The Fight on Little Round Top

Valor of the Twentieth Maine at Gettysburg.

By FRANK H. SWEET

THE war council of Federal generals the night before the second day's battle of Gettysburg became necessarily a frantic pretention of scanning the unknown. Outside on the lengthening ridges and between the abrupt hillsides of that intricate battlefield lay the encampments of the two hostile armies, ominous and solemn. There were few campfires. At times could be heard the voice of a sentry challenging or the drawn out clatter of a horseman on the stone pavement of the cemetery. Daybreak found cautious General Meade still listening to the reports of his division commanders, to their stories of misfortune and plans for strengthening the line of battle.

The unexpected was certain to be. fall both officers and men, and they must be ready to perform miracles if need be. An instance of this kind was the fight of the Twentieth Maine on Little Round Top, in token of which the colonel of the regiment, Joshua L. Chamberlain, for his daring heroism received the medal of honor.

Little Round Top had escaped the vigilance of the Federal commanders. This was the smaller of two rough hills, strewn with bowlders and bare, slippery rocks, rising sharply from a wooded swamp, behind which stretched the Confederate battle line. At the foot of Little Round Top a body of Union troops had been posted.

It was now afternoon. Lee's attack was expected momentarily, and every man was waiting intently, with his eyes fixed upon the open space that separated the two armies. Just at this time, by a fortunate chance, it occurred to General Meade to order General Warren to ride over the field in the direction of the Round Tops. Warren did so, and when he came to the foot of Little Round Top he left his horse and climbed to the summit. What was his surprise to find at this point only one soldier, an officer of the signal corps! He no sooner looked about him than it became instantly clear to him that the top of this hill was in reality the key to the whole position. His astonishment gave place to consternation.

With his glass he noted the thickly wooded ridge beyond the swamp.

"Captain," he said, "fire a shot into those woods."

The captain of the rifle battery did so, and a simultaneous flash of musket barrel and bayonet revealed to the northern general the presence of a long line of the enemy far outflanking the position of the Union troops. The fact thrilled him. It was most appalling. A strong force should have been intrenched long ago on this hill. Perhaps even now it was not too late. He rushed off a messenger to General Meade with a penciled word to send General Warren at least a division to hold the position at Little Round Top.

On the summit where the signal officer was stationed the musket balls were beginning to fly. He folded up his flags and was going to leave, but at this moment Warren came back and induced him to keep the flags waving.

"It may puzzle those people," he said, meaning the enemy, "and may keep them back for a few minutes."

The moments of suspense came suddenly to an end with the arrival of Vincent's brigade and Hazlett's battery of rifled cannon, Fifth artillery.

The young battery lieutenant spoke. "General, what is the matter?"

"The deuce is to pay!" was the reply. "I hope you can hold out until the infantry gets into position."

"I guess I can," answered Lieutenant Hazlett. As a matter of fact, he stayed there until he was killed.

The veteran Chamberlain, now in his eightieth year, thus describes the action from this point:

"Warren started our brigade (Vincent's) before he sent Hazlett's battery to Little Round Top. My column passed Hazlett getting his guns up by hand and handspike to the summit of Little Round Top. The Twentieth Maine was placed on the extreme left of the Union army. The attack, beginning on the right of our brigade, rolled rapidly upon my front.' The assault was first from the Fourth and Fifth Texas, joined by the Fourth Alabama and next by the Forty-seventh and finally by the Fifteenth Alabama.

"My regiment had already been cut down by the casualties of the service, so that only 368 muskets were in line. We first fought without seeing the extent of the opposing force which was constantly increasing. Then the two flanking regiments (Fifteenth and Forty-seventh Alabama), preparing a 'turning attack,' were met by a change of front. I sent also a strong company out on that flank to strike this attack in flank."

"FIRE A SHOT INTO THOSE WOODS."

No sooner had Colonel Chamberlain's little force reached the portion of the hillside assigned to it than it was engaged by the Fourth Alabama. Soon it saw a dense mass of Confederates coming toward its left, for two strong regiments of the enemy, containing a thousand men, had been ordered to turn the Union flank at exactly that position. Discerning in a flash the grave peril of his command, the Maine colonel sent out a company to engage this force and ordered five companies to swing back until they formed a line at a right angle to the

Colonel Joshua L. Chamberlain In Civil War Days.

Round Top

How Colonel Chamberlain Won the Medal of Honor.

rest. At this instant the Alabamians attacked them on front and flank, opening with a murderous fire. There were five successive charges by this force

Colonel Chamberlain with drawn sword moved up and down his lines. The bullets whizzed incessantly past him. His men were constantly groaning and falling on every side. Outnumbered more than three to one, their position was terrible, and it was apparently a hopeless one. Yet with dripping faces the men loaded and fired their muskets, displaying the cool expertness of true veterans. Colonel Chamberlain thought only of one thing—that the position he held was of great importance in the battle. Retreat might mean the destruction of an entire corps. There was no hope that supports would be sent him in season to save the position. He was resolved never to yield, though it seemed that in a few minutes not a man would be left alive.

HAZLETT'S BATTERY ON LITTLE ROUND TOP.

Colonel Chamberlain thus describes what followed:

"Seeing the desperate situation, I had ordered my men to use the cartridges of the fallen, friend or foe. When they had fired their last cartridge into the faces of a rallying force I resolved to make a countercharge with the bayonet and so instructed my officers on the wheeling flank, on whom the brunt was to fall. Returning to my center, I was about to order the movement when Lieutenant Melcher, commanding the now salient center company, came up and asked if he might not rush forward and rescue some of our wounded before the oncoming enemy should trample them underfoot. I admired his tenderness and courage and answered: 'Yes, sir; I will give you a chance. I am about to order a charge.' I went forward to our colors and shouted 'Bayonet!' adding 'Forward!' But no mortal could hear this, the roar of fire and shouts of my men drowning all words.

"We made a sickle sweep, a great right wheel, with our whole line, astonishing the enemy into surrender or wild retreat. We cleared the whole valley between Little Round Top and brought back 400 prisoners. I had lost half my men on the center and a third of the entire regiment on the line. The company I had sent out on our left not being at first in the charging line, it was made by scarcely more than 200 men. We later advanced in midnight blackness, clambering the rough sides of Great Round Top, beyond which the remnants of Hood's division had retreated, and with the aid of two regiments held the position."

The heroic leader of this remarkable action, besides receiving the medal of honor for his work at Gettysburg, was made a brigadier general on the field in a later engagement by General Grant, and in 1865 General Chamberlain was brevetted a major general "for conspicuous gallantry in action." At the ceremony of the actual surrender of the arms and colors of Lee's army at Appomattox Chamberlain was designated to command.

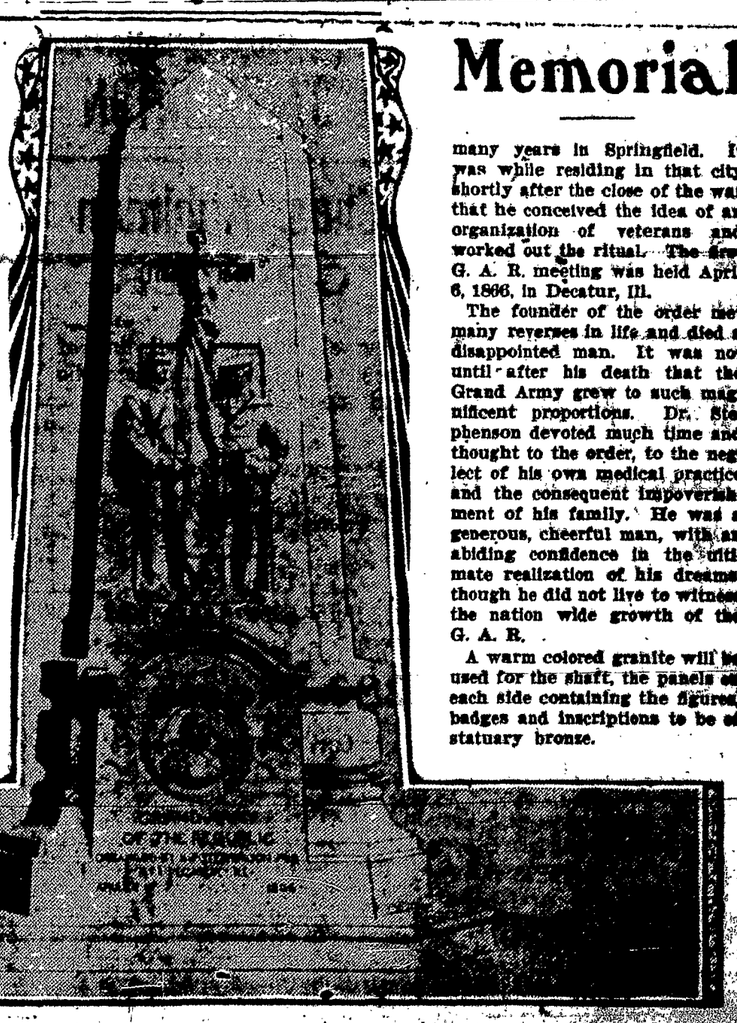
Grand Army Memorial

SCULPTOR J. MASSEY RHIND of New York is working on a monument to commemorate the founder of the Grand Army of the Republic, Dr. Benjamin Franklin Stephenson of Springfield, Ill. The memorial, a three sided obelisk, is to be erected in Washington at the junction of Louisiana avenue and Seventh and C streets, in the middle of a circular grass plot, and it is to be ready for dedication about Aug. 1, 1909, when there will be an encampment of the Grand Army to unveil it. Congress has appropriated $10,000, and G. A. R. men have raised about $25,000 additional, so that the monument will be a splendid creation.

Dr. Stephenson was regimental surgeon of the Fourteenth Illinois volunteer infantry during its three years of service in the west. His rank was that of major. He was born in Wayne county, Ill., in 1822 and died in 1871. Dr. Stephenson grew up in Sangamon county and lived many years in Springfield. It was while residing in that city shortly after the close of the war that he conceived the idea of an organization of veterans and worked out the ritual. The first G. A. R. meeting was held April 6, 1866, in Decatur, Ill.

The founder of the order met many reverses in life and died a disappointed man. It was not until after his death that the Grand Army grew to such magnificent proportions. Dr. Stephenson devoted much time and thought to the order, to the neglect of his own medical practice and the consequent impoverishment of his family. He was a generous, cheerful man, with an abiding confidence in the ultimate realization of his dreams, though he did not live to witness the nation wide growth of the G. A. R.

A warm colored granite will be used for the shaft, the panels on each side containing the figures, badges and inscriptions to be of statuary bronze.



NOT IN WOMAN'S CLOTHES.

Jeff Davis Wore a Fantastic Coat, but It Was a Man's.

Recently the Boston Herald published an interview with L. C. Bateman of Auburn, Me., a veteran of the civil war, in which Mr. Bateman stated that the story that Jefferson Davis, the leader of the lost cause, when captured by the Union troops was dressed in women's clothing is a myth.

The Herald interview was widely copied, and Mr. Bateman received many letters regarding the matter, and almost without exception they are favorable to his side of the controversy. One letter was from Captain B. D. Bryant, sheriff of Jackson county, Mo., in which, among other things, he said:

"I was a commissioned officer of the Twelfth Maine regiment and was with the regiment at Augusta, Ga., when Jefferson Davis was brought in by his captors. I remember the incident very well, and your interesting story awakens a slumbering memory of those stirring times.

"I, too, saw Mr. Davis and his entire party and had conversation with Stephens and others of the distinguished prisoners.

"I spoke to Davis, but he was reticent and disinclined to notice me.

"I was officer of the guard by regular detail this day, which gave me vantage opportunities that I might not otherwise have had. I was aboard the Planter and took in everything in sight and some things that weren't. Several officers of our regiment accompanied the Planter on the trip with its precious cargo of the defunct Confederacy.

"Your description of Mr. Davis in surtout and cavalry boots tallies exactly with my remembrance of his attire, and I have always maintained that a mistake has gone abroad concerning his capture in female garb.

"I also conversed with several of his captors. In fact, one of the officers of Lieutenant Colonel Pritchard's command was a guest at our headquarters, and he did not mention any peculiarity of dress other than the rather fantastic coat coming well down to the feet.

"Absurdities surely do creep into history."

WAITED FORTY YEARS.

Romance Interrupted by War Renewed in Life's Winter.

Not long ago was performed in Washington a wedding ceremony which was postponed more than twoscore years ago by the civil war.

The bridegroom was sixty and gray. His bride also was sixty and gray. Both were as happy as they were when as playmates they looked forward to an early marriage.

When James Gaffney enlisted as a private in Company K, Fifth cavalry, of Washington and rode away to uphold the cause of the Union he left behind him a young girl, but he carried with him her promise to wed him as soon as the war was over. Gaffney remained a soldier from the beginning to the end of the war. When he returned to Washington he was unable to find his sweetheart.

In his disappointment he drifted away from the city and finally located in Pittsburg. In a few years Gaffney married, and he did not return to Washington until six months ago. When he did so he was a widower. He had been there but a short time when he found the object of his search many long years before. She, too, had married, but her husband had died thirteen years ago.

Gaffney called on his old sweetheart with great regularity. They took pleasure in recalling the olden days when as playmates they plighted their troth. Gradually the love which was interrupted over forty years ago began to ripen, and Gaffney, now gray haired, but still ardent, pleaded his cause with all the fervor which marked his first proposal, and the object of his affection, Mrs. Honora Burke, was as demure and coy as she was when she blushingly said "Yes" to her sweetheart of old.—Philadelphia Press.

Grant's Old Cook Loses His Pistol.

General Grant's army cook, John Furling, was recently compelled to surrender his revolver and forego the taste for firearms that has clung to him from civil war days. He was convicted at Wayne, Mich., on April 2 last of threatening to shoot a man for treading on the corner of his lot. Of the talesmen called before a jury was got twenty-four admitted prejudice on the ground that Furling had at one time or another threatened to shoot them. So great was the interest in the trial that business in the village was suspended during the progress of the case.

Author of "The Blue and the Gray."

Francis M. Finch, who died last year and who wrote "The Blue and the Gray," was for fifteen years an associate justice of the New York state court of appeals. The poem first appeared in September, 1867, in the Atlantic Monthly. When he became a judge, Mr. Finch continued to write verse, but made no attempt to get it printed. "I did not feel," he said, "that the publication of poems was compatible with the dignity of a judge of the court of appeals."

At Shiloh and Chickamauga.

On the battlefield of Shiloh the spot where any brigade commander fell is now marked with cannon and piles of cannon balls. At Chickamauga similar historic spots have pyramids of ten inch shells, and mounted guns—many of them the same cannon that were used at Chickamauga—mark the stations taken by batteries.

A $200,000 Memorial.

A memorial of granite and bronze erected on the battlefield at Vicksburg by Illinois cost $200,000.

THE ROMANCE OF A TREE.

Soldier's Present to His Wartime Correspondent Still Lives.

In the wide front yard of Captain Joseph A. Humphreys, in North Alabama street, is a large birch tree which attracts by its slender, beautiful trailing branches the admiration of all passersby and the possession of which makes the captain the envy of all his neighbors.

"It's called a Rochester birch," said the captain. "At least that was the name given to it nearly forty years ago, when I set it out, and there's a story—you may call it a romance—goes with that tree.

"After the civil war, in which I served four years and seven months and like of an officer who accompanied came out a captain, I was at my mother's home in Missouri sitting on the porch puffing on a meerschaum pipe which the boys of my company had given me, feeling very proud and comfortable, when two young ladies happened along to visit my sisters. One of these ladies, dressed neatly in a calico gown, struck me as pretty as a picture. She had charming manners, and then and there I made up my mind to know her better. My lovemaking was of the whirlwind order. She couldn't escape, and in a few days we were engaged. Then we were married. We came to Indianapolis and in 1868 bought this piece of property.

"During the war there was a good amount of correspondence between girls here at home and boys in the field. They had never met each other, perhaps, but it was all very pretty and sentimental and did the boys a deal of good, serving to break the monotony of camp life. My wife, who had been a schoolteacher, told me she had carried on a correspondence of this kind with a young Ohio soldier whom she had never seen, and when we were married we wrote to him telling him of our marriage and wishing him all sorts of good fortune.

"Well, in 1868, after we had bought this place, we sent to a nursery for a lot of fruit trees to set out. It seems the nursery was run by my wife's war correspondent, which we didn't know of at the time, and when he saw the name signed to the order he remembered us. So what does the chap do but send that birch tree to my wife with his compliments; also a variety of rosebushes, with the request that she plant them in remembrance of him and the letters which had served to lighten the dull hours of his soldier days. So there's the tree nearly forty years old; there's the little bit of romance more than forty years old, and there's Mrs. Humphreys sitting on the porch."—Indianapolis News.

THE COLONEL OBEYED.

How the Color Sergeant Took Command of the Regiment.

An incident which occurred at the battle of Drainesville, Va., had a mixture of the tragic and humorous that makes it worth relating. The color sergeant of Colonel McCalmont's regiment was Frank Alexander, a fellow not counted particularly clever, but one who was infatuated with his office and his flag. While the battle was raging and we were slowly advancing Frank in his enthusiasm got far in front of the regiment.

"Bring that flag back to the regiment!" shouted Colonel McCalmont.

There was no response, though it was evident the color bearer had distinctly heard the order.

"Bring that flag back to the regiment!" again shouted the colonel.

"Go' durn you, bring the regiment up to the flag!" shouted Frank furiously, and the colonel obeyed the order.

When Frank was afterward taken prisoner he managed in some way to wrap the flag which was so precious to him around his body under his clothes, and so carried it with him until he was exchanged.—Philadelphia Press.

Yankee Fires For Confederate Baby.

General Grant had been a dear friend of my husband ever since the Mexican war. At the time our first baby was born the two armies were encamped facing each other, and they often swapped coffee and tobacco under flags of truce. On the occasion of my son's birth bonfires were lighted in celebration all along Pickett's line. Grant saw them and sent scouts to learn the cause. When they reported he said to General Ingalls:

"Haven't we some kindling on this side of the line? Why don't we strike a light for the young Pickett?"

In a little while bonfires were flaming from the Federal line. A few days later there was taken through the lines a baby's silver service engraved "To George E. Pickett, Jr., From His Mother's Friends, U. S. Grant, Rufus Ingalls, George Suckley."—Mrs. Pickett in McClure's.

He Was Lincoln's Telegraph Operator.

Dewitt Fuller of Hancock N. Y. said to have been private telegraph operator for President Lincoln during the civil war, was killed on the Erie tracks at Narrowsburg, N. Y., March 16 last. He was about seventy years old and was employed by the Erie as a telegraph repair man. He had been in the employ of the road for about forty years. He was riding his track velocipede when he was struck by a passenger train.

A No Sider.

The possessions of a farmer in the vicinity of Culpeper, Va., were in a district where both armies foraged. The old chap one day, surveying the streaks in the soil where his fences had stood, remarked with much feeling, "I ain't took no sides in this here rebellion, but I'll be doggoned if both sides ain't took me."

Sheridan's R...

Sole Survivor of ... Phil's" Escort Tells ... of Famous Dash.

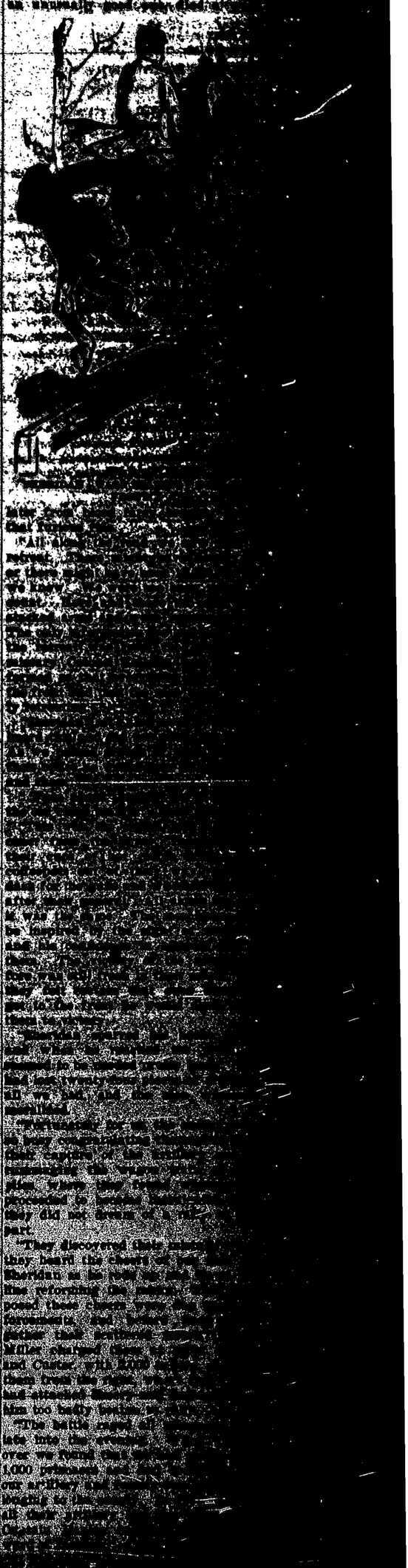
THE graphic story of the ... ride of Sheridan as ... front of the Union ... the battle of Cedar C... the Shenandoah valley, is ... added interest when heard ... line of an officer who accompanied ... general on that noted ride. ... Major Spera of Council Bluffs ... sole survivor of the escort of ... men who made that eventful ... the morning of Oct. 19, 1864, ... magnetic leadership of Sheridan ... a disastrous rout into a brilliant ...

"Early in the morning," says Major Spera, "as we were resaddling our boots and saddles at Millto... heard firing and discussed the ... among ourselves.

"As we rode out of town and ... the top of a hill we noted men ... toward us on the double quick ... looked to me mighty like the ... Chancellorsville, and when ...

"Just a month before he had ... Early's men unmercifully at Win... ter, and Early had been saying ... his revenge ever since. I was ... to take twenty of my best ... follow Sheridan to the front ... we could get them picked out ... the remainder of my command to ... a cordon across the road. ... on his big black horse ... for the front.

"I was riding a good mount ... may know something about the ... not we when I tell you that ... an unusually good pony ... us.



"Just as we ... Early's men ... ter, and ... his revenge ... to take ... follow ... we could ... the remainder ... a cordon ... on his ... for the ...

"I was ... may ... not ... an ...

"They ... they ... Sheridan ... ed these ... favorable ... gather ... Miller ... and Custer, ... them from ... was ... him too ... "The ... late ... over ... 1,000 ... our ... pouring ... all ...