earth he could get it out.

I do not know just how to explain it or to tell how easy it all appeared when it was over. But if you will bear in mind that everybody in the camp was fast asleep except the pickets; that we either crept stealthily upon these pickets, one by one, put pistols to their faces and told them to keep quiet, or that we rode up to them boldly and gobbled them up before they realized that we were not their own relief guard; and that, once inside, it was no more dangerous to move around quietly among five thousand sleeping men than among five; and that, when sleeping men awake suddenly, they never are instantly ready to fight; and that, when we began yelling and firing into them, they never knew whether we were five thousand or five; and that, by the time they were sufficiently aroused to fight intelligently, we had dashed out of the camp and disappeared in the darkness, it will not seem so strange.

It fell to my lot one dark night in winter to capture an infantry picket before our men could get into the camp, where we knew there were a lot of fine horses and mules. Not knowing how many pickets we might have to take the Colonel had ordered another man to go with me. His orders were merely to "take the

pickets." We left our horses and started towards the camp on foot. Within a few hundred yards of where our men were waiting for us I could see a figure moving along in the darkness, and we both dropped to the ground. I saw him march to the right and we crawled up a little and stopped. He turned and marched back, and as he passed us we crawled a little nearer. When he had gone up and down a few more times we were in his path, and just as he came up to me I jumped up and thrust my pistol in his face. I do not recall that he said that he was pleased to make my acquaintance, but I do remember that, before we got him back to our base, he was taken suddenly sick. It was a simple case of extreme fright. He needed a good stiff drink.

I captured a Yankee soldier on the 21st of November, 1863, who never ceased to be grateful to me for doing it. Mosby had about seventy-five men on a raid below Warrenton while General Gregg's Division of Federal Cavalry was encamped there. We had stopped in a piece of pines near Bealton Station to watch " for something doing " in our line of business; it was raining, cold and disagreeable, and the boys were all feeling ugly and impatient. Mosby saw a cavalryman and a man on foot coming along the road, and told Walter Whaley and me to bring them in to him. We had on rubber ponchos which hid our bodies entirely and, drawing our pistols under them, we marched up to the two men; we spoke only when we were a step away, and then merely said, " Surrender." The mounted man's first impulse was to draw his pistol and fight us, but he thought better of it and gave him-

self up. Whaley disarmed him and I had laid violent hands on the one on foot, when his face broadened into a smile.

"Oh, thank God for this," he cried, "may God bless you my boy."

I did not know exactly what to make of this demonstration, for we were not accustomed to being thanked for gobbling up the boys of the other side but, when we went through the cavalryman, who proved to be a courier bearing important despatches and papers, we unraveled the mystery. My man on foot was his prisoner, and was being taken to a nearby camp to be shot, according to a sentence of a court-martial held the day before.

When we first took the men I asked the one on horseback if he carried any papers; he said he did not and, to prove that he was a good soldier and likely to be lying, I searched him thoroughly; I did not come across the prize envelope until I got inside of his inside shirt, next to his skin, where it was sticking to him like a porous plaster.

When we took our prisoners to Mosby he opened the envelope and found the order to have the man shot. We took him back with us to our part of the country, got him a suit of old clothes and, facing him Northward, turned him loose. He started for his home in Pennsylvania and no doubt he never stopped until he got there.

Among the courier's papers was an Official Order which informed us that some wagons would be along soon; in due time they arrived and we captured them,

with their guard. Mosby said that it was clever of the enemy to inform us when to be on the lookout for their good things. With the wagons we captured fifteen prisoners together with thirty horses and mules, and helped ourselves to all the medical supplies we needed for our surgeon's use. Their wagons contained a supply greater in quantity, perhaps, at that time, than the Medical Department at Richmond could boast. I know of one old local doctor, to whom I gave a few bottles of morphine shortly afterwards, who thanked me actually with tears in his eyes, assuring me that the stuff was worth more to him than its weight in gold.

The courier also carried a bundle of letters to be mailed, and these we amused ourselves with while we waited for the wagons to come along. We did not think it was wrong to open other people's mail in those days. Among them were some love letters, which we sent to Warrenton later, one of which created a mighty stir and nearly split a church in twain. For there were many in that congregation who were horrified at the discovery that one of their number was corresponding with a "horrid Yankee Officer."

Very few of the fights of Mosby's men were pitched battles. Most of them were little affairs hardly worth writing about. Yet they were part of the almost daily experience of some of the men. I recall one of them in which I took part, where my companions killed four-fifths of the enemy, and I captured the rest. We wiped the whole crowd out completely.

Colonel Mosby took five of us on a scout into Fairfax county, on one occasion, and about midnight we

got information from a man living on the roadside which changed his plans and made him decide to go back home and try again a little later. We learned, however, that a picket post of five cavalrymen were stationed on the turnpike a few hundred yards below where we were, and that a vedette stood between them and us. Colonel Mosby told us to go down and bring them in while he took a little nap in the pines, as he did not think it at all necessary to lead in person such a formidable body as we were. We tied our horses and started on foot in a roundabout way, to get between the picket post and the supporting company, a hundred or two yards away and nearer their army corps. Captain Montjoy, being the only officer in our little party of five, assumed command without objection from any of us and suggested we string out, in line-of-battle style, a few yards apart, and stealthily approach the post, till we could jump on the pickets and whisper to them not to create unpleasantness by firing their weapons.

We crept along noiselessly, step by step, in the dark, circling around the vedette, and keeping the pickets in full view all the time, as they were grouped around a little smouldering fire. Each of us had his pistol drawn ready for an emergency, but we hardly expected to use them. When we were within twenty feet of them one of us stepped on a dry stick which broke with a snapping sound, and the five sentinels turning to us called out, "Halt, who goes there?" Montjoy answered, "Surrender."

In an instant five carbines were emptied at us, and

four of our pistols rang out, point-blank, at them. Four of them fell dead around their little fire.

In our advance on them Montjoy was on one end of our little "line-of-battle," and I was at the other, not dreaming we should have to fire on them, but thinking that we could take them noiselessly. I did not realize what Montjoy said, but mistook "Surrender" for "Friends;" and in my excitement I did not fire my pistol with the others.

We rushed on them immediately, and it fell to my lot to reach the only live one first. He understood the situation only too well, and in his anxiety to surrender to me and save his life, he pushed the muzzle of his carbine up against my stomach but, not knowing how to speak English he did not speak a word of anything. I mistook his action just as I had mistaken Montjoy's call and, as the carbine was pressed against me, I imagined I could feel my heart, liver, lungs and vermiform appendix flying through space out of the stove pipe hole in my back. I do not believe I ever suffered such suspense for about a half minute in all my life but, as the carbine failed to do its expected deadly work of exploration, I took the fellow a prisoner and threw the gun away.

We pulled the four dead bodies out of the fire, took their pistols and belts, mounted the five horses, put the captured German up behind me, and galloped back to where the Colonel was peacefully sleeping in the pines.

As we rode away from our ghastly work we could hear the lone vedette crashing through the woods on

his way around us, back to his company, but we did not try to head him off and, when daylight dawned we were twenty or thirty miles away, headed for the mountains, with five horses and no German. In the darkness he had slipped off the horse he was riding, and the man who was supposed to be guarding him did not seem to be very sorry to lose him. As we rode along through the darkness we each decided to keep the horse he was leading, instead of drawing lots for them and, as my captured animal was the friskiest of the lot, I believed I had the best. But oh! what a difference in the morning! I had a regular old plug.

One morning in the late summer, previous to my capture, I had been scouting with Colonel Mosby in the Valley, and a few of us were resting on the roadside, hidden under the trees from the view of any of the enemy who might be passing along the pike. While Sheridan was in the Valley all the roads in the vicinity of his army were pretty well covered by his cavalry in motion. Looking out under the trees from our hiding place the Colonel saw the four legs of a gray horse coming toward us, and assumed that a horse's body and a man, mounted on it, accompanied the legs; so he told me to go out and bring the man in to him. I mounted my horse and rode out to see who the newcomer was and, as he was not looking for anybody from Mosby's Confederacy, I had no trouble in poking my pistol under his nose before he could draw his own from the holster. He surrendered very quietly and I took him back to the Colonel, in the meantime searching him carefully to be sure that he had no dynamite

about his person. I was much relieved to find that he only had a harmless pocket-book and a pretty good watch which, in all kindness, I offered to keep for him and which, in equal kindness, he permitted me to do. He proved to be Lieutenant Wright, Provost-Martial for General Merritt. During the morning we captured some other prisoners and, inasmuch as I had profited more than the other boys by the horse and the personal effects of the Lieutenant, as well as some other trinkets obtained casually from other prisoners, the Colonel made me take all the prisoners out. I had to get them from the rear of Sheridan's troops, and along the western base of the mountain till I came within the lines of our own army, which was facing Sheridan. In other words I had to describe a circle of about twenty miles to go what would have been only about five in a straight line. When I got to General Early's headquarters I tried to have Lieutenant Wright exchanged for one of our own Lieutenants, Frank Fox, who had been wounded and captured only a few days before, but my good intentions were frustrated by the death of Frank Fox, and my captured Provost-Martial was sent to Richmond. The Colonel enjoyed my ownership of the captured watch very much, and after that day he would frequently say, "What time is it, Munson, by Lieutenant Wright?" Years and years afterwards, in fact when he had returned from his long residence in Hong Kong, where he had represented the United States Consul, he was walking with me one day in St. Louis, and turning to me with his happy smile, asked me the same old

question, "What time is it, Munson, by Lieutenant Wright?"

When I was captured my "Lieutenant Wright" watch became part of the spoils of my conquerors, but in all the excitement and terror of my downfall I noted the appearance of the fellow who took my watch and, when I arrived at the headquarters of my captors that night I asked the Colonel of the regiment (I think it was Farnsworth of Illinois, who later was a Congressman) to try and get my family heirloom returned to me. I pointed out the man who had it and it was given up, but not to me. It was sent along to the Old Capitol prison accompanying the prisoners.

When I escaped from that prison early in 1865, I was in such a hurry that I forgot to ask for my watch.

In June, 1865, when the men who were in prison with me came home from Fort Warren, one of them told me that when my escape was discovered and our men were sent away to Boston, the superintendent of the prison restored to each man his personal effects, and when he held up that watch and asked who it belonged to, the boys told him it was Munson's. "Well," he remarked, "if Munson will call here for it he can have it." When I heard this I wrote him a request to send me the watch and, two days later, received it; as it is still among my possessions it has really now become an old family affair.

I met General Merritt at an entertainment in St. Louis, ten years after the war, and told him of my capture of Lieutenant Wright, and he said he was glad to learn the facts, because the Lieutenant had

disappeared from the face of the earth that morning and, as no word was ever heard of or from him, he always supposed he had deserted. I heard that he died in prison in Richmond, but if I am mistaken, and if he is still alive, and if he reads this and wants his watch I will send it to him; but not his pocket-book.

I captured another watch that same summer from another man of Sheridan's Command and, at the close of the war I gave it to Mr. John Carr, a citizen who lived on the mountainside near Paris. When most of our men went over to the Valley on April 22, 1865, to surrender to General Hancock, Mr. Carr went along to get his parole also, thinking perhaps that sympathizing citizens were included in the general terms of the surrender. The old gentleman was pretty well frightened at his surroundings when he reached the Valley, and told a friend of his he expected every minute to be his last. He wanted to know what time it was but he was afraid to pull out that watch on the street, for fear its former owner might recognize it and put him in jail. The possession of it worried him so that he slipped it down inside his trousers and let it drop into his sock, and getting on his horse he hurried out of town to his home.

Sam Alexander was one of our heavy-weights, though he was only a youngster. I would not like to say how much he weighed, but it was close around the two hundred and forty pound mark. It did not interfere in the least, however, with his riding. He came from Campbell Court House, Virginia, and was a son of Captain Jack Alexander, one of the best-

known men in the state and once the owner of the celebrated race horse "Red Eye," by Boston, the sire of Lexington. Sam came by his love for fine horses honestly, but I do not know where he got his fluent and variegated assortment of profanity. There was not a better rider in the Command, and there was not a gamer man. When he swept down on a sutler his process of absorption was unique. He could extract from the victim his last gasp of protest, as well as his last penny's worth of goods. I only mention this boy's name, among my stories of time-pieces, because I am reminded of him whenever I think of a captured watch. It was a fruitless raid for Sam when he did not come home with a newly absorbed watch.

There were other specialists in our Command. Some would have a peculiar fondness for new pistols, and in every fight would try to capture weapons newer than their own. Others made a point of getting handsome saddles, and still others wanted fancy saddle blankets. It is perhaps not strange that a number of the men made pocket-books a specialty. I believe I was of this number.

While the effect of robbing a captured soldier was felt largely by the victim, it formed its part of the general purpose of "harassing and annoying the enemy." It made a man in the service less anxious to fall into his captor's hands a second time, after one experience of being fleeced. I recall at even this late day that I never had any desire to become the guest of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry after that gallant band had gone through me. And that just reminds me:

It was the Major of the regiment who got my pipe and silk tobacco bag. Surely a poor private can be forgiven for indulging in his raids on the prisoners' pocket-books, when the commissioned officers set the example.

## CHAPTER XIV

### I AM CAPTURED

AFTER the war, when the Nation was healing its wounds and reminiscence was rife in the land, my dear old mother met a friend on the Richmond Capitol square and stopped to talk about the great conflict.

"Mrs. Munson," ventured the friend, who knew my connection with the Partisan Rangers, "what do you reckon was the worst whipping Colonel Mosby's men got during the war?"

"Well, I never heard anyone discuss it," replied my mother, smiling to herself, "but I reckon it must have been the day the Yankees captured my boy Johnny."

A good many mothers were under the impression that the entire conflict was fought right around their children, and those who sat waiting at home for the soldier who never came back had some reason for their beliefs. Fortunately for me and for the good woman who dated Mosby's greatest misfortune as simultaneous with my capture, I succeeded in escaping from the Yankees and in returning to the South before the trouble had ceased.

It was not strange that I should get into the Federal drag net sooner or later. I had been enjoying a lot of liberty during the two last years and, when it came

time for me, as it did in the latter end of 1864, to throw up my hands and "come along with us," I did so with that same alacrity with which other hands had been thrown up to me.

It came about in this wise. A newly appointed Captain, chosen by Mosby from what he used to call his blue hen's chickens, because of their unfailing excellence, had a chance to win his spurs in a fight that was about due to come off near Upperville. A detachment from the Eighth Illinois Cavalry was on a short raid from their camp near Rectortown, to Upperville, and Colonel Mosby ordered them attacked. The officer to whom I refer had been with Mosby since the very inception of the Partisan Rangers and, as an individual fighting man, had no superior in the Command, his promotion from the ranks being a just reward for a continuous record of brilliant service. His waving plume was ever at the head of the column when there was fighting to be done, and everybody in the Command loved Walter Frankland.

Captain Frankland's plan was to divide his Command for the purpose of charging a stone-wall of Federal cavalry in front and flank simultaneously. It did not work if my memory serves me right, as the enemy had our first detachment whipped before Lieutenant Grogan with his flanking party reached the scene. Grogan had no idea that Frankland had been disposed of, until the Federals turned their attention to his little squad, and discomfited him at the same handy pace.

They poured a deadly carbine fire into us as we

rushed on. We were charging in fours, and I was at the front, and did not know that our men had wavered and turned off from the hopeless attack until it was too late to follow them. When I discovered my predicament I believe it would have been a safe thing for me to have headed my horse straight at their line and trusted to my breaking my way through by the impetus of the charge. It takes a good strong horse to withstand the charge of another one, head on. What I should have done, and what I did, are two widely different things. Luck, too, was against me. I only realized that I was up against it, and must try to get away. When I headed my mare for a high and forbidding stone fence the animal refused to take the leap. For an instant, as she approached the ugly barrier, I thought she would go over, but that short, firm step that a jumper makes just before rising failed, and a wave of anxiety passed through me as she hesitated. I tried to lift her with the movement that the rider involuntarily makes, and touched her with my spur. She trembled, gave a frightened little neigh, and fell back on her haunches.

It looked bad for me. I jumped from her back, scrambled over the wall on my own hook, and was breaking the world's record in a fine two hundred yard dash for some timber on the other side. At one time I thought I would actually get away, but the Yankees found a gap in the wall that I had overlooked and got on my trail at once. My mare jumped the wall after me like a deer, and with head and tail up defiantly, though really as badly scared as I, dashed

away across the field and was found the next day riderless, miles away from the scene of my troubles. I fancied, as I saw her fading away from me, that she looked back pityingly, but I could fancy any old thing just then.

Before I got a hundred yards from the wall they pounced on me and made the most complete capture of a rebel ever witnessed. About twenty men made as many passes at me, and the baubles and splendors of guerrilla life disappeared. They got my hat and plumes, my gloves and pistols, my watch and belt, and all my personal belongings. Before I had time to make the slightest protest, one fellow sat me down abruptly, put his foot on me, and relieved me of my boots in a most startling and finished manner. Talk about Mosby's men going through a man! There was not a man in our Command who could swoop down and capture a pair of boots like the man who took mine! It was my initial touch at the game of retaliation, and the Yankees trimmed me well.

I have very recently received a letter from Mr. W. S. Freeman, who is now a prominent business man in Le Mars, Iowa, in which he said, "I was one of the men who captured you, and my share of the swag was your spurs. I wish I had them now, so I could send them to you. Another one of our little party was Mr. James How, of Audubon, Iowa. You overrated the number of men who captured you; there were only a few of us." I answered his friendly letter and told him my mental condition was such, when he claims to have first formed my acquaintance, that I

could imagine his whole regiment had a hand in the affair.

I did not regret the loss of any of my belongings as much as that of my watch. Pocket-book, knife, pipe, tobacco-bag and everything else could be duplicated when I should come back home, but that watch was my pride.

Not many months before that day I had ridden out on the turnpike in the Valley and captured an officer who was riding towards me. He was Lieutenant Wright, Provost-Marshal for General Merritt. The first thing I took from him after disarming him was this watch. Everything else he had followed in the regular order, but I paid no special attention to them. I fondled that watch, for it was the first one I had ever captured.

I had learned to appreciate what we were pleased to call "a fat capture," for a great many of the men we took seemed to be waiting for the paymaster to arrive. I remember in a fight we had near Duffield Station on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, I captured, single handed, five poor, frightened infantrymen who had thrown down their guns and were absolutely harmless. From all the five men I only got sixty-five cents. I had no heart in the business for days after. One of the best men we had was big, fat Sam Alexander. He was a dare-devil and much given to profanity. In an ugly fight one day Sam aimed his pistol at a man's head and said: "Give me your pocket-book, you blankety blank, blank."

"I have not got any pocket-book," he said.

"Well then, surrender," Sam said, as he proceeded to disarm the prisoner. But this is a digression.

I was taken with some other prisoners over to Rectortown, and locked up in the station of the old Manassas Gap Railroad. Had I known that the distance from the second story to the ground was less than fifteen feet, I might have jumped it and got away. As it was, I remained there that night and got some much-needed rest and sleep. The following day we were taken to Alexandria by rail. In my guard I recognized a man whom I had befriended the previous year, when he had been my prisoner in Fauquier County. He had not forgotten the circumstance and was willing that I should jump off the train when it came to the next stop. Here was a little light ahead; some of the bread I had cast upon the waters bid fair to return. The next thing I knew my friendly guard was relieved by another man, and the bread became dough.

I spent the next night in the old slave pen in Alexandria. "Served me right," remarked one of my fellow prisoners. On the following day I was marched into Washington to the Old Capitol prison. My raiment consisted of a suit of underclothes protected by a cast-off outfit that I had picked up somewhere after I had been put through the third degree by the Eighth Illinois boys and, in addition, I carried in my hand a pair of rough horsehide boots that replaced the twenty-seven dollar Wellingtons which had been skinned off me. I could not wear the boots, and I did not care to give them up, for I had hopes that I might be able to exchange them for some others to

suit my size and taste in foot-gear, so I carried them around with me by the straps.

From Alexandria we were marched up the road and across the long bridge to Washington and, when we swung into Pennsylvania Avenue I was barefooted, as my socks had worn through on the march. Beside me marched Dennis Darden, a Washington man, who knew every foot of the locality through which we were passing. Carefully we worked our way down our line till we were the last two in the ranks, for we had arranged to strike down the guards on either side of us, when we reached a certain alley, and make a dash for freedom. I figured on smashing my guard in the face with the horsehide boots and pulling his musket down over his back before he could empty its contents into my rebellious bosom. Incidentally, I had made up my mind to make a better run than I made two days previously. Just before we got to the alley some of Darden's friends, learning of his capture, gathered along the line of march and brought up in the rear, following at our heels, and offering cigars. Dennis turned pale and whispered to me that any attempt to escape would involve his friends, who would be arrested and possibly shot as accomplices in our escape.

About sunset we reached the Old Capitol prison, at the southeast corner of First and A streets, almost opposite the Senate Chamber. I was assigned, with thirty-six others, to a room in the front of the building overlooking the Capitol of the United States, with the gilded statue of Liberty on the dome. She stood against the winter sky and beckoned me to the freedom

that she has since given to the oppressed in many climes; but in '64, I spent long days and weary nights at my grated window, playing checkers with my nose, wondering what particular significance that golden goddess with hand outstretched had for me. She looked awfully inviting, but I could not accept.

There was not much in prison life that interested me. What I was most concerned about was how to escape. I racked my brain in vain endeavor for some brilliant idea by which I could bid adieu to everything north of Loudoun county, Virginia. One night, while exercising in the narrow yard in which we were permitted to move about, I observed the entrance of the scavengers who came every twenty-four hours to clean out the prison. It occurred to me that I might make a deal with one of these men to escape in the cart they used. I arranged to give one of them a five-dollar gold piece, provided he would help me out. I had ascertained from him that he was a former slave of a friend of mine in Virginia. He was willing enough, but offered the objection that I was a white man, while the scavengers were negroes. I agreed to take care of that part of the transaction.

That night I burned a big cork, and in the shadow of the exercising yard I blackened my face like a minstrel and sauntered up to the scavengers' cart. The two men, anxious that I should play my part in a natural and easy manner, handed me their shovels, and ordered me to hustle around lively and show what stuff I was made of. I had no choice but to shovel garbage, and I put in half an hour of the hardest work




MOSBY AND A GROUP OF BALTIMORE GUERRILLAS IN 1865.

*From a Photograph.*

of my life. The perspiration mixed with the burnt cork, and I looked more like a coal heaver than a Washington coon. Nevertheless, when the work was done, I jumped on the cart and we drove indifferently towards the exit. We passed the post and it looked as if we would get away. At the outer gate, however, a figure stepped out of the shadow and a well rounded Irish-American voice remarked, "Git down from that and go back to your quarthers: two of yez nagers come in, and three of yez is thrying to go out." I crept back humbly to my grated quarters.

Within a week I had another plan. It contemplated making an exit in the contract baker's wagon which came into the prison yard every day to deliver bread. One morning when conditions seemed to be about right, I jumped into the wagon, worked my way under a stack of warm, white loaves, and snuggled down in the flour dust, waiting for my baker coachman to come out and drive me away.

One of my large feet protruded from the bread pile and was discovered by one of the eagle-eyed reserve guard, who dragged me from the friendly loaves, sputtering and wild with rage, much as a butcher pulls a side of beef from an ice-box. I was promptly marched off to the guard house and advised, privately, that my next attempt at rambling would be met with something calculated to keep me in for an indefinite period.

I was obliged to resort to these expedients because at that time the usual methods of escape had been worked to death, and necessity had become the mother

of many new inventions. Tunneling, uprising, cutting bars at windows, bribing guards, and other familiar devices of prisoners were amply provided against. One of our men found a guard who for a consideration agreed to let him escape through a window under which he was on duty. The poor prisoner sawed through the iron bars of his window, made a rope from his bed clothes, and with infinite caution at the appointed hour, slid slowly down to what he imagined was freedom. Just as his feet touched the pavement and the thrill of liberty began to fill his soul, a bayonet driven by the friendly guard, pierced his back and passed through his heart. The guard was rewarded with a sergeantcy. A well-deserved promotion, perhaps.

The confinement was beginning to wear on me. While the food and the treatment were in every way satisfactory, I felt an intense longing to go back to Virginia, where the fighting and raiding and hurrahing were going on, and where I had friends, relations and countrymen. All my efforts to escape had come to naught and it seemed that I was destined to remain in prison until the Federal Government saw fit to turn me loose. Nevertheless, I stuck to the principles of eternal vigilance and watched the game as it went on around me.

In the daily life of the prison I observed a short, black-haired man, a member of the hospital staff, who passed in and out of the main entrance thrice a day. I found out that he took his meals outside, and that he was never challenged by the guards. The thought

occurred to me that I might surreptitiously take his place. Upon reflection, however, I observed that he was short and stumpy, about forty and black-haired, while I was a tall, rakish, clipper-built blonde of eighteen; that I wore gray, while he wore blue; that he was out while I was in. Nevertheless I made up my mind to take one more chance for better or for worse, for life or death. This hospital steward's insignia consisted of a strip of green about two inches wide, bordered with faded yellow braid. In the center of the strip was a faded figure of Mercury with a serpent coiled around the staff of the wand, with spreading wings on top. This figure was also in yellow or gold. I never got close enough to inspect the design carefully, but I had a pretty correct idea of its general characteristics fixed in my mind. He wore one on either arm.

I had written an appealing, and probably exaggerated letter to my aunt, Mrs. Margaret E. Sangster, of New York, who since that day has endeared herself to countless thousands of readers all over the world by her graceful writings in prose and verse. In the epistle I described prison life so graphically that she sent me from the north a generous supply of good gold coin with which to relieve the hardships I depicted. Sometimes I think that if novelists could spend a few years in jail, they could turn out literature that would have an irresistible appeal to their readers' hearts.

With a portion of the money sent by my aunt, I proceeded to mould myself into a hospital steward. My first purchase was a blue blouse from a Yankee

prisoner who was in for jumping the bounty for the seventeenth time, as he informed me. To this day my aunt has never forgiven me for using her loyal gold to bribe a northern soldier, even though he was a bounty jumper. But I consoled myself with the reflection that I needed the liberty and that, if one of my name were ever to accomplish anything in a military way and make it famous, she must contribute her share to it, since she was a Munson.

The next step in the scheme was to trade my gray trousers for a pair of dark-colored ones which, at a pinch, and in the evening, might be taken for good northern blue. Then came the rub; where was I to get the green strips so necessary for the strips on the arms? How could I find the yellow to make the figure of Mercury? I was in distress.

After cogitating over the matter I recollected that some of the southern uniforms contained a piece of green cloth sewed inside of the gray, or rather I thought I recollected it. How was I to get at these treasures? Only by ripping the coats or pockets open. Whereupon for the next week when my comrades were asleep, I got up, ripped their coats open, and prospected for two strips of green cloth, holding the garments up to the moonlight. Failing in my quest, I sewed up the rents, and passed on to the next coat. I was obliged to work slowly and noiselessly. I did not find what I most desired, and quoting the old saw, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," I metaphorically threw up my hands and abandoned the attempt.

A fortnight passed uneventfully and my determina-

tion began to reassert itself. My one object in life now was to find something green, but oddly enough it was the one color which seemed to have disappeared from the face of the world. Even the trees, rattling their bare branches in the winter winds, had lost their leaves, and the emerald hope was realized only in my dreams.

One afternoon I wandered into the sutler's shop, and while dealing with him my eyes fell upon a green pasteboard box on one of the upper shelves. Luck of all luck; it was the exact shade I had been seeking for the past month. I began to tremble with excitement. Did the sutler notice my emotion? No. I began to talk about needing a box to keep my valuables in. "That one up there on the shelf will do," I ventured, pointing to the green treasure.

"You can have it, young fellow," said the sutler, reaching up and pulling the box down from its position with the tip of his finger, "but you need not be afraid of burglars around here." He laughed at his joke immoderately, and with a final chuckle tossed the priceless thing into my receptive hands. I hurried away to my quarters. Ye gods! but I was happy.

That night I got up cautiously and, with nothing to see by but the light that flickered through the grated window, proceeded to cut strips of the proper dimensions from the green box. I had scarcely cut into the paper before I discovered that the body of the box was yellow straw board of a dull old-gold color that would easily pass muster for the one of Mercury and the coiled serpent. I almost broke into cheers in my

excess of joy. I found that, by trimming the edge of each strip of its superficial green layer, a nice yellow border was to be had.

When I had fastened the two strips of the proper length so that they would encircle my arms at the biceps, I went carefully to work on a crude outline of the figure of Mercury and the serpent, which after infinite pains began to assume the proportion of the real article. Michael Angelo never worked so hard over drawings as I did over these. Perhaps he had never experienced such inspiration as that under which I labored. After what seemed an interminable time I completed the outline drawing and peeled the green layers off the cardboard, exposing the precious yellow golden tint underneath. Then I drew on my blue blouse, pinned the green badges of office on either arm and stood fearful and furtive in the silence, the prison hospital steward. Then the gray light of morning crept in upon me. Thinking of my two clumsy efforts at deception I felt a great fear rising in my heart that perhaps failure was to be the end, and that the golden goddess on the dome of the Capitol might beckon to me in vain.

A guttural tremolo, loud and echoing, broke from one of the sleepers, rousing me from my reverie. Without further delay I whisked the blouse off, tucked it under my bunk in the farthest corner and crept into bed. I could not sleep, for there passed in review before me scenes of the fight at Dranesville, dear old Chapman and Richards leading their divisions to battle, John Puryear dashing madly among the Yankees

in some dare-devil expedition, Captain Montjoy singing his happy songs to the morning, and Colonel Mosby standing with his hands at his back, gazing across the Potomac towards Washington. I wanted to be with the Command. As the memories of the past two years rushed upon me, I felt my chin quiver and found myself swallowing a big lump in my cheerless rebel throat.

In the morning of the following day I took Dennis Darden into my confidence. He belonged to my company and I knew he could be trusted. The prevalence of spies in all the prisons made me cautious, which accounts for my reticence during the preparatory work. Before the war Darden had been in the secret service department of the Government, and I knew he could instruct me what to do if I succeeded in making my escape. He did not take kindly to the plan and advised me not to make the attempt. He urged that every step in my path was fraught with danger, and that if detected I was a dead boy. He reminded me that the reserve force had orders to kill the next man trying to escape, and volunteered the cheerful information that the Potomac was impassable in winter. He wound up, however, by giving me the names and addresses of several people in Washington to whom I could go for help if I ran the gauntlet and got away alive.

The prison rules permitted only two men to leave any one room and enter the yard at the same time, except for meals, and Darden therefore agreed to accompany me to the enclosure after dark. I did not dare to put on my blouse in the room occupied by

my comrades; not that I mistrusted them, but I feared indiscretion of some kind. For that reason Dennis was the only man who shared my hopes and fears.

There was a little interval of time between the last of twilight and the lighting of the prison candles in our rooms, and these were the saddest moments out of the twenty-four hours that made up the day. It was then that we used to think of home, and many a wan face turned to some friendly shadows, while silent tears trickled down the cold cheeks of stern soldiers. I have seen plenty of brave men cry, and to this day I do not like the late twilight when I am alone.

It was at this hour that I changed my gray coat for the blue blouse. Picking up Tom Love's overcoat to hide the precious green insignia, I beckoned to Dennis Darden to follow me, and passed through the building to the yard, with Dennis at my side, our nervous hands grasped tightly in what was to be a farewell grip.

The sentries, believing that we were simply en route for our evening's exercise, passed along without comment. We trod the cold floor like specters, both ready to "burst out crying." I wish he were alive today so I could once again press the faithful old hand that clung to mine as a father's clings to his son's.

When we got into the shadow of the yard I took off Tom Love's overcoat and gave it to Dennis to carry up stairs. He felt at his throat as if his collar was choking him and, turning, walked back without looking at me again.

After the war he confessed that he was so wrought up that he was afraid to see me start for the door, fearing that, in his emotion, he would cry out and attract attention. I watched him cross the yard and disappear in the shadows at the other end of the enclosure.

Suddenly a great and overpowering dread of the first sentry came over me and I stood as if petrified for at least a minute. Then the old longing for liberty asserted itself and, without further ado, I marched, numb with uncertainty, up to the main doors leading into the long hall through which I must pass to freedom. The sentry made no protest and, with that for a first success, I threw out my chest and held my arms so that the insignia of the hospital steward were prominently displayed. I passed all the inner guards unchallenged, and stepped by the night relief force just being formed in the hall, finally reaching the outer door of the prison, which was opened for me and held so by the man on post.

A blast of cold, fresh, free air smote me in the face. A man on horseback with his cloak wrapped around him, cantered by on the hard pavement; lights glittering from the houses in the distance reached out long arms and splashed on my green badges. The sentry bowed familiarly to me, and in three more steps I passed through the gates that had held me prisoner and heard them jangle and rattle as they closed behind me. The sharp click of the bolt in the big lock sounded like a pistol shot as it slipped into place. Involuntarily I contracted all my muscles, literally shrank myself up

like a boy about to receive the paternal shingle, and crossed the street with a wildly beating heart, but free! free! free!

Dennis Darden hurried back to my former quarters, took our friend Captain Babcock by the arm and, leading him to the grated window, pointed to the figure sauntering across the street in the direction of the Goddess of Liberty looming on the Capitol dome. Then he whispered:

"There goes John Munson home."

## CHAPTER XV

### I ESCAPE

NOW that I was actually out of prison and free to proceed whither I willed, the difficulties of the situation began to present themselves. Where could I go that a Southerner was sure of protection and assistance? I had the names Dennis Darden gave me before my departure; names of people supposed to be sympathizers; but the novelty of the situation was too much for me and I began to feel like the guilty who flee when no man pursueth. Although I had been a resident of Washington for three months, I had kept strictly indoors and was not in the least familiar with the streets and the people. All of a sudden I bethought myself of the green insignia on my arms. I wrenched them from my blouse and tore them into bits, tossing the fragments into the Capitol grounds. They fell in a green shower and lay scintillating in the reflections from the gas lamps that lined the thoroughfare. I fled from them precipitately, ever fearful that the fat, dark, hospital steward would come sauntering along and see me playing his part.

Among the names supplied by Darden was that of a woman who kept a fashionable boarding house. I decided to call on her first and after considerable diffi-

culty I found her residence. A young darky answered the bell.

"Yes sah, de Missus is in, but I don't reckon you can see her jess at dis hour. You name sah, if you please?"

At that moment the lady happened to come down stairs and to the door where I was standing. In a low voice I told her Dennis Darden had sent me to her, but before I could proceed, she said with considerable excitement, though well controlled:

"Never heard of him! Who is he? You must have made a mistake, young man."

I was heartbroken.

"George," she said presently, turning to the darky, "go up stairs and close the back window. There is a draught in the hall." The servant disappeared.

"Quick, my boy, what can I do for you? Yes, I know Dennis Darden well."

She drew me into the warm hall with motherly tenderness. "Do you want money? here it is," and she pressed me to take it. The roll of bills she offered me made me think this was another greenback raid. "I don't want your money," I replied," I have enough for all my wants; I want you to conceal me somewhere. Can you hide me for a day or two, or just for tonight? If you can only catch on to my situation at present, I am on the run."

I said all of this in a good deal of a hurry, and in just as much of a hurry she said,

"Impossible! I am suspected of being a Southern sympathizer; this house is watched by spies, and Colo-

nel Billy Wood at the Old Capitol will have his detectives here as soon as he finds out you have escaped. I will tell you where to go."

She gave me another address. The servant was returning and I bowed myself out, while she protested in a low voice that she had never heard of Dennis Darden and did not want to, and I thought I heard the word tramp, but maybe not.

By midnight I had visited four "Southern sympathizers" who protested hatred of everything south of the line. I cannot say in justice that I blamed them for giving me the cold shoulder, as Washington was full of detectives and spies engaged in ferreting out residents who were suspected of treasonable tendencies. It was a dangerous thing to display any anti-Union leanings in those days.

An exception to my general turning down was in the case of Dennis's old mother and sister, whom I called on after I left the boarding house landlady, but I only stopped for a moment to tell them about their son and brother, for I knew their's would be one of the first houses to be searched. They welcomed me and would have had me stay and hide, but I knew that it would endanger them, and I moved on.

I wandered around the back streets in a sort of panic, ducking behind trees and sneaking into shadows every time a pedestrian or horseman came into view. I thought every soldier was after me, as the roll call was sure to disclose my absence.

The last address in my possession was that of a sporting man of the name of Lunsford. He ran a

gilded palace of chance down town, and his place was generally filled with army officers with a penchant for faro and roulette. I hesitated about going there, because of its popularity among the Union officers. Nevertheless, about midnight I decided to take the gambler's chance myself, and entered the place boldly. It literally swarmed with Federal uniforms, but by this time I was too desperate or perhaps too indifferent to care much what happened. I called Lunsford aside when he was pointed out to me, and told him my story, explaining how I had been turned down four times that night.

"Serves you right," he answered; "you should have come to me first. Did not Dennis tell you I could be depended on? Confound you, this idiotic delay may cost you your liberty."

At this greeting all my fears left me, and the world seemed to be mine, especially when he added cheerfully, "Better get some grub into you, and prepare to light out of Washington before daybreak. How is old Dennis? Does he want anything?" With that he hustled me into the back room where I satisfied myself at the guests' table, taking care of a meal that was by far the best and largest I had ever eaten since my capture.

At the conclusion of my assault on the viands, Lunsford called in his manager, told him to run the place until it was time to close up, and together we set out for Georgetown. It added speed to my steps when he intimated that some of the soldiers in his place, very probably, were men sent out to look for me, though

it might have been only one of his jokes. I wanted to walk, so that if necessary I could break into a sprint, but he insisted on riding, and somewhere he got a cab and we drove into Georgetown about two o'clock in the morning. My new-made friend took me to a little family hotel called "The White House," kept by a Frenchman named Tony Rodier, and instructed him to hide me until I could be safely started in the direction of Loudoun county. Lunsford thereupon bade me a warm good-bye, and after offering to share his roll with me if I was out of funds, drove back to Washington.

That was the last I saw of the brave and generous fellow, but I wrote to him after the war expressing my appreciation. I have recently learned that he is still living in Washington, at a ripe old age.

I remained most of the time in a room in the attic, as my host did not care to have visible a guest whose character was likely to be questioned at any moment. On the fourth day I had about concluded to strike out after dark and make my way back to the Command as best I could. But in the meantime Madame Rodier had arranged with a country market man that I was to leave the town with him, passing as his son; the idea being to get me outside of the picket limits and turn me loose in the open to go it alone. I did not realize then that it was infinitely harder to escape from Washington through the almost countless pickets than to get out of the Old Capitol prison. Madame Rodier told the countryman that it would be a pleasure for her to annihilate him if he failed in his mission.

Evidently the farmer was impressed, for he displayed evident signs of fear; so much so, in fact, that the hotel man's wife had to supply him with courage in the form of a bottle of brandy. The effect was instantaneous and he departed for the rural districts in fine feather.

About two miles outside of the city limits the last of the pickets we had to pass held us up and wanted to know where the farmer had "dug up" the boy, meaning me. An argument ensued, but the farmer protested stoutly that I had come in with him, and that I was sleeping among the vegetables when he entered the lines. The guard looked incredulous, and then to try and trip the old fellow, asked if he did not have something to drink. My "father" insisted that he never took a drink in his life and, after a brief parley, we were permitted to proceed. When we came to the first turn in the road where we were hidden from the soldiers, the old fellow drew out his bottle and took a long pull at the contents, saying to me, "Sonny, if you was as badly scared just now as I am you'd be mighty glad to take a swig out of that bottle, young as you is."

For several days and nights after the garden-truck man set me down, several miles outside of Georgetown, I was kept busy dodging pickets and straggling troopers, keeping out of the way of strangers and sidestepping awkward situations, to say nothing of the extreme difficulty of getting enough to eat. But I gradually made my way north-westward, not far from the Potomac at any time, and at length I began to feel

that my prospect for reaching the stamping ground of the Rangers was improving.

Just about sunset on the seventh day I was set down from a stage coach in the little towns of Poolesville, in Montgomery county, Maryland, pretty tired, but hopeful, for I had caught a glimpse of the Blue Ridge Mountains that afternoon and made up my mind to reach their friendly shelter or know why. I was looking rather seedy for my clothes had seen hard usage of late and they were not new when I got them. I found a soldier in Poolesville who was doing cavalry duty in the neighborhood. He was a Federal trooper and seemed to be a decent sort of fellow. I inquired of him the way to a certain house near the Potomac river, a house occupied by a " friend " to whom I had been directed. He advised me to keep away from the river, saying the Federal pickets might mistake me for a rebel and shoot me. I insisted on going, however, and he offered to let me walk beside his horse while he rode out into the country, promising to start me right when we got to a certain fork in the road.

It was a bitter cold night and the patches of snow lay white and shimmering along the fields on the highway. Before us, covered with frost and ice, was the winding road, sometimes in the open white light of the moon, and at other times heavy with the shadows of trees. My guide was rather a talkative person and under the influence of his chatting I began to warm up to the trip.

Once when we were passing along a frozen stretch of the road I reached out and grabbed a pistol holster

from the trooper's saddle, in an effort to support myself. The instant my fingers touched the leather a thought flashed through my mind. Why not capture him? Never had a man such a chance as this. He had everything that I lacked; a good horse, a carbine, two pistols, and a warm coat. I withdrew my hand from the holster and trudged along. The idea began to appeal to me. I recalled the time when my Captain, Billy Smith, of Mosby's Command, while being led off captive by the enemy, pulled his captor down by the wrist, dealt him a blow in the face, dragged him to the ground; how he took his pistols, mounted into the empty saddle, and galloped back to the Command, cheering his own prowess.

It would be a very simple matter to haul that Federal trooper to the earth, and the idea that the Colonel would approve of it if I told him of it, was a consideration not to be overlooked. I did not want to execute the maneuver in a hasty and bungling manner, so I set about studying the conditions more closely. I recollect how, in my conversation, I made many gestures, all of which were calculated to bring my hands more closely in touch with the rider's boots, his revolver holsters, his stirrup, and such other important things as were likely to come in for a share in the mixup. Once I put my hand over on the stirrup casually, just to see how far his foot went into the slot. At that particular moment the trooper had slipped his boot almost out of the stirrup and I could have then and there carried out my plan with little risk to myself. I glanced up in his face just to see if there could be

any possible suspicion in his eyes, intending to raid him when we struck the shadow of the next tree. Just then he spoke.

"If you are tired, comrade, I will walk and let you ride a spell. I guess it must be pretty hard jogging along these frozen roads."

Here I was contemplating this fellow's capture and humiliation, while he was occupied with thoughts for my comfort. It did not take me long to assure him of my gratitude and, when we separated a little farther up the road and I shook his hand, I hoped that the genuine warmth with which I grasped it might compensate for my unbrotherly cogitations earlier in the night. I stood there alone, watching him melt into the landscape, and the sane thought presented itself to me that the river was frozen over, making a horse unnecessary, and a prisoner would have been an awful handicap to me. There is no fool like a fool looking for a fight.

I found my way to the house I was in search of and spent that night and the next day under a dry and hospitable roof, changing my clothes for warmer garments. When I finally went down to the river's bank, under cover of darkness, I heard voices and hid behind a pile of rocks. A trio of Federal soldiers passed so near me that I heard their voices. The amusing part of it was that they were holding an animated conversation about Mosby and his captivating tactics. I gathered from what I overheard that the Command had been raising no end of trouble during my absence.

After the Yankees passed I made for the river rapidly, and found it completely frozen over, as had been reported. A bad storm was blowing up, however, and I could hear the ice crackling and humming ominously. The snow began to lose its crispness and I knew that a thaw was about to set in. This gave me another reason, an excellent one, for getting across to the soil of Virginia, and I made tracks over the frozen bosom of the old Potomac, like a timber wolf loping back home. All the way I could hear the ice sheet humming and warping under my feet. A blinding wind from the southeast was eating into the ice hummocks, and I felt the moisture coming through my boots. The thaw was on without a doubt. At every few steps my feet slipped on the rough lumps and I fell sprawling on my face, only to lie quiet for a moment, and gaze up and down the river and try to find out if I was discovered by the pickets stationed along its banks. I could see their fires for miles both ways, and my overwrought nerves made the noise of each stumble and fall appear to me like explosions of a mine. I could almost imagine the guards could hear me grunt and groan. The ice broke up and the river opened two hours after I crossed.

I landed a few miles below Leesburg and tramped into that town about ten o'clock at night. On the way I heard the sound of horses, and dropped down behind a clump of bushes to hide. They proved to be a raiding party of Yankees returning from our country to their camp in Fairfax. I spent the night at a friend's house in Leesburg and another raiding

party came into town during the night and searched the house. I began to think getting out of prison was easy compared with dodging raiders. The next day I walked out to West Aldrich's home, a few miles from town, and he gave me a lift as far as Upperville, the town near which I had been captured nearly three months before, and where a meeting of the Command was being held when I reached there.

I walked in on my old comrades like a specter, for some of them had heard that I had died in prison of smallpox. I had much to tell them of the boys I had left behind and much to listen to about the adventures and experiences of those that were safe. The burden of my advice was, "Don't get caught, for it is hard to get back."

Colonel Mosby had not yet returned to the Command from his severe wound received late in December at Lake's house and, as the men were not particularly busy "annoying the enemy," I was given an indefinite leave of absence and went home to Richmond.

My first questions were, when I reached Upperville, about my horses, especially of the mare who got me captured by refusing to take the stiff stone wall. Until then I did not know what had become of her. I learned that my old comrade, Emory Pitts, had taken care of all my animals in my absence and, when I went into the stable where they were munching their oats, two of them, old "Champ" and the mare "Annie," stopped eating and whinnied their recognition and welcome. Maybe it was silly and boyish, but I

could not help it; I hugged both of them and cried just a little bit.

When at home in Richmond, I walked in on my mother, who had also heard that sickness had carried me away in a northern prison, there was a convulsive reunion. When my father came in that evening and asked the threadbare question, "Heard anything more about John?" the fact that I was hiding behind the door did not deceive him as to the meaning of the expression on my mother's face.

Well, somehow or other I got out from behind the door and fell into my father's arms like a helpless child, and for a while there was a triple crying and hugging and laughing. Truly it was worth a short term in prison to be part of such a family reunion.

It may be interesting to know what happened in the Old Capitol prison after my departure. Within half an hour following my exit, the superintendent and his guard made their nightly rounds and called the roll. It was then discovered I was missing. Search was made in every conceivable spot, even up the chimney and in the sewer. Careful investigations were resorted to and after several days it was discovered that the bounty jumper had sold me his blue blouse. As a punishment he was sent to the Dry Tortugas. All the rest of the prisoners were handcuffed in pairs and sent up to Fort Warren in Boston Harbor, where they were kept till the summer of 1865.

I should have mentioned before that Mosby's men were not exchanged during the latter part of the war, and the only way to get home was to go home. I

believe now, after forty years have passed, that the life of the old Partisan Command was what lured me back and made me take the chances one must take for liberty. I was fully repaid when, amid the stirring scenes of my soldier life, I heard again the old familiar order:

"Mount your horse, Munson, and come along with me."

## CHAPTER XVI

### TRYING FOR BIG GAME

ABOUT the middle of August, 1864, I don't recall just the date, but I believe it was the 15th, Major " Dolly " Richards's squad killed Lieutenant Walker of the First United States Cavalry. I have referred to it previously. In one of Walker's pockets the boys found a miniature likeness of his bride, with her name and the date of her marriage inscribed on it. Watkins of our Command gave it to a lady nearby, and asked her to see that it was sent through the lines, in safety, to that waiting bride. I hope she got it. I don't like to think of the incident.

Walker's horse was a splendid animal, and when his master was killed the poor, frightened creature dashed away toward the camps. Willie Martin chased him, but finding he could not overtake him, yelled to a Yankee soldier standing in the way to catch and hold him, which he did and, when Martin rode up, he told the man to get on the horse and " come along." It looked like a rather ungrateful way of paying him for doing a favor. The boys presented the horse to Major Richards. One of the men went through Walker's pockets and got five hundred dollars in greenbacks.

Lieutenant Alfred Glasscock took fifteen men to the

Valley about this time to annoy Sheridan. He was raiding near Kernstown with his little squad of fifteen men when he saw a company of cavalry approaching. His men wore rubber ponchos to keep off the rain. He could not distinguish the number of the enemy approaching, owing to a bend in the road, but told his men it was no time to run for, if there were too many of them, he would pass on by and trust to luck not to be discovered, but if there were not too many he would attack them and demand their surrender. He said:

"Now, boys, I am going to show you how to capture Yankees in the regular Mosby style."

As the commands approached each other, the Yankee said to Glasscock: "Hello, boys, I thought you were rebs." Glasscock smilingly told him not to be worried on that account, and as he rode on past the company his fifteen men scattered along the line from front to rear and, at a signal from Glasscock, every man presented a cocked pistol. The entire crowd surrendered, and not a shot was fired. We captured thirty men and their horses, and no record of their disappearance was left behind. It may have reached Sheridan's ears and "annoyed" him, or he may have heard that his men deserted in a body, or that the ghosts had spirited them away; but, whatever report of the disappearance of one of his cavalry companies was made to him, if any was, could not have added much to his cheerfulness.

Mosby had such confidence in the ability of his officers that he permitted them frequently to lay out their

own work, or rather the details of it. He would send an officer to the Valley, for instance, and tell him to find something to do around Winchester, while another one would be told to go with a few men to the neighborhood of Charlestown or some other point. Hardly a day passed from the first of August, 1864, till midwinter, that some of our men were not troubling Sheridan. Some time toward the middle or last of August, Major Richards tried to capture Sheridan, and but for a simple accident, it might have been accomplished. The game was at least worth the candle.

He took a dozen of company B and crept stealthily toward the sleeping army, encountering a picket who was captured silently. He then marched into the camp of the Nineteenth New York, but the soldiers were scattered so thickly on the ground that he could not ride through them. He had to retrace his steps and get in some other way. In passing a sentinel, Willie Martin, in a spirit of fun, spoke to him in a commanding voice, and told him to hold his gun properly, saying: "That is no way for a soldier to stand on duty." The man at once assumed a soldierly position and our boys had a quiet laugh at his expense.

Wherever Richards turned the sleeping soldiers were so thick he could make no progress among them, nor could he get the information he wanted about the location of headquarters, even though he woke some of the men to ask them. He turned to the pike once more, hoping to get from some of the men moving, the location of General Sheridan. He captured a man and took him along, hoping to extract something val-




COLONEL MOSBY AND GROUP OF RICHMOND MEN.

*Taken in 1865.*

1 COL. JOHN S. MOSBY.

2 N. V. RANDOLPH
3 SERGT. A. G. BABCOCK
4 LT. JOHN W. PURYEAR
5 LT. FRANK RAHM
6 W. W. GOSDEN
7 H. T. SINNOTT
8 O. L. BUTLER.
9 CHAS. QUARLES.
10 —— NOEL.
11 I. A. GENTRY.
12 SERGT. TOM BOOKER.
13 JOHN W. MUNSON.
14 TOM THROOP.
15 SERGT. R. H. PARROT.
16 LT. W. B. PALMER.
17 LEE HOWISON.

vacant place that seemed never to be filled. There were men and boys among us who had become so prominent by their individual bravery that when they left us we did not know who to stand up in their gaps, and so we left the gaps open. Willie Martin was one of them.

In the fight at Mount Zion Church a little more than a month previously, this boy had charged up among the Second Massachusetts men, and got so closely wedged among them that they clubbed him into insensibility with their carbines, as he was too close to them to be shot with safety to themselves. Company E was organized on July 28, 1864, and Willie Martin was named by Mosby as its second lieutenant, an appointment, like all the rest he made, for gallantry. Three weeks later with his two little modest strips on his collar, the insignia of the promotion he was so proud of and which he so justly deserved, they laid him to rest forever.

In May, 1864, Richards, with fifteen men, crossed the Shenandoah river at Berry's Ferry to find out what was "doing." We struck the Valley pike near Newtown early in the morning and picked up quite a number of stragglers during the day. Late in the evening he sent the prisoners back, and taking ten men, went into Newtown to get information.

At first the people would not believe we were Confederates, but we at last convinced them, and found there were no Federal troops at 2 o'clock P. M. on that day. Richards determined to raid Winchester. It commenced to rain about night and the darkness was

very dense. We were riding in single file on the side of the pike.

On the old Kernstown battle-field we heard the enemy coming up the pike. Richards immediately halted his men and gave orders for no one to say anything, as he would do the talking, saying that, if it was a small detachment, he would try and capture them, and if it was a large body we would pass on.

We again started down the road, and after going a short distance we were halted by the challenge: "Who comes there?" Richards answered, "First New York," as he knew that it was with Sigel, for we had captured some men from it that day. They answered:

"All right, we are the Twenty-first boys, come on advance guard of the regiment guarding wagon trains."

The officer in command of the detachment asked where we were going, and Richards replied:

"Couriers on the way to Martinsburg to telegraph that Sigel had whipped the rebels and gone on up the Valley."

The Twenty-first gave three cheers, and Richards told them to hold fast as his business was urgent, and we had to go on. As he reached the rear of the detachment he stopped, and the men turned on the Yankees and demanded their surrender. They were in the act of surrendering when some one fired a shot. I think that one of our boy's nerves gave way and he fired. The fight then became a melee, both sides hallooing and cursing. The regiment that was guard-

ing the train charged on us and we left. Charley Dear was shot through the side.

Speaking of Charley Dear, the following contribution from him will prove interesting, I am certain. I offer it entire, and take this opportunity to thank him for it.

On January 30, 1865, Major Richards started from Bloomfield, with thirty men, to raid the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. We reached the railroad running from Harper's Ferry to Winchester about midnight, and found that road so heavily guarded by infantry, and patrolled by cavalry every half hour, that we could not accomplish anything.

Richards determined not to be outdone, and sent part of his men off with John Russell, and kept about fifteen men with him. He endeavored again to cross the railroad but failed, and then called Jim Wiltshire and me to him, and told us to go and bring him a prisoner, and be certain to bring one before we returned.

The weather was cold and the snow was on the ground; the moon was shining bright. Wiltshire and I moved quietly up the railroad and soon met two men who asked us where we were going. We answered, "The Twelfth Pennsylvania, sent out to see what had become of you fellows, as you had stayed beyond your time." We were then right up to them, and covered them with our pistols, and told them to keep quiet and go with us, which they did. We took them to Major Richards, who after a talk with them of a few minutes, called Wiltshire and me to him, and told

us to take the prisoners aside, separate them and demand the countersign, which we did, with a six-shooter at their heads. They gave it to us but, when we compared notes, the word did not come up right; we tried it again, with the pistols cocked this time, and pressed against their heads, but with no idea of shooting them. It was very persuasive this time, and when we again compared notes they had agreed, as they had given us the same word: the countersign was "Dry."

Charley Wiltshire, Will Shepard, Jim Wiltshire and I were sent down the railroad to see if the word would work, which it did, and the boys brought in four more prisoners.

After this it was clear sailing. After talking with the prisoners Richards determined to pay our respects to the guard-house of the Twelfth Pennsylvania Cavalry. The reason we went to the guard-house was we heard there was a prisoner there, Charley Aisquith, who was from the Second Virginia Infantry.

Richards sent back the prisoners and kept with him nine men. As we approached the camp all was quiet; they little dreaming that the Mosby men were there. The interior guard halted us and Charley Wiltshire gave them, "Patrol," and riding up to him, asked him if he wanted the countersign. He said "No."

Wiltshire shoved a pistol in his face and told him to keep quiet and, putting him behind one of the men, we rode quietly through the camp to the guard house, making the prisoner show us where the guard house was, with a man riding beside him with a pistol at

his head telling him to remain quiet. The camp was laid out in streets, with stables on one side, where we could see the fine horses; the front of it was open, sentinels walking their beat in front; cabins on the other side covered with canvas; all asleep.

We rode straight to the guard house and, as we arrived there, a soldier had just come out to replenish the fire in front of the guard tent. Charley Wiltshire jumped off his horse and captured him and Jim Wiltshire also dismounted to see if the Charlestown boy was in there. Jim Wiltshire walked to the door of the tent, pulled up the flap and he and I looked in to see if Aisquith was inside. He was not. If he had been Jim Wiltshire was going in after him. The soldiers were lying side by side, asleep, little thinking that two of Mosby's men were looking in upon them.

Joe Bryan and Joe Gibson were also dismounted, holding their horses, and the rest of the boys commenced cutting loose the horses around the guard tent, ready to take a hand in the fray. Bartlett Bolling, seeing a sentinel standing near looking on, rode up to him and demanded his surrender. The soldier replied with a shot, and that broke up the fun.

We did not go out as quietly as we went in; the boys made it lively for them, giving the Mosby yell as we rode out, firing down through the tops of cabins, as they were covered with canvas. We were going out at a dead run and Hearn was riding a very fine race mare, and his bit broke. She went through the camp fairly flying, and he called to Major Richards, "For God's sake catch my mare, or I'll go to hell."

Richards replied,

"I have been expecting you to travel that road for some time."

We got out safely with eight horses and, as we came through Charlestown, the enemy opened a fusillade on us from both sides of the street, from the old court house and the jail. It did no harm.

We raised pandemonium in the camp, as bugles were blowing and men shooting in every direction. I think Reno did not sleep so quietly after that.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE SUTLER

MOSBY'S men had a decided weakness for Yankee sutlers, and though few of these capitalists were captured during the latter part of the war, the traditions of the Command about them were so fascinating, when related by the older members, that it kept all the men constantly on the lookout for them.

I remember an occasion once, in October, 1864, when we saw a covered wagon going down the pike in the Valley, guarded by a few men only. When the men caught sight of it there was a cry of joy from a hundred throats.

"A sutler at last!"

And away a lot of us dashed for it, though a big force of the enemy was in sight. We overtook it and only succeeded in getting the driver to stop his team when we began firing into him. He was so near his men he thought he could reach them. When we finally hauled him up we found, instead of a sutler, that the wagon contained only a General (Duffie) and two other officers. Some of the men who did not go to church regularly gave way to a species of profanity. It was an awful disappointment. We did not need any Generals, but we wanted good things, such as the

sutler's wagon always carried, and we wanted them badly.

While the boys were chasing the wagon they were telling each other what they intended choosing when they got into the goods. One boy said to another, "If you get hold of a pair of number seven high boots, save 'em for me, and I'll give you some of the flannel shirts I get, and don't forget to save me some figs and candy, and some cigars." When that boy saw General Duffie he almost cried.

In the early months of the Command's history the capture of sutlers was as common as the capture of soldiers. They seemed to swarm in Fairfax county, and they traveled around without guards for, up to the time Mosby went into the country, there had been no necessity for protection. They were safe to go where they chose. On nearly all the early raids a sutler would be numbered among the spoils, and the average army sutler was not to be despised. He was a traveling retail general store, with a saloon attachment, sometimes, and sometimes a bakery and confectionery to boot. There was never any effort to divide his goods equally among the captors: each man pitched in and took what pleased his fancy, and whatever he took was his own. The men frequently exchanged with each other after the raid, things that each did not want, for others they did want.

I recollect we raided some sutlers one night, and the supply of stuff they had was simply bewildering. It was in the early autumn of 1863, September 16th, and they were located near Warrenton. I do not know

how many of them were interested in the outfit, but there was a small building filled with goods, and there were several wagon loads outside. These wagons were standing in front of the house, and the horses were haltered to the wagon tongues. I dismounted and climbed into the back of one wagon, and found it loaded two-thirds of the way up to the roof of the cover. A large buffalo robe was spread over the goods and two men were lying asleep on it. They had been playing cards by candle light, for the unlit candle in their candle-stick and a deck of cards, were lying between the men on the robe.

I woke one of them out of a sound sleep and told him Mosby's men were all around him, and I wanted his pocket-book before I went any further. He cursed me and told me to " clear out " as he was tired of being held up by a lot of camp bums calling themselves Mosby's men. I tried to convince him I was in earnest, but I gathered from his growing warmth that his own men had been trying in the past to rob him, and he proposed to put a stop to it. Fearing he might get up suddenly and knock me out of the wagon (he was lying down all this time), I slipped my pistol out carefuly and slid its cold barrel along his upper lip and held it there. The change was instantaneous. He wilted and began handing out his valuables, and when he had given me everything detachable which he had, I turned him out and told him to sprint for his life. As I did not care to open and look into his big boxes and packages, I secured the robe and fastened it to my saddle and went into the

house where our men were plundering. I had never seen quite as interesting a collection of sutler's goods before. These fellows actually had everything we could possibly have wanted, and I never saw such a busy lot of men as ours. It was a regular bargain counter crowd, scrambling and surging and crowding to get the best of everything. The men would eat and drink a little of everything that came within their grasp. Think of a mixture in a human stomach of sardines and raisins, cakes and claret wine, cheese, figs, beer, chocolates, pickled onions, champagne, oysters, more cheese, jelly, and Hostetter's Bitters — but where would I ever stop if I tried to mention everything? Well, this is just about the collection most of the men consumed and the order of its consumption. When every man had filled a big sack with useful things, and his stomach with what he was pleased to think "nice things," we set fire to the building and wagons and started away.

One man, Sewell Williams, in the midst of all the bewildering variety, was so dazzled that he only filled his sack with cigars and playing cards, and the strange part of it was that he neither smoked nor played cards. As soon as we started off every man went to Williams and got one or more cigars and began to smoke up, whether he had ever smoked before or not. The result was that smoking, and the outraging of the Guerrilla stomachs caused by the fluids and solids recently introduced into them, brought on an illness which extended down the entire line, and Mosby's Command never appeared so abjectly miserable and helpless in all its

career. One good healthy Yankee could have taken them all that night, and if he had promised to cure them of violent sick stomach they would all have been glad to go.

Among the personal property of the sutler who yielded up his all at my armed request, was a big pocket-book containing his accounts and papers. When it first fell into my hands I fancied I had the fellow's roll and I hastened to investigate it only to find papers. Among them were a lot of requisitions from army officers for supplies and delicacies which he had filled in Baltimore, and was delivering when we found him. The sutlers had printed blanks which the officers would fill out and sign, and these became vouchers later for their pay when the goods were purchased and brought to camp. My sutler seemed to have a very select trade among the officers, for his orders called for champagne, brandy, whiskey, high-grade canned and bottled goods, in fact all sorts of delicacies and necessities, and he had filled and checked up all his orders, and we got his goods.

A short time after this raid I was in Richmond for a day or two, and at my father's office, which was a sort of rendezvous for officers on leave, especially for Louisianians and Marylanders, who could not get to their homes. The morning of my arrival there I found the office pretty well filled with these officers, and among them General Pickett and old Colonel Fred, Skinner. I took out my sutler's requisitions and read them to the officers, who listened with bated breath to the fairy story I was reciting. I wound up by saying:

"Now, gentlemen, you've heard me tell you of all these good things, and I'll add that we captured every-one of them and consumed them, and it is quite a common occurrence for us to do the same thing."

If you will only think that at that time a grand dinner in Richmond consisted of bacon and corn bread, you can appreciate the heartlessness of my conduct. Old Colonel Skinner swore he would resign at once and join our Command. For the rest of my stay in my father's office I believe I was disliked by every hungry officer in the room.

Very near the close of the war, I believe it was only a few days before Lee surrendered, John Russell and I were on a scout in the Valley, when we saw a man walking with two ladies near the camps of the Union army. We galloped over to him and found he was a sutler who was taking a little stroll outside of his lines with two of his best girls. When we pounced on him the girls broke away from him with little screams, and we each took hold of one of his wrists and, keeping him between us, galloped back to where we started from, our sutler running along to keep his arms from being pulled out of their sockets. As we ran I reached down on my side of him and took his watch and chain out of his pocket, very carefully, while John Russell reached down on his side and got his pocket-book. Then I slipped his ring gently off his finger while John as gently slipped his scarf-pin out of his tie. By the time we had finished running him we had finished searching him. We were only search-ing him. Then we discovered that his coat and trous-

ers and boots, being all of fashionable style and good quality, would be very acceptable to a couple of young country fellows we knew, so we relieved him of these also. We left him his undershirt, drawers, socks and a red cravat. Then we turned him loose and told him to go back to camp, suggesting that he hurry up. He started off on a run, and we could see him until he got inside his lines for, in his efforts to avoid the two girls, he skirted around among the hills and valleys for a mile or so; we could see those little white legs trotting along faster than they had ever carried him before. If either of those girls saw him stripped as we left him, he never got one of them for his wife.

General Augur thought to catch Mosby at one time by sending one of his detectives, named Pardon Worsely, to our country in the guise of a sutler. He came with a wagon load of fine stuff and had his wife with him. He said she was his wife, and we did not ask to see his marriage certificate. As soon as he got into our country he was promptly captured, but he begged the men to take him before Mosby and let him tell his story, which he did. He said he had slipped through the lines with his load, believing we would be glad to protect him and buy his goods from him, if he would promise to fill our orders for anything we wanted at fair prices. It sounded very nice, but Mosby looked him over very carefully and sized him up correctly. He told Worsely he had caught too many sutlers to be caught by one, but that he would protect him if he would fill our orders and make no effort to do any funny business.

Worsely saw a fine opening for making a lot of money by fooling General Augur, and for some time we enjoyed an open express line to the North. I suppose Augur caught on in time and put our transportation line out of business.

Among the things I ordered Worsley to bring me was a big doll baby for a little girl relative at home. Worsley made me pay him twenty dollars in gold for it. I suppose he got it for five, but it was as big as a real young baby, and when it arrived in Richmond people from all parts of the city came to see it, for there had not been a new doll baby in Richmond since the war began.

I also got him to buy me cloth for a fine suit of clothes and, in fact, a general outfit of finery for which he made me pay regular blackmail prices, but I made him pay me a good stiff price for a big box of chewing tobacco and in that way I got even with him. Colonel Mosby got old Worsley to bring him a sack of coffee from the North, and I believe he had some of that coffee on hand when the war ended.

On July 13, 1863, Mosby, with twenty-seven men with him in Fairfax county, captured twenty-nine loaded sutler's wagons, about one hundred prisoners and nealy one hundred and fifty horses. He brought his captures out safely as far as Aldie on the turnpike, when he was overtaken by Colonel Lowell with two hundred men of the Second Massachusetts Cavalry, and nearly all the prisoners, with all the wagons and horses, were recaptured. If the boys could only have got home safely with those twenty-nine loaded wagons

we could have opened a big department store in Mosby's confederacy.

On October 11, 1863, about forty of us, under Mosby, were on a raid and scouting trip in Fairfax county, on the pike a few miles from Alexandria. We had lain hidden in the thick pines all the day before, because the Yankees were all around us, and constantly on the move along the roads. Mosby took Walter Whaley with him and hid in the bushes where he could see the pike, and Captain Smith made me go with him a little farther up the road, where we got another hiding place on the pike. A body of two hundred and fifty cavalry came along, which for obvious reasons we did not attack. They were the escort of a long train of wagons, and we preferred wagons to large bodies of cavalry, so we waited for the wagons. Mosby and Whaley rode out from their hiding place and cut out a few of the last wagons of the train and had them driven into the woods, while Captain Smith and I picked up a straggling wagon in the extreme end of the train and gathered it into the common fund. It proved to be a gold mine, and the Waldorf-Astoria never spread before its guests a more enjoyable feast than we consumed that morning. All sorts of eatables and drinkables, all sorts of wearing apparel and useful and ornamental things and, best of all in our opinion, nearly two hundred pairs of cavalry boots. We simply revelled in riches out of that unfortunate sutler's supplies.

A man named Dunham, living in that part of the country, had been down to Alexandria with his wife

trying to buy supplies, but was refused the privilege; they were on their way back to their home, in their empty wagon, when they were brought into our camp at the time we were in the midst of enjoying the sutler's goods. We listened to their hard-luck story and amply recompensed them for their fruitless trip by loading up their wagon with something of the entire supply we had appropriated. I thought our men were past-masters in the art of handling sutlers' goods, but Dunham and his wife made us ashamed. It was their first experience, but they did not require any teaching from us. They got a sample of everything.

On several occasions when we captured sutlers and soldiers on the same raid and opened up the sutler's goods for distribution among our men, we always invited the prisoners to pitch in and help themselves. It was amusing to see the fiendish delight with which the boys in blue would go through their natural enemy. They always looked upon their own sutlers as robbers, and they never got a chance to get even with their foe except on occasions of this sort.

Mosby sent a party of us into Maryland in the summer of 1864, under Lieutenant Joe Nelson, and our objective point was Adamstown, on the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. When we galloped into the little town we were on the lookout for sutlers' stores more than for soldiers and, spying a rather attractive store, the boys dismounted and began appropriating the stock. The owner was frantic in his objections to our robbing him, claiming to be a good Southerner, and rushed around among the men begging and threaten-

ing by turns. We paid no attention to him, and when we filled our sacks with plunder of all sorts and were about to mount, Joe Nelson came in and ordered every man to give back whatever he had taken or pay for it, saying we had no right to rob a good Southerner. I had my doubts about the man's loyalty to Jeff. Davis, and also had my mind firmly made up to carry back with me at all hazards my carefully selected assortment of merchandise, which I considered worth several hundred dollars. I was enough of a soldier however to obey the orders of my superior officer, so I gave the merchant five dollars in Confederate money and, without waiting for the change, or for his receipt, rode south. One of our boys who had taken a lot of the man's hats paid for them by leaving his own. We started back home after doing all the damage we could and recrossed the Potomac near the mouth of the Monocacy river, but not before we had to whip about fifty Federals stationed there to cut us off. They thought they had us in a trap, but Joe Nelson and Harry Hatcher, each with a part of our little Command, charged them from different directions and killed four of them and captured a dozen more. We charged and scattered another crowd at the river and captured six of them. Our only casualty was the wounding of Johnny Alexander, who on that occasion, as on all others, never knew when to stop fighting. We brought him out safely.

When we rejoined Mosby he asked some of the men, not me, where the captured good things were and was told Joe Nelson had prohibited the men from bringing

any away because the store keeper was a good rebel sympathizer. Mosby said he gave no such order, and that we ought to have taken everything in the store, for the man was one of the worst Yankees in Maryland. My conscience was at once eased and I rather regretted parting with my five dollar Confederate bill, though just at that time it would have only bought me one good cigar in Richmond.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE CELEBRATED GREENBACK RAID

IN reading these recollections, I would suggest that the reader should keep in sight the fact that our mission was to "annoy the enemy." How we did it, when we did it, and where we did it, were left to our own ingenuity and application, the whole idea being to make the Federal army uncomfortable.

One of our modes of annoyance was to tear up part of the railroad track and stop a train. If the officers and the men had anything valuable about their persons, we annoyed them also; but it was the enemy in general, the great and glorious United States Government, that our little body of men were trying to worry and destroy piecemeal. A pretty big undertaking, wasn't it?

I suppose that if General Sheridan had been asked what he considered the greatest piece of annoyance introduced into his campaign in the Valley of Virginia in 1864, by Mosby's men, he would have cited what was known as the "greenback raid," for it annoys any officer to lose all his pay roll at one fell swoop, especially when it summed hundreds of thousands of dollars. Sheridan did not lack opportunity for comparing our different grades of annoyance, for while he was campaigning that summer and autumn in the Valley of Virginia we took good pains to let him

know we were around. He had not been in the saddle but a few days when we swept down on one of his big wagon trains and cleaned it off the face of the earth.

In many respects the greenback raid was as sensational as any event for which we were responsible. It brought to our Southern friends an idea of suddenly acquired wealth beyond the dreams of avarice for, at the time it occurred, our Confederate money was getting very low in purchasing ability, and a greenback note seemed to them as big and as green as a wheat field in May. In fact most of them had never seen a greenback and none of them had ever owned one.

To the average Northern man it was a blow at the pocket of his Government, and a Northern man does not like a blow at his pocket. He makes his money generally by his brains, and he does not like to see it slip away from him for lack of precaution. To say the least it was an annoyance and that is just the thing we wanted it to be. It came about in this way:

On the twelfth of October, 1864, Colonel Mosby took eighty of our Command over to the Valley to operate in Sheridan's rear. They crossed the Shenandoah river in the night and arrived on the Valley turnpike the next day in time to pick up some stray prisoners, coming and going. As nothing of special interest developed during the day, except their occasional captures, the Colonel moved the Command at dusk towards the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad, and halted before midnight immediately on the line of the railroad about eight or ten miles west of Harper's Ferry. A detail of men began ripping up the track,

with the idea of derailing a train from Washington. The Colonel had selected a deep cut in the road as the most likely place to derail a flyer, figuring that the high embankment would protect the train from toppling over and becoming a total wreck. He was always considerate of non-combatants, no matter how actively we might be engaged in annoying the enemy.

After tearing up the rails the horses were taken back from the immediate line of vision of the track and the men partly concealed themselves and waited for a train to round the curve.

It was one of those cold autumnal nights that always seem colder in the South than anywhere else, and the boys needed something to warm their blood. Let me say here, while I am speaking of warming blood, that there was not a more temperate body of men in the army than Mosby's. Although there were a number of distilleries scattered through our country, and home-made whiskey could be had for the asking, I very rarely saw one of our men who drank it, and I never saw a drunken Mosby man in all my army life. Mosby would not tolerate drunkenness, and the fact was that no man among us could afford to muddle his brain with drink, for he needed his wits all the time. Lots of our men carried captured canteens but they did not contain whiskey.

Shortly after midnight the whistle of the engine was heard, and in a few minutes she came snorting along at full speed. The men hugged the ground a little closer and stopped breathing, waiting for the crunch of the wheels in the sand and gravel, and the fight



RETURNING FROM THE RAID.

*Photographed from a painting by Armand-Dumaresq, reproductions of which were widely circulated in France and America just after the war.*

that might have to follow if the soldiers were aboard.

Nearer she thundered. Every man put out a restraining hand to hold his neighbor down. There was a flash of yellow light in the deep cut, and with a snort that was almost human the engine and entire train proceeded to rush off the track and turn over against the side of the cut on the side of the curve, where it brought up jangling and groaning. The engineer knew that the rails had been purposely removed, and throwing his throttle to dead center, stopped. A volume of steam escaping from the exhaust filled the air with a white cloud, out of which our men began dropping on the train from the bank above. The conductor stepped from the train, waved his lantern and said:

"All right, gentlemen, the train is yours."

Jim Wiltshire, Charley Dear and West Aldrich climbed into a car, emitting the Mosby yell and howled, "Surrender" to the whole crowd.

A soldier at the far end of the car drew his pistol and before he had a chance to use it Charley Dear dropped him in his tracks. He and West Aldrich rushed up to a group of five officers and demanded their surrender. Two of the group bore the rank of Major, and one of them held in his hand a bag to which he clung as if he wanted to fight for it; and his associates advised giving it up and surrendering.

The persistence with which the officers adhered to the bag and tin box, supplied excellent evidence of their worth, and Charley Dear and Aldrich insisted on taking possession of officers and luggage. They took the

party to Colonel Mosby who was busy giving orders. Before they reached him with their prize somebody told somebody else that somebody had said the bag and box contained greenbacks, and that the two captured Majors were Ruggles and Moore, Paymasters of Sheridan's army.

They confirmed the rumor and admitted that they carried the pay for the army.

The booty was immediately passed over to four of our boys, Grogan, Wiltshire, Dear and Aldrich, with instructions to fly across the Shenandoah river and the Blue Ridge mountains into Loudoun county, and to there await the coming of Colonel Mosby and the Command.

In the meantime the rest of the boys were taking charge of things generally. The ten cars of which the train was made up were rapidly emptied; the civilians separated from the soldiers, and a torch was applied to the rolling stock of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. A lot of foreigners aboard who could not speak English were only induced to leave the cars when the fire was well started.

In the midst of the excitement Jim Wiltshire was seen escorting a handsome lady away from the burning train. His gallantry was never under eclipse. It was said when she reached the Colonel she threw herself, figuratively speaking, into his arms, crying,

" Oh save me, save me, Colonel Mosby, my husband is a Mason."

She then tried, dramatically, to swoon, and the Colonel replied, " I can't help that, but you shan't be

harmed, notwithstanding," and had her escorted back to the group of civilians, no doubt by the gallant Wiltshire.

Quite a collection of prisoners was got together for the homeward march; tender good-byes were spoken, much more tender on the part of the Rangers than the forsaken civilians and, with the sparks flaring into the black sky and the prisoners hanging their dejected heads, the little column vanished as silently as it had come, fading away into the autumnal night, once only, halting and looking back at the group clustered around the burning cars.

The whole thing, while it was almost a bloodless affair, had its element of tragedy and some humor as well. While the Colonel sat on his horse, looking at the confusion of the burning train, Monroe Heiskell, a grandson of President Monroe, brought a prisoner to him who had been captured by Charley Dear. The man had on a foreign uniform, or rather part of it, and spoke broken English. He had explained to Heiskell that Mosby's men had taken from him, in addition to everything of value which he possessed, a very highly prized ring, an heirloom, which he hoped could be restored to him. Charley did not take his ring: he only took his overcoat and gave it to Jim Wiltshire.

Mosby inquired where he was from, what uniform he wore, and learned that the man was formerly an officer in the Austrian army and that his acquaintance with American life was necessarily brief, inasmuch as he just arrived. What he wanted most, however, was to recover that family ring.

"What the devil did you want to come over here to fight us for?" asked the Colonel.

"I come to learn de tactics," he answered.

"Well, that's part of them," replied Colonel Mosby, gathering up his reins and trotting away. Before his departure, however, he asked Heiskell to try and recover the officer's ring and restore it to him, which was done, and the student of tactics was admonished to look out for himself in the future. Heiskell also handed his prisoner some money, advising that he would find it of service to him when he got into Libby prison in Richmond, to which he was soon to be headed under guard. Not long afterwards the Austrian halted Heiskell as he passed by with wailing and lamentation, and said,

"De poys haf robbed me again."

This was more tactics.

In the meantime Mosby's financial committee was hurrying into Loudoun county with the treasure-laden box and bag. It was said that one of the four men, Charley Grogan, had a fall in the darkness, and dropped his package, which burst open and let the money out on the ground, and that, when the others returned to help him gather it up and save it, he waved them away with the remark that a few thousand dollars made no difference as there must be millions of it still left.

Close on the heels of the three men followed the rest of the Command. The plunder bearers were overtaken at the appointed spot and a balance sheet was struck, with the result that the treasury was found

to contain one hundred and seventy thousand dollars in crisp new greenbacks, issued by the Government which it was our duty and our pleasure to annoy.

The money was divided then and there, each of the men who were on the raid receiving twenty-one hundred dollars. Not a cent of this money went to Colonel Mosby. He paid his own way during the whole of his Partisan Ranger career out of his private means, buying his own horses and uniforms and everything he had. It was one of his delicate notions of honor, and his men respected him for it. Officers of other Commands who took captured articles lost not only the good opinion but the respect of their men.

Fancy the feelings of other members of the Command who were on other raids at the time, or who remained at home! No raid, no greenbacks: that was the rule. To share the spoils, a man had to share the danger and be at the capture. At the very time of the Greenback raid Captain William H. Chapman had a part of the Command on a raid in Maryland, about eighty in all, burning boats on the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, capturing horses and mules, cutting telegraph wires and making himself disagreeable generally. On his return towards the Potomac river his men were attacked by the enemy under Captain Grubb, of Cole's Battalion, but Chapman whipped him severely and captured a number of his men and horses without the loss of a man of his own Command.

If one will stop to think of the effect these raids had on the powers in Washington, the full purpose of "annoying the enemy" will be understood and appre-

ciated. We plied our industrious calling over a radius of at least one hundred miles, at one and the same time, from one base. It was necessary for the Federal troops to guard every wagon train, railroad bridge and camp with enough active and efficient men to prevent Mosby from using his three hundred raiders in one of his destructive rushes at any hour of the night or day. Thousands of soldiers were kept from service at the front because of Mosby's activity. General Grant at one time reported that seventeen thousand of his men were engaged in keeping Mosby from attacking his weak points, and thus away from active service on the firing line. Finally it was not safe to send despatches by a courier unless a regiment was sent along to guard him.

Mosby frequently divided his men into small detachments, each under a competent officer, and sent them out in different directions with instructions to hit a head whenever they found it exposed; and, through his excellent judgment of men, he had surrounded himself with officers for the different companies in whom he could place implicit confidence in carrying out his orders. The men were supposed to choose their own officers for elections, but it was merely a little agreeable fiction on their part.

Mosby knew what sort of men could do his bidding intelligently and when an election was held the slate was already prepared and the men went through the hollow form of voting. He knew his business better than we knew ours. If it had been left to us to choose our captains and lieutenants, some good look-

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Lieutenant-Colonel William H. Chapman in 1865.

ing fellow with big blue eyes would win over a cool, headed, seasoned soldier every time. What did we know or care for military talent? The boy with the dash and the merry song for us.

Washington, always with its ear towards the seat of war, would suddenly hear that a sleeping camp near Winchester had been beaten up and a hundred men and horses captured, with the usual number of killed and wounded; that a wagon train near Fairfax Court House had been stopped, the wagons burned and the horses and mules driven off; that a railroad train in Maryland and been thrown from the track and a lot of prisoners taken and property destroyed; that a picket post on the Potomac river had been surprised and the men killed; that a raiding party had been seen not many miles from Washington. All this cheerful news would come in on the same day. Wasn't it reasonable that official nerves should be somewhat unstrung?

It was Mosby's business to keep this thing up, giving as much variety to the program as possible. His mind was constantly at work devising new phases of the entertainment, besides keeping Lee and Stuart informed of every significant move of the enemy, using his own judgment as to the importance of each incident as it occurred. He could not afford to make any mistakes.

The effect of the greenback raid was electrical. Every telegraph wire between Washington and the front was kept hot with messages. From the most remote points there came back echoes of that midnight

haul. Paymasters wired to Washington for instructions how to proceed or where to hide their funds. For instance Paymaster Ladd telegraphed from Martinsburg as follows: "I have my funds in the parlor of the United States hotel here guarded by a regiment. I shall make no move until I can do so with safety and, in the meantime, await orders from you."

The war department wired to General L. Thomas, who was at Wheeling with six regiments of negro soldiers, on his way to Washington, that the Secretary of War thought it unsafe to come by the way of the Baltimore & Ohio, because of Mosby's liability to attack other points on the line; and suggested that he should take some other route. Every General or commanding officer within reach contributed his version of the story, and Washington was smothered with telegraphic advice. Orders were sent broadcast to "overtake the Guerrillas and capture them." Troops started out from a dozen points some in the right direction, in wild pursuit. There was a great hullabaloo everywhere; but in the quiet of a little Loudoun county village, undisturbed by any fear of interruption, Uncle Sam's crisp greenbacks were handed around equally, and liberally, among eighty of his grateful and admiring friends, and the incident was closed.

## CHAPTER XIX

### GLIMPSES OF GUERRILLA LIFE

WHILE the Federals were at work in the autumn of 1864, rebuilding the Manassas Gap Railroad and incidentally occupying the best part of Mosby's Confederacy, much to our disgust, Lieutenant Ed. Thomson with about thirty men rode over to the neighborhood of Salem, now called Marshall, and stopped in a little ravine. Thomson wanted to draw the enemy out from the town so he could get at them on some sort of fair basis as to numbers, and he thought the best way to get them out was to go in town or send in and invite them out by firing into them. He asked for three volunteers to undertake the rather risky job, and Louis Powell, Tom Benton Shipley, of Baltimore, and Bowie of the Northern Neck, stepped to the front before others could answer. They were first class men, always ready for any duty, and game.

Poor Powell ran amuck after the war and paid with his life for his mistake. While in our Command he boarded with a Mr. Payne, and in some unaccountable way, certainly in a moment of temporary insanity or mistaken loyalty to the South, he joined in the assassination of President Loncoln, taking the name of his old host, Mr. Payne, and making the name a disgrace for the many well-born, well-bred people of our coun-

try who bore it, until they found his name was Powell. It was he who attacked and stabbed Mr. Seward, the night that Booth killed the President. I have never heard how he became one of that crowd of crazed conspirators, but I have always held that it was the original purpose of Booth and his associates to try and kidnap Mr. Lincoln, and perhaps other prominent officials, and get them across the upper Potomac and into our part of the county, and hide them in the mountains until terms for their release could be made with the authorities at Washington. If Powell suggested it I would not be surprised, for he was always keyed up for any new sensation. When he left our Command to go to Washington he became a deserter, and our connection with him ceased.

But to our story. Powell and Shipley and Bowie galloped into Salem and fired on the pickets, while Thomson and his men were concealed in the bushes, watching for the enemy to come out, and ready to signal to John Puryear to charge them, with Thomson in the rear, as they passed. Our men got them in a lane between Utterback's and Shumate's and killed, wounded, and captured all but one of them. The man who escaped was chased by Thomson and John Dulin for a mile to Tom Rector's gate, where they killed his horse, not intentionally, while he jumped the fence and got away.

When Thomson got back to his men they gathered all the prisoners together, many of them wounded, and the road was filled with their dead and dying. The prisoners were sent out to Gordonsville, and

Thomson got a promise from the Misses Mountjoy to care for the wounded. He turned over one of the wounded men to a Mr. Wm. A. Morgan, a gentleman who lived in that locality, and the kindness bestowed on the man was well repaid by the protection given him by Colonel Gallop, Commander of the regiment at Salem to whom Thomson had applied for a surgeon and nurse for the wounded men. Colonel Gallop complimented Thomson for his kindness.

It is not necessary to say what John Puryear did that day. He was supposed to be in command of a part of our men, but he forgot all about that when the fight opened and, as he dashed along that lane where everybody was crowded, he mowed them down. We captured about seventy-five men and their horses and did not lose a man.

I never knew of any sham that could fool Mosby. No sham soldier could do it for a minute. Many people within the Confederate lines never saw a grain of real coffee after the second year of the war, and in its stead they drank decoctions of roasted peanuts, or beans, or sweet potatoes, or almost anything that would look black, and taste burnt. Mosby would not drink a drop of any such sham coffee, and he could distinguish the slightest adulterated article from the real bean.

As we were always inside the enemy's lines, there were many of the people who managed in some way to get a little coffee now and then. Those at whose homes the Colonel occasionally called to pay a short visit or take a meal, and who were so fortunate as to

have a supply of coffee, would always see to it that he had a cup of the real stuff, no matter what the rest of us had to drink.

In order to insure his supply he sent North by a sutler and bought a sack of it and divided it around among his friends, as geographically equal as possible. He reserved a small portion for emergencies, and at times carried a little bag of it in his saddle pocket when he went on a raid. I do not believe the Colonel ever drank a glass of whiskey in his life.

When I asked some of the members of our Command to let me have a few of their recollections to add to mine, I got a reply from Fred Hipkins, who is a broker living in New York.

He said that he remembered "once upon a time" when he and I were with the Colonel on a scout in the Valley of Virginia, and the Colonel wanted a cup of coffee badly. Taking a little bag of the roasted article from his saddle pocket he gave it to me and told me to ride to Mrs. ——'s not far from where we were hidden in the woods, and get her to make a cup of it for him. As I started away he told me not to let her make it unless she had some sugar to sweeten it with. When sufficient time had elapsed as he thought for the proper brewing of the beverage he and Fred Hipkins followed me to Mrs. ——'s and on entering found an elaborate breakfast prepared at my request, consisting of fried chicken, ham and eggs, hot biscuits, flannel cakes, honey, and peaches and cream. The lady served us bountifully and poured a cup of steaming hot coffee, for the Colonel, remark-

ing as she handed it to him gracefully, "I am awfully sorry, Colonel Mosby, but I have not a lump of sugar in the house." Hipkins says the Colonel stopped short as if he had been stricken, and turning sharply on me said, "I thought I told you distinctly not to have my coffee made if you could not get some sugar to sweeten it." He ignored the chicken, and the ham and eggs, and the cakes, and everything else on the groaning board and only thought of his coffee. What effect his disappointment had on our hostess I do not know, but the absence of the sugar did not interfere with the healthy appetites of the Colonel's two scouts.

Captain "Bill" Kennon was a polished, highly educated, well-bred gentleman who was a conspicious member of our Command. He was somewhat of an adventurer and free lance, and had served with Walker, in his Nicaragua filibustering expedition, a few years before the war. He was a delightful man to talk to, or rather to listen to, for he was the most picturesque liar, in a harmless way, that I ever knew. Colonel Mosby always enjoyed "Bill's" romancing, and the Captain never wearied of contributing to his and our amusement and amazement. He was not in the least coarse in his conversation, but he sometimes indulged in a little well selected profanity. It was refreshing to hear him when he used his full repertoire.

On one occasion he was riding along a road in Orange county near General Stuart's camp, when he was overtaken by an army chaplain who picked up a conversation with him. Captain "Bill" was not long in discovering his chance acquaintance's calling and

controlled his profane tendencies far longer than he was accustomed to. Finally the reverend gentleman asked Captain Bill what part of the army he belonged to, and the Captain said he was chaplain for Mosby's Command. In great surprise the stranger asked:

"Don't you find them a hard crowd, Brother Kennon?"

The Captain was at the end of his rope, and replied: "Yes, my brother, a damned hard crowd."

He was quite a lady's man, and as he was a very handsome, as well as a fascinating man, his company was sought by the gentler sex and much enjoyed.

In the early part of these recollections I said in speaking of our men in a general way that we did not know anything about bugle calls. I forgot about Brewer. Brewer said he knew all about them and none of us dared contradict him, for we had no way to prove he was lying. But there were a lot of us youngsters who doubted Brewer's assertion and we concentrated our efforts for several months after Brewer came to us with his musical bravado, on the capture of a Yankee bugler with his instrument. While we were looking for that bugler, I believe we would have scorned to capture a sutler's wagon, so intent were we on humiliating poor little Brewer. At last we were rewarded. In a fight one day with a raiding party some one of our anti-Brewer crowd spied a bugler at the head of the column. Like the followers of Robert the Bruce, King of Scotland, when his heart, encased in a silver casket, was thrown far into the ranks of the enemy, they followed it with the cry,

"The heart, the Bruce's heart," there arose on the wind in that charge of ours the wild cry, "The bugler, the bugler," and we dashed after that poor non-combatant and smothered him before he could perform "one blast upon his bugle horn."

We tore his bugle from him, and did not even take his pocket-book; no doubt some of the pro-Brewer men saw to that later. As soon as we could find Brewer the bugle was thrust into his hand and he was told to "blow her," which he proceeded to do very skillfully, much to our surprise and disgust. The truth of this story compels me to say, however, that Brewer at once became a hero, among our little crowd who had been inclined to belittle him. Brewer assumed at once the position of Mosby's bugler, as much to our joy and amusement as his first performance had been to our surprise, for we made him blow whenever we met him.

Two or three weeks after Brewer was equipped with his new toy we went on a raid into Fairfax county. He and two or three others stopped at a farm-house to get a good meal, while the Command went ahead; and about a mile down the road we ran into the Yankees unexpectedly, had a rattling hot fight, which, like lots of others, lasted only a few minutes, gathered the prisoners together and started back up the road and when half way back to the house where Brewer had stopped, we met him galloping down on us full tilt, his bugle to his lips, blowing the "charge," with all the power in his lungs. I do not know whether I ever laid eyes on Brewer again: in fact I do not know if I

would have acknowledged his acquaintance after such an unpardonable failure to make himself and our Command famous. I took the thing to heart, for my idol had fallen.

This was the first and last bugle and bugler we ever had, and we tried to forget it.

Our Command never numbered over three hundred and fifty men available for active service at any one time, but probably not a day passed from the time Mosby arrived in Northern Virginia, in February, 1863, with his original detail of fifteen men until after Lee's surrender, that some of the men were not raiding and scouting somewhere. There was no idle time for us. We never went into winter quarters.

During our career of a little over two years death was making its unceasing subtractions. In that time we had seventy of our best men killed and nearly one hundred wounded. We had nine of our commissioned officers killed, and nineteen of them were seriously wounded. Colonel Mosby himself was honey-combed with bullets. He was severely wounded in a fight at Goodin's tavern August 24th, 1863. On the 15th of September, 1864, he was wounded not far from Centerville in Fairfax county. He had two men, Tom Love and Guy Broadwater, with him, when they ran into five of the Thirteenth New York cavalry who had been sent out to head him off. He was shot in the groin but kept his saddle and whipped the men. That bullet is in him yet.

On his way back he stopped at a house on the roadside and had his wound dressed, the old lady of the

house assisting. Ten days after, he passed that same house on a raid to Fairfax and woke the old lady up to ask some questions. She opened her window and asked who it was.

"It's Colonel Mosby; don't you remember me?" he answered.

"Oh no it aint? Colonel Mosby was here ten days ago badly wounded. I wouldn't believe you unless I saw the wound."

"You're as bad as Thomas who doubted his Lord," the Colonel answered, "but I can't stop now to show you my wound."

On the 21st of December, 1864, he was again dangerously wounded at Lud Lake's house. The bullet went into the left side of his body and was cut out of the right side. He closely escaped peritonitis. All his wounds were at close range. There is a belt of wounds around his waist. Dr. W. L. Dunn was the surgeon of our Command at the time the Colonel received all his wounds, and attended him.

One of our best men, Ned Hurst, was wounded seven times, twice in one fight. He was one of the original fifteen men who started out with Mosby, and he came pretty nearly being in all the fights of the Command, for he was often in his saddle when he ought to have been in bed. He thought he was safer in his saddle.

Dr. Jim Wiltshire wrote to me recently, charging me not to mention Ned Hurst without saying that he killed at least one hundred men during his Partisan Ranger career. One night we had a fight at White

Post in the Valley, and we were all pretty well mixed up in the darkness. I dropped my pistol down on a man at my side, and was about to pull the trigger, when a gentle old voice said softly,

"Don't make a fool of yourself Johnny: it's me."

And I recognized Ned's voice.

Another of our men, John Ballard, lost his leg in a fight in June, 1863, and the following winter he got hold of a second-hand artificial leg somewhere and kept up the fighting until the war ended; but in a fight in the Valley one day he broke it, and somebody after that gave him the false leg of Colonel Dahlgreen, of the Union Army, who was killed near Richmond on his celebrated raid.

Our little Command in two years lost more men killed, wounded and captured, and more officers killed and wounded, than any full cavalry regiment during the entire four years of the war, and we were in more fights, big and little, during our two years of existence, than any cavalry or infantry regiment in the army. Our loss in killed and wounded in nearly every fight was much less, proportionately to the number of men on both sides, than the enemy's, but in a few engagements our dead and wounded outnumbered theirs.

At Harper's Ferry we had eight men killed in a fight, eight of the bravest and best men in our Command, or in the Southern army. Captain William Smith of my company, D, and Lieutenant Tom Turner of company A were of the number, men on whom Mosby relied under all circumstances.

Frank Stringfellow was a scout for General Stuart who, with a detail of about a dozen men, operated in our section of the country for a short time in the winter of 1863–4. He was trusted by General Stuart and was a brave, untiring, valuable man. He informed Mosby of the condition of the camp at Harper's Ferry early in January, 1864, and, on the night of the 9th of that month, acting on his information, verified by Mosby, we attacked a camp with one hundred of our men. Major Cole and his Maryland battalion of cavalry were camped on the mountain-side of Loudoun Heights in winter quarters, with heavy re-enforcements of infantry nearby. The night was bitterly cold, and the march in single file up the frozen mountain-side was a reminder of Washington at Valley Forge. Mosby had laid his plans carefully for a successful blow at the enemy and, if Stringfellow had not blundered, Cole's Command would have been wiped from the face of the earth.

Every condition was favorable for the accomplishment of a brilliant night attack and victory, and Mosby rarely failed to carry out his plans. As a compliment to Stringfellow, Mosby ordered him to surround the Headquarters building and capture Cole and his officers, while our Command attacked and captured the camp.

We reached the rear of the camp and found everything favorable for our purpose; within one or two hundred yards of the camp Stringfellow was sent ahead on his mission, and we followed slowly in order to give him time to do his part. Suddenly and

without warning, Stringfellow and his men came charging and yelling and firing into the camp, having made no effort or attempt to catch Cole or the other officers.

Mosby then charged, mistaking them for the enemy. The noise had aroused Cole and his men, and they met us with a deadly fire from their protected position in their camp. Our attack was so impetuous that they were driven into the surrounding woods, but they continued to pour their deadly fire into us and, as Stringfellow's blunder had thrown us and our plans into confusion, and as the nearby infantry would soon be on us, we retreated in good order, bringing out our prisoners and horses safely, but leaving our dead and some of the wounded on the field. While the fight lasted it was terrific, for both sides were in deadly desperation, but they outnumbered us two to one, and we had to retreat. We killed five of Cole's men, wounded seventeen, and captured and brought out six prisoners and about sixty horses. Our loss was four killed and seven wounded, four of the latter dying in a few days. We lost only one man taken prisoner.

Ordinarily the result of this fight would be considered in our favor. Nevertheless, we always looked upon it as a little Waterloo, for the men we lost seemed to us worth more than all Cole's Battalion.

## CHAPTER XX

### "THE CHIEF"

I HAVE referred frequently to Mr. Blackwell in preceding chapters, but I have not given any particulars of the man as we knew him. About the time I met Mosby by appointment at Blackwell's, in the summer of 1863, there was only a slight acquaintance between the two men. I don't believe to this day Colonel Mosby could give any special reason why he began going to Blackwell's after our meeting there, but it is a fact that, unintentionally or unconsciously, the men began to call the place Mosby's Headquarters. In fact he could be found there oftener than at any other place in "Mosby's Confederacy" when he was not in the saddle.

If our men wanted to see him or wanted to hear of him they naturally drifted to Blackwell's and if he was not there they generally learned something about him. I am inclined to believe he was attracted largely by the personality of Mr. Blackwell. The man was attractive, as well as unique; and he was loyal. There was nothing about his house or his farm to draw one to it, for the dwelling was so small that the few of us who made it our home completely filled it. There were only five rooms in it and they were little rooms, but

the warmth of welcome there was enough to have filled a baronial castle.

The little dining-room could accommodate, on a pinch, about eight people at table; and I never knew the day that a second or third relay of visitors was not entertained at the board. Joe Blackwell never let a man go away from his house uninvited to break bread with him, and all invitations were accepted. How he kept his head above water I do not know, for his farm did not produce a thing but grass and not much of that. His place was too much of a storm center to admit of any farming, and, as the negroes had nearly all gone North, Blackwell's field force was reduced to one gentleman from Limerick, Ireland, Mr. Lat Ryan, who was totally unable, physically, to cope with the problem of successful farming. Most of Lat's time was spent in fussing with Colonel Mosby's old negro, Aaron, who was always boss wherever he was living, and who ordered Lat around all day and every day. I managed to keep on Lat's good side by occasionally stocking him with tobacco, or a flask of newly distilled corn nectar, from some mountain still, but if my contributions were too far apart I was sure to hear from him in some disrespectful remark reflecting on my generosity or my bravery; and sometimes, when old Aaron had been rubbing Lat's fur backwards for a day or two, I came in for dire threats of losing my horses in the next Yankee raid, by his refusal to run off to the mountains with them.

Mr. Blackwell sometimes found fault with Lat and threatened to discharge him, but would promptly re-

lent when he remembered that Lat was the only available farm-hand, white or black, in the county. All the negroes had run off and all the white men were soldiers except Lat, and he would gladly have been in the army if the authorities would have accepted him; but on examination he was found to be badly crippled in both legs and both feet; nearly all his teeth were gone (and teeth counted during the war, for cartridges were made of paper and had to be torn), his hands were twisted and curled up with rheumatism; both eyes were dim at certain stages of the moon (Aaron said he was moon-eyed) and he was hard of hearing when you asked him to do anything. In fact he was a sick man from a military standpoint, and was only waiting for the war to close and the Manassas Gap Railroad to resume operations, so he could get a job as flag man at the crossing nearby, a duty he had performed before the war.

But, if men were lacking on the Blackwell farm, their absence was more than made up by a force of women who did all the domestic work. The old yellow cook made biscuits and loaf bread and corn pudding that would make your lips smack, and the house maids were kept on a trot from the kitchen to the house during the three meals each day. Mr. Blackwell showed his pleasure in having the Colonel and the men around him and, little by little, he took upon himself a military importance which the Colonel encouraged and when, one day, he was addressed by Johnny Edmonds and me as "Chief," his place in the Command was settled.

From that moment everybody addressed him as "Chief," and he swelled, fairly swelled, with importance. He was colossal of stature, anyway, but the newly acquired title simply inflated him till he appeared to weigh about four hundred. He began wearing a gaudy uniform of gray, though he had never served a day in the army, and his boots were Wellingtonian. Steel spurs jangled on his heels and a brace of revolvers never left his belt except when he went to bed. He bought a splendid horse to ride and got a complete military equipment. He strutted around his domain with infinitely more pomposity than any General in either army and, from discussing our raids, he in time began criticising them; before the war ended he wanted to command us.

There was a question as to who was the more afraid of being captured, he or old Aaron, but he was always the first to get away when the report of the Yankees came. He bragged so much about his valor and his military ability, that we finally badgered him into going on a raid with us, and that came near being his undoing. We held out the inducement of plunder to him, and he fell. We took him on the Point of Rocks raid, July 4, 1864, and as he approached nearer and nearer to the Potomac, and the boys pictured to him the splendors of a sutler's store and the glory of capturing it, his enthusiasm rose to its highest, and he was frantic for the attack.

Scrambling across the river at the imminent risk of drowning, he finally emerged soaking wet, and started with the rest of us in a gallop to attack the post. Just

Univ. of California



A Richmond Group in 1865

Lt. Ben. Palmer. Walter Gosden.
John W. Munson. Tom Booker. Sergt. Babcock.

then a volley was poured into us from the men in the works, and the "Chief" broke down. He had not expected any fighting, for we told him there never was any fighting when sutlers were captured. At the first report of the guns he checked up his horse with a jerk, and began bemoaning his unhappy fate.

"Oh, my Lord, why did I ever come on this damned raid, to have my brains shot out? Why did I make a damned fool of myself just for a few yards of calico and a new pair of boots? Why didn't I stay in my own comfortable home and let the damned Guerrillas do their own fighting and robbing? Ah! will I ever see my family again? No! No! No! I am a dead man sure! How can I get away from these infernal Yankees that have been after me for a year or more? Oh! if the Lord will only forgive me this time I promise never to make an ass of myself again! If I ever get back home again I'll stay there the balance of my life!"

But the "Chief" forgot all his woes very soon afterwards. In a few days all his bravado returned and he swore he never enjoyed anything so much as the raid on Point of Rocks; in fact he said we never would have taken the place but for him. For two or three months we all humored him in his conceit and praised his valor, and I really believe we might have induced him to go with us on another raid, but the Yankees came up to our country and settled on us for awhile and soon after their arrival they burned the "Chief's" little home and all his farm buildings, and drove him and his family away, to seek shelter elsewhere; and

the happy years of our experience at Mosby's Headquarters were to become only a memory.

Few of us ever saw the Chief again during the war, but Colonel Mosby got an appointment for him in the Government service some years afterwards, which he held for a number of years. He and the Colonel kept up their friendly relations until a short while ago.

As I write these lines I hear from a friend in Virginia that the old Chief has just died. I am truly sorry to hear it, for I never had a more unselfish friend.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE COLONEL'S SERIOUS WOUNDING

THE little god of love captured some of our best men during the war and held them more securely than the Yankees did. There is no record of any escapes from his imprisonment, nor of any attempt at escape. Among the good men he got hold of and held onto were Colonel Chapman, Lieutenant Fount Beattie, and Ordnance-Sergeant Jake Lavinder. The latter was married on December 21st, 1864, at Mr. Blackwell's home, or rather the place he was living at after his own home had been burned. Colonel Mosby attended the wedding, the bride being a sister of Mrs. Blackwell and of Johnny Edmonds and, like all the rest of her family, great favorites of Mosby.

Word came during the festivities that a raiding party was in the neighborhood and Colonel Mosby and Tom Love started out to look for the raiders, and if necessary to gather our men together to attack them. Near Rectortown he saw them going into camp for the night, as he supposed, and rode as far as Lud Lake's where they stopped for supper, tying their horses to the front fence. The house was surrounded by Yankees before the Colonel was aware of it, and one of them shot him through a window of the room where he was at supper. The raiding party, which

was a detachment of the Thirteenth and Sixteenth New York, under Major Frazer, had not gone into camp at Rectortown as Mosby supposed, but had only stopped for awhile and then resumed the march to their camp, passing by Lake's house on the way. Mosby had thrown his hat and cape and overcoat to one side when he went into Lake's house, and when the Yankees rushed into the house they captured these articles.

Seeing the Colonel lying on the floor desperately wounded, they examined him and left him to die. He had hidden his uniform coat when he fell and there was nothing to indicate his rank. The members of Lake's family and Tom Love " disowned " him, saying they thought he was a Lieutenant in some Virginia regiment.

As soon as the enemy left, taking Tom Love with them, the Colonel had Mr. Lake remove him in an ox cart to a farm a few miles away, where he remained a few days and was then taken to his father's home near Lynchburg.

The bullet had entered one side of his body and passed around the abdomen; it was cut out of the opposite side, and he did not entirely recover from the wound until some time in the following February. It was the worst jolt of many he got during the war, and but for his splendid physical condition it might have put an end to him.

Colonel Mosby's brother, William, who was our adjutant, had about half a dozen men with him on the day when he ran into this raiding party, but had to get out at double quick. The Yankees were too many

for "our Billy." In the retreat a boy named Cocke was thrown from his horse and would have been captured but for Hugh McIlhaney who caught him by the arm and lifted him up behind on his horse, fighting the pursuers all the time to keep them off. They crowded Hugh closely and drove him to a fence which he tried to jump, but the load was too much for his horse and he and Cocke were captured.

Although the Yankees had Colonel Mosby's overcoat, cape, hat and hip boots to identify him by, they did not find out who it was they had wounded for several days, and then seaching parties of hundreds of men were sent to our country to find him, but the bird had flown away. Our boys who were captured the day he was shot swore like gentlemen that they did not know this man, though they gladly admitted they themselves were Mosby's men.

General Sheridan reported to General Stevenson on December 29th that he had very satisfactory evidence that Mosby was mortally wounded. On the 31st, in a despatch to Emery he said: "I have no news to report except the death of Mosby. He died from his wounds at Charlottesville."

Major Frazer, who commanded the raiding party that shot Mosby, reported on December 31st to Colonel Gamble that he examined personally the man's wounds and pronounced them mortal; that he was in a hurry to return, as he was behind time, having been skirmishing all the afternoon with the enemy ("the enemy" consisted of Billy Mosby, Johnny Foster, Hugh McIlhaney, Willie Cocke and two or three others), that

all his officers saw the wounded man and none of them had the slightest idea it was Mosby; that when he went into camp an orderly brought him the captured hat and he at once knew it was a field officer's, and tried hard to make the prisoners tell him who the man was; and that on returning from a scout for information that day, December 31st, he was unable to say the wounded man was Colonel Mosby.

Colonel Gamble endorsed the report as follows: "I exceedingly regret that any such blunder was made. I have given orders that all wounded officers and men of the enemy be brought in, although I thought any officer ought to have brains and common sense enough to do so without an order."

Sheridan, in his report of December 27th, said: "They fired at Mosby and some of his men through the windows, wounding Mosby in the abdomen." My own opinion is that, if some of our men who had chances to shoot Sheridan and Custer and Hancock and others as they sat at night in their tents, had committed such a murderous attack as Frazer's men did on Mosby there would have been a mighty outcry. But then it did not matter what manner was employed to kill the "Guerrilla Chief," so long as he was killed.

Last year I called on a lady in New York, at Colonel Mosby's request, and identified the hat which was captured forty years before. It had been treasured as a valuable war relic all those years. She sent the hat to the Colonel, and I believe it is now in the museum in Washington with other war curiosities.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE GUERRILLAS' LAST FIGHT.

WITHIN a very few days of the final winding up of our career as Partisan Rangers, or to be accurate, on the 30th day of March, 1865, there occurred a disastrous little fight. There was in our command a young fellow from the Valley of Virginia, Charley Wiltshire, who, like his brother Jim, was one of the blue hen's chickens. He had served honorably in the regular Confederate army, before he joined our Command, and had been seriously wounded several times in hard fights; in fact he was on crutches when he came to us, having been honorably discharged for disability. He began his guerrilla tactics when he should have been in the hospital. He was not long idle after he became a Mosby man, and in his first "mix-up" he broke his crutch over a Federal soldier's head. A sabre would not have been half as effectual. Mosby thought very highly of him and told him late in the month of March, 1865, that he intended making him a lieutenant in the new company H which was soon to be organized.

On March 30, he told Charley to take a few men on a scout into the valley around Berryville, and with George Murray Gill, Bartlett Bolling, John Orrick, and Bob Eastham, he crossed the Shenandoah river

beyond Snickers' Gap. Bolling and Eastham were told by Charley to stop at a house on the roadside to get some information, while the others rode on and caught sight of two Yankees at Mr. Bonham's house running towards the barn. Charley and his two companions dashed off after the two Federals who were inside the barn for protection. Charley galloped up to the door and leaning over his horse's neck, so as to reach as far as possible into the barn, he fired, and was immediately shot from within the building.

Several shots rang out from inside this " fort," and Gill and Orrick fell, the latter thrown from his horse. One of the Federals fired through a door and the other through a window. When all three of our men were down the Federals dashed out and made a run for their horses. One of them, who proved to be Lieutenant Eugene Ferris of the Thirtieth Massachusetts, caught Charley Wiltshire's horse and mounted it, shooting at the dying boy who was lying on the ground and who had raised on his elbow to shoot at Ferris. Then, ordering the other man who was his orderly to follow him, they galloped away at top speed towards their camp nearby.

When the firing began, Bartlett Bolling and Bob Eastham rushed to the house at top speed and met Ferris and his man leaving on a run. Ferris shot Bolling in the breast as he passed but did not entirely disable him, and he and Eastham started in pursuit of the two flying men, overtaking them before they reached their pickets. Orrick recovered sufficiently to join them in the chase, which ended when they reached

their camp. Bolling, wounded as he was, dragged the orderly from his horse and captured him, while Eastham fired at Ferris and began to club him from his horse, but Ferris on the captured horse got away, still chased by Bolling and Orrick.

When the race was over and they rode back to Bonham's house, they found Charley Wiltshire and George Gill desperately wounded and being cared for by the ladies. Charley was later removed to Mr. Gilbert's and died there April 6. George Gill managed to go as far as the mountains on his way back to our country, but had to stop and in a very few days died, breathing thanks with his expiring breath for the privilege of giving his young life to his country.

Mr. John Gill of Baltimore, who was then attached to General Fitzhugh Lee's staff, was in our country scouting, and had gone on several raids with our men. George Murray Gill was his cousin, and John Gill was at his death bed and gave him Christian burial on the mountainside. The body of our gallant Maryland boy now rests in Green Mount Cemetery in Baltimore.

For his part in this affair Lieutenant Ferris received from the Secretary of War a medal of honor for his distinguished gallantry in the face of the enemy.

Dr. Lawrence Wilson, of the pension office in Washington, formerly of the Seventh Ohio Infantry, First Brigade, Second Division, Twelfth and Twentieth Army Corps, read an account of this fight, in a book written in 1867 by Major John Scott. The Doctor only saw the book thirty years later and, being attracted by the story, he wrote to some of the partici-

pants and then applied to the Secretary of War. The medal resulted.

The last record of our defeat is, by a singular irony of fate, the record of our last fight, a fight that took place on the 10th of April, 1865, one day after Lee's surrender at Appomattox. We did not know of that event at the time, but possibly the fight would have taken place just the same if we had known it. The Eighth Illinois Cavalry was our adversary on this occasion, as it had been so frequently for two years preceding. We had tested their mettle and felt their bullets sufficiently to have a proper respect for them. These men would fight at the drop of a hat, and we knew it meant bloodshed whenever we came together.

On the 9th of April Captain George Baylor of Mosby's Command was put in charge of Company H, which had been organized but a few days before, and was composed almost entirely of recent recruits to the Command. With him was a part of old Company D, and his mission was to raid the Federal communications in Fairfax county and capture a wagon train; incidentally to win his spurs. Every newly elected Captain was given the chance to show what stuff he was made of. Baylor had come to us with a fine reputation won in the regular army, but that did not signify that he would make a good Captain of Mosby's men, and so he was turned loose on his own responsibility, "to do something."

Lieutenant Ed. Thomson acted as guide for the party. The wagon train which it was supposed Baylor would find hauling wood, had been withdrawn;

possibly the authorities had heard of the projected raid, and he was returning with his men. He stopped at Arundel's farm for rest and feed, and the men dismounted. Baylor did not put out a picket, and suddenly out of nowhere that Eighth Illinois crowd burst on him and his men, bringing confusion with them.

The Mosby men, unprepared for the attack and many of them unarmed, broke for cover. One of Baylor's boys, J. D. Shewalter, now a lawyer in Colorado Springs, acted as rear guard during the entire retreat of several miles. He was riding a horse that would not run, insisting on trotting the whole distance and, as all the rest of our men were sprinting, he was left in the rear.

The Federal Commander called on him early in the engagement to surrender and the boy was willing to do so, but that trotting horse of his would not let him. Some of the older members of the Command made an effort to check the stampede, fighting their pursuers, in a way, as they ran, but their efforts were in vain. Among them were Captain Baylor, Joe Bryan, Ed. Thomson, Charley Dear, Jim Wiltshire, Frank Carter, Walter Gosden, and a few others. Bryan and Wiltshire saw one of their men, Sergeant Mohler, trying to escape on foot. His horse had been shot, and they rode up on each side of him and, taking hold of his wrists, galloped along with him until he overtook a riderless horse which he mounted; but he was captured shortly afterwards. He always declared that if he had been allowed to proceed under his own steam he would have got away.

Walter Gosden checked up his horse to help a man that was down. Shewalter saw the danger of stopping then and called out to him to save himself. Just then the bullets were flying pretty fast and Shewalter began using a very select brand of profanity which Gosden thought was emanating from one of his Yankee pursuers; as each new expression escaped Shewalter's lips, Gosden's spurs went deeper into the sides of his horse and, without looking around to see who was cursing, he fired his pistols back recklessly but harmlessly at close intervals, till both were empty and Gosden was almost dead from exhaustion.

Our loss was one man wounded and four taken prisoners; the enemy's loss was four men wounded and a number of horses killed. The chase was kept up as far as Wolf Run Shoals near the old Bull Run battlefield. Jim Wiltshire and Frank Carter fired the last shots in the affair and shot the last man.

Charley Dear made his will the night before this fight, and among his legatees was Joe Bryan, who was to fall heir to some new socks which Charley had come in possession of, and of which he was very proud. During the fight Charley was thrown from his horse and rolled over and over into a gulch, with his horse following a close second. Joe could not help thinking of the priceless socks that were so soon to be his. The unfortunate Ranger turned up next day, however, safe and sound, and the new socks did not change hands.

This was the last fight and the last whipping of Mosby's Command. Colonel Mosby was not in it, but every man wished he had been, for a different story

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*From a Photograph by Kennedy, Washington.*

JOHN S. MOSBY,

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CIVIL WAR, IN THE UNIFORM OF A CONFEDERATE COLONEL.

would have been told. Once before, on the 29th of October, 1864, a newly elected Captain, trying to win his spurs, had run into the Eighth Illinois Cavalry and got a thrashing. There seemed to be a fatality in pitting a new Captain of our Command against Farnsworth's old Eighth.

The foregoing are some of the most memorable fights in which the enemy got away with us. I have not undertaken to record all our disasters; as I said, I am not writing its history. Now that I look back over it all, and review the memories of those eventful years, I cannot help thinking that the defeats we occasionally suffered did as much as our victories, if not more, to cement us closely together in those days, and to make us feel tenderly towards each other now that we are old.

In this, our last affair, some of the first and some of the last to join the Command fought side by side, and such was the influence of the "Mosby men of record" upon the newcomers, that the latter sprang, full-fledged, into the booted and spurred Ranger the instant he touched elbows with the former on a raid or in a fight. After the first division of the spoils of a successful raid all Guerrillas looked alike to me.

Usually a young fellow who joined Mosby's Command came to him with romantic ideas of the Partisan Ranger's existence. It was something vague in his mind. He was ever on the look-out for its secrets and its inner workings. He took his lessons from some one or more old models, but he learned the first day of his enlistment that he must keep awake and

fight. These were the two important first lessons. In a hand-to-hand fight one day in the latter part of 1864, a young fellow who had just joined the Command the day before found himself rather bewildered by the surging, yelling, fighting crowd all around him and, turning to Harry Hatcher, one of the old veterans, said in an innocent, schoolboy way,

"How can I tell who are our men and who are the Yankees?"

"Damn the difference," Harry replied, "pitch in and shoot anything."

Just then an Eighth Illinois pistol was poked under the boy's nose, but it was not quick enough, for Harry's lesson had been learned when it was given, and a Yankee saddle was emptied.

That Mosby imparted the spirit of courage and daring to his soldiers is undoubted. I have cited many instances to show what a wonderful influence his presence in our Command had over the men who came from so many parts of the South to join him.

Every member of the Battalion did something worthy of record, and I had hoped to be able to speak of it. None of the officers or men were ever idle. What I have written is a mere chapter of our story. The little personal incidents, the individual scouts and fights, the daily experiences of each man, these are what would have proven most satisfactory in a book about Mosby's Men, but I could not remember a tenth of it all, and I must leave what is unwritten to some other, who will write the story as cheerfully and as lovingly as I have written my share.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE BEGINNING OF THE END

THERE came the time at last when Mosby's Men had to stop their raiding and fighting. Four years of the bitterest conflict, four years of hardship, weariness, privation and horror, had made the soldiers of both armies weary of war. We of the Partisan Rangers had had little more than two years of it on our own account and, although our Command had more of the poetry and romance in its history than fell to the regulars, we had begun to feel some of the weariness, the exhaustion and the satiety that invariably come to an army, with bloodshed; to the victors as well as to the defeated.

So far as its physical well-being was concerned, Mosby's Command had never been in better condition than when Lee surrendered at Appomattox. Every man in the saddle was a seasoned Ranger, better equipped, better prepared in every way to continue fighting, than any of the cavalry in the regular army.

Gradually the undesirable element had been weeded out; the drones in the hive had been eliminated by a process which was practically the survival of the fittest; the unruly element, whenever it showed itself, was hustled off under guard to the regular army, and a series of unusual achievements had filled the

Command with an overwhelming desire to precipitate measures that looked towards a continuance of the struggle.

That we were in magnificent shape to perform our best work there is no possible doubt; but the general relaxation that came along the line after Appomattox doubtless communicated some of its depression to us and, while we resisted its influence, we became, as did all concerned, its unconscious victims.

We had cast off our old horses for new; as each individual pocket-book swelled, a better horse was added to the already good private stud. Each man's equipment was better after every raid; a new suit of buff and gold-embroidered gray was ordered from the local tailor or the underground road from the North. Our arms were the best to be had, and the entire Command, reaping the fruits of war, found itself equipped in paraphernalia of the finest. Many of the men had exchanged the ordinary raw-hide covered McClellan saddles of the private soldier, for the more elaborate, brass-trimmed, enamel leather saddles of the commissioned officer.

Naturally we came to the conclusion that the entire Southern army was sufficiently equipped, and our hopes were lifted in proportion to the success we met on the raids we made.

It seemed to most of us that the cause for which we stood was soon to be won and that the long winter through which we had passed was to offer us full compensation in the shape of victory.

Our last fight, which I have just described, was

fought by some of the best-dressed, best-mounted, and best-equipped men in the army. The last shots fired were fired by two of our young lieutenants, Jim Wiltshire and Frank Carter, mere boys, who were dandies in their gorgeous attire.

Suddenly Richmond fell, General Lee surrendered at Appomattox, and the curtain of war was rung down on the last act.

Mosby's Men, as I have previously related, did not know of the surrender, when, on the following day, we went into battle with the Eighth Illinois. I sometimes feel sure that, if we had known it was to be the last fight of our career, every man of us would have died rather than suffer the defeat that followed.

One may imagine the effect that Lee's surrender had upon the Partisan Rangers, although the tidings did not reach us until several days afterward. The Northern forces in the Valley of Virginia were commanded by General Hancock, who, under the date of April 10th issued a circular addressed to the citizens in the neighborhood of his lines, urging their co-operation in the immediate restoration of peace. He told them, however, that Colonel Mosby, the Partisan Ranger, was not included in the terms of surrender.

On the same day, General Grant informed Mr. Stanton, the Secretary of War, that he thought all the fragments of the army of Northern Virginia would come in and surrender under the terms given to General Lee. He added that he "wished Hancock would try it with Mosby."

On the same date, April 10th, General Hallock,

however, in sending on to Hancock the Secretary of War's Order to have the correspondence between Grant and Lee printed and circulated, closed his communication with this positive sentence:

"The guerrilla chief, Mosby, will not be paroled."

General Augur also issued a circular in which he styled Mosby "an outlaw," stating that he would not be paroled under any circumstances. It will be seen that there was considerable confusion as to Mosby's exact status.

On April 11th General C. H. Morgan, Chief of Staff to General Hancock, addressed the following letter to Colonel Mosby:

"HEADQUARTERS MIDDLE MILITARY DIVISION,
April 11th, 1865.

*Colonel John S. Mosby, Commanding Partisans.*

COLONEL: I am directed by Major-General Hancock to enclose to you copies of letters which passed between Generals Grant and Lee on the occasion of the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia. Major-General Hancock is authorized to receive the surrender of the forces under your command on the same conditions offered to General Lee, and will send an officer of equal rank with yourself to meet you at any point and time you may designate, convenient to the lines, for the purpose of arranging details, should you conclude to be governed by the example of General Lee. Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

C. H. MORGAN,
*Brevet Brigadier-General, and Chief of Staff.*

The reader will observe that General Morgan did not ask Colonel Mosby to surrender himself, but "the forces under his command."

On the following day, April 12th, General Hancock notified General Hallock that he had sent a communication to Mosby offering to receive the surrender of his command, and added:

"It is quite as likely that Mosby will disband as that he will surrender, as all his men have fine horses and are generally armed with two pistols only. They will not give up these things, I presume, as long as they can escape. I will employ the cavalry force here in hunting them down."

Three days later, April 15th, Colonel Mosby sent his reply to General Hancock, acknowledging the receipt of General Morgan's letter of the 11th, concluding as follows:

"As yet I have no notice through any other source of the fact concerning the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia, nor, in my opinion, has the emergency yet arisen which would justify the surrender of my Command. With no disposition, however, to cause the useless effusion of blood or to inflict on a war-worn population any unnecessary distress, I am ready to agree to a suspension of hostilities for a short time in order to enable me to communicate with my own authorities, or until I can obtain sufficient intelligence to determine my further action. Should you accede to this proposition I am ready to meet any person you may designate to arrange the terms of an armistice."

This communication was sent to General Hancock through the hands of Lieutenant-Colonel Chapman, Captain Walter Frankland, Adjutant William H. Mosby, and Dr. A. Monteiro, of our Command, and was delivered to the General in person.

General Hancock sent a prompt reply, agreeing to cease hostilities until the following Tuesday at noon. On the same day, April 16th, General Hancock received from General Hallock a notice that General Grant authorized him to "give Colonel Mosby and his Command the same terms as those agreed upon by General Lee."

On the 18th, Colonel Mosby met a number of the Rangers at Paris, in Fauquier county, and proceeded with them to Millwood in the Shenandoah Valley, where he met, by appointment, General George H. Chapman and his officers. Colonel Mosby, having as yet received no news from headquarters, asked for an extension of time.

The truce was extended to the 20th, with a conditional ten days further truce if approved by General Hancock.

On the 19th, General Hancock wrote to Colonel Mosby informing him that the truce would end at noon the next day, and would not be renewed. On the same day Hancock notified Hallock of what he had done.

Promptly at noon on the 20th, Colonel Mosby, with twenty of his men, walked into one of the rooms of the little brick building in Millwood, near Winchester, where the Northern officers were waiting for his de-

cision. The Colonel was informed that General Hancock refused to extend the truce any longer than that hour and, as Mosby refused to surrender, the Federal Commander said to him:

"The truce is ended. We can have no further intercourse under its terms."

He looked the Colonel square in the eyes when he said it and both men appreciated the serious import of the moment. This was the first time that Mosby had come, face to face, with so critical and peculiar a situation without instantly acting. Anything approaching it in the past had meant bloodshed. To add to the suspense, one of our men, a rough diamond named John Hearn, who had remained outside among the soldiers and had got up an impromptu horse race with one of them, discovered, at the end of his half-mile dash, that a regiment of cavalry was drawn up near the little town, hidden behind a clump of trees. Instantly he dashed back to where Mosby was and bolted into the room where the conference was being held, shouting in a voice so loud that all assembled could hear him:

"Colonel, the d——d Yankees have got you in a trap: there is a thousand of them hid in the woods right here."

Mosby looked squarely at his informant. "Let's fight 'em, Colonel," he continued coming to Mosby's side. "We can whip 'em."

Up to that moment the conference had been dignified, although unusual. At the conclusion of the trooper's dramatic announcement, Mosby, who had

been seated during the conversation, rose to his feet and placed his hand on his revolver.

"If," he said slowly, keeping his eye on the group of Federal officers, "the truce no longer protects us, we are at your mercy; but we shall protect ourselves."

Followed by his twenty men, all ready to draw their weapons at the signal, Mosby strode from the room.

If, at that critical moment some hot-headed Partisan had made any move towards trouble, or a hammer of a six-shooter had clicked in cocking, that tavern room would have developed a catastrophe that Dodge City, or Abilene, in the palmiest days of the old cattle trail, could not have equalled.

The handful of Rangers filed out in breathless silence, Mosby at their head. Each man mounted his horse without molestation and they galloped down the turnpike to the Shenandoah river. Plunging across it, full tilt, they rode over the Blue Ridge Mountains, into our own "Mosby's Confederacy," their arms in their holsters and chagrin in their hearts.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE RANGERS DISBAND

THERE is not room here to recount all that we did and all that we felt that night. The outlook for the morrow was gloomy. Failure of the cause for which we had fought made the chilly winds of early spring seem colder and the drizzle from the trees all the drearier. Colonel Mosby, like the rest of us, showed plainly that his heart was heavy. The blow had fallen with awful force and, though little was said, the gloomy faces of the Partisans told how tumultuous were the thoughts surging amid the memories of past achievements. Many of us slept in strange beds, or in none at all, that night, for we felt that we were to be henceforth wanderers.

In the morning, after very brief preparations, Colonel Mosby, who was at Glen Welby, the home of Major Richard Henry Carter, in Fauquier county, asked for paper and writing material, and then and there penned his farewell address to those of the Partisan Rangers who had gone through the war at his side; to those who loved him as men love their fathers, their brothers, and their kin.

By previous arrangement the whole Command, or as many as could be mustered, met on that morning at Salem, and by noon the line of faithful followers

was drawn up to hear his parting words. No sadder ceremony ever occurred in the life of that little band of men and, as Mosby rode along the line, looking each man in the face, it was plain that his heart was breaking.

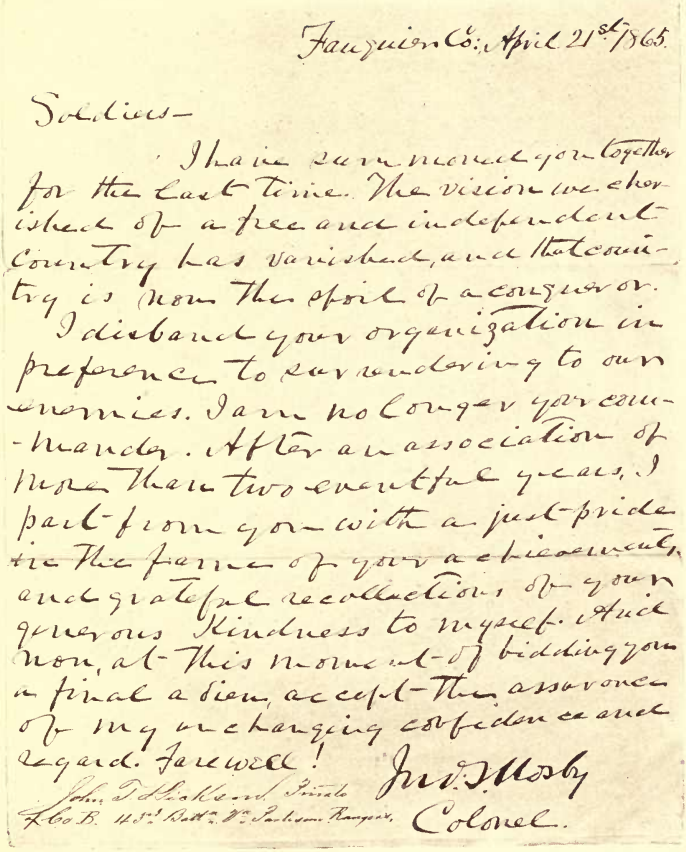
The document that the Colonel had prepared earlier that morning was read to each squadron. From the original draft, now in possession of Mr. Frank R. Pemberton of New York City, I herewith quote the historic address in full:

"FAUQUIER COUNTY, April 21, 1865.

"SOLDIERS: I have summoned you together for the last time. The visions we have cherished of a free and independent country have vanished, and that country is now the spoil of the conqueror. I disband your organization in preference to surrendering it to our enemies. I am no longer your Commander. After an association of more than two eventful years, I part from you with a just pride in the fame of your achievements and a grateful recollection of your generous kindness to myself. And at this moment of bidding you a final adieu, accept the assurance of my unchanging confidence and regard. Farewell.

"JOHN S. MOSBY."

I submit this as one of the most genuine expressions of regret that was ever penned, and it is small wonder that Mosby afterward said: "When writing I had some of the feelings of Boabdil when he took his last look at the Alhambra."



Fauquier Co: April 21st 1865.

Soldiers—

I have summoned you together for the last time. The vision we cherished of a free and independent country has vanished, and that country is now the spoil of a conqueror.

I disband your organization in preference to surrendering to our enemies. I am no longer your commander. After an association of more than two eventful years, I part from you with a just pride in the fame of your achievements, and grateful recollections of your generous kindness to myself. And now, at this moment of bidding you a final adieu, accept the assurances of my unchanging confidence and regard. Farewell!

John D. Blakemore Private
Co B. 43d Batt Va Cavalry Rangers

Jno. S. Mosby
Colonel.

*By courtesy of Mr. F. R. Pemberton.*

FACSIMILE OF MOSBY'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.

It isn't possible for me to write an adequate description of the scene that followed. Each of those present was so occupied with his personal griefs and regrets that the full effect of the occasion did not present itself. Singly and in groups, the participants in this saddest of farewells, Mosby's men, gave way to their feelings in a manner that requires no description. Strong men, who had laughed in the face of the gravest dangers and smiled at the pains of grievous wounds, walked apart to weep. Colonel Mosby, with his hat off, stood at the side of the road, receiving the clutch of friendly hands, and bestowing brave words on the men with whom he had fought for the lost cause. The wild excitement of the past two years, the crash of pistols and carbines, the yell of victory, and the fever of battle were all ended now. To many of those men that parting was their first sorrow.

Colonel Mosby told them frankly that they could do whatever they chose; that if they went to General Hancock they could get their paroles and be protected in their homes; that he did not intend to surrender, but would go South, possibly to connect with General Johnston's army.

In little groups the men dispersed to meet next day under Lieutenant-Colonel Chapman and proceed to the Valley of Virginia, there to surrender. Mosby was left with a handful of boys who preferred to remain at his side, to follow him blindly wherever he chose to lead them, to become Knights Errant in a new Crusade.

There were only about a half dozen boys in this

remnant of Partisan Rangers who were with Mosby at the last, and I was one of the number.

We started South with more, but only this little group got as far as the neighborhood of Richmond. Colonel Mosby sent Coley Jordan and me into the city to discover the situation and report to him the next day at a point a few miles west of the city, on the James river. I went to the old Jeff Davis mansion, which was then occupied by Federal officers, and ascertained that we could raid them successfully at night, capture the whole crowd and get out of the town with them. I then inspected the officers' stables which were on Franklin street, where I found we could take every horse in the stable and the few guards who were on duty.

After getting all the information I wanted on which to base one of the most audacious and sensational and destructive forays of our career, I rode back in the night and reported to the Colonel, who had got tired of waiting for my return and thought that I had fallen by the wayside to the pleadings of my parents to remain at home. He turned to Ben Palmer and said:

"Ben, if Munson don't come back tomorrow, I want you to go into Richmond, but don't go near your father."

While I was gone a canal boat came along from the city with some officers aboard. Ben Palmer, at Mosby's request, went down to the canal to get the news and was given a copy of a Richmond paper which contained an account of Johnston's surrender. Ben waited all night on the roadside for me, and I turned

up promptly the next morning. But when I reported to Mosby he said,

"Too late! It would be murder and highway robbery now. We are soldiers, not highwaymen."

Our new-born crusade had come to a sudden end. The war was actually over.

It has always been some satisfaction to me to know that I performed, as well as I could, the last order for service ever given by my Colonel to any man in his Command; and, as I had done duty as marker of the cavalry company which performed the first active service of the war in Virginia, and as this trip to Richmond was one of the last active services of a Confederate soldier in the State, I congratulate myself that I saw the race from start to finish.

Mosby bade the four or five of us an affectionate farewell and, in company with Ben Palmer, rode away towards his home in Lynchburg. About two months later he took his parole.

The day he left us he and Ben Palmer stopped at a farm-house for dinner. He did not tell who he was, and the old farmer, unable to control a natural curiosity, asked him his name. Mosby told him, and the old man said:

"Colonel, where is your Command?"

Turning around and pointing to Ben he said,

"There it stands! That is all that is left of it."

No truer, braver, or better soldier in all the South, or all the North, ever unbuckled his weapons and laid them down for peace, than John S. Mosby, Commander of the Partisan Rangers of Virginia.

"Mosby's Men" became a memory. They scattered far and wide, each to take his place in the busy world; each to contribute his share towards the development and progress of the re-united country over which we fought so long and bitterly: each to try and make his presence felt in the new scheme of things. That the great majority of them have proven worthy of the confidence Colonel Mosby reposed in them, is attested by their lives today. They and their children are scattered throughout the land in all walks of life, adorning the professions, the arts, the sciences and the trades.

Thirty years after the Civil War, John H. Alexander of Leesburg, Virginia, one of the foremost members of the Command, issued a call for a re-union of the survivors to be held in Alexandria, Virginia. In response, there came about one hundred and fifty of the Rangers, Colonel Mosby among them. Many speeches were made by prominent ex-officers of the Confederate Army, but most impressive of all was that of our old Commander. I quote it in full, for I think no more graceful or appropriate re-union speech was ever made at a gathering of soldiers.

### COLONEL MOSBY'S SPEECH.

"COMRADES: When, on April 21st, 1865, I told you that I was no longer your Commander, and bade you, what we then considered, a long and perhaps eternal farewell, the most hopeful among us could not reasonably have expected ever to have witnessed a

scene like this. Nearly thirty years have passed away and we meet once more on the banks of the Potomac, in sight of the Capitol, not in hostile array, but as citizens of a great and united country. Gun-boats no longer patrol the river; there are no picket guards on the banks to challenge our crossing.

"Your presence here this evening recalls our last parting. I see the line drawn up to hear read the last order I ever gave you. I see the moistened eyes and quivering lips. I hear the command to break ranks. I feel the grasp of the hands and see the tears on the cheeks of men who had dared death so long that it had lost it's terror. And I know now, as I knew then, that each heart suffered with mine the agony of the Titan in his resignation to fate.

The rock, the vulture, and the chain,
All that the proud can feel of pain.

"I miss among you the faces of some who were present that day, but who have since passed over the Great River. Memory brings back the image of many of that glorious band who then slept in the red burial of war. Modern skepticism has destroyed one of the most beautiful creations of Epic ages, the belief that the spirits of dead warriors met daily in the halls of Walhalla, and there around the festive board recounted the deeds they did in the other world. For this evening, at least, let us adopt the ancient superstition, if superstition it be. It may seem presumptuous in me, but a man who belonged to my Command

may be forgiven for thinking that, in that assembly of heroes, when the feast of the wild boar is spread, Smith and Turner, Montjoy and Glasscock, Fox and Whitescarver, and all their comrades, will not be unnoticed in the mighty throng.

I shall make no particular allusion to the part you played in the great tragedy of war. Our personal associations were so intimate that it would not become me to do so. But, standing here as I do, amid the wreck of perished hopes, this much at least I can say — that in all the vicissitudes of fortune and all the trials of life, I have never ceased to feel, as I told you at parting, a just pride in the fame of your achievements, and a grateful recollection of your generous kindness to myself. I remember — and may my right arm wither if I ever forget — how, when the mournful tidings came from Appomattox that "Young Harry Percy's spur was cold," you stood with unshaken fidelity to the last, and never quit my side until I told you to go.

"A great poet of antiquity said, as descriptive of the Romans, that they changed their sky but not their hearts. While I lived in far Cathay, my heart, untraveled, dwelt among the people in whose defense I had shed my blood and given the best years of my life. In the solitude of exile it was a solace to hear that my name was sometimes mentioned by them with expressions of good will. Nothing that concerns the honor and welfare of Virginia can ever be indifferent to me.

"I wish that life's descending shadows had fallen

upon me in the midst of friends and the scenes I loved best. But destiny — not my will — compels me to abide far away on the shore of that sea where 'the god of gladness sheds his parting smile.' I must soon say to you farewell, a word that must be and hath been. I shall carry back to my home by the Golden Gate proud recollections of this evening, and I shall still feel, as I have always felt, that life cannot afford a more bitter cup than the one I drained when we parted at Salem, nor any higher reward of ambition than that I received as Commander of the Forty-third Virginia Battalion of Cavalry."

THE END.

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