

1988

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Martin W. Brett

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**Experiences of a Georgia Boy
in the
Army of Northern Virginia
1861-1865**

by

Martin W. Brett

**Auspices
Bulloch County Historical Society
1988**

Magnolia Press
P.O. Box 2921
Gainesville, GA 30603

Introduction

This first person account of the experiences of a Georgia boy in the Army of Northern Virginia during the War Between the States was written by Martin W. Brett in June 1902, for his family and descendants. The manuscript was found among the papers left by Mrs. Katherine (Kitty) Brett Franklin, of Metter, Georgia, who died in 1987.

Kitty Franklin was the granddaughter of Martin Brett. Upon discovery of this manuscript, her grandson, Brett Franklin, immediately suggested that it be brought to my attention.

Because of the inherent value of the written account and because of the value of the reconstructed muster roll, and because Metter and Candler County, where the Franklins live, were part of Bulloch County until 1914, the Bulloch County Historical Society is pleased to publish this eye witness account and to make it available to members of the Society and to the general public.

Kemp Mabry, President
Bulloch County Historical Society

Statesboro, Georgia
May 1988

Published 1988 for the Bulloch County Historical Society

Additional copies may be ordered for \$6.50 (ppd) from:

Magnolia Press
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Kenneth M. Adams, President
Bulloch County Historical Society

Milledgeville, Georgia
May 1988

Published by the Bulloch County Historical Society

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P.O. Box 2921
Cairoville, GA 30503

Martin W. Brett, the writer, was born throughout the Civil War, to 1865, as a member of Company "F", 11th Regiment, Georgia Cavalry, in the Army of Northern Virginia, and was captured by the Union forces in 1865.

He was captured in 1865, and was held in a prison camp in Milledgeville, Georgia, until the end of the war in 1865.

He was released in 1865, and returned to his home in Milledgeville, Georgia.

A NARRATIVE

concerning some events in connection

with the service of Martin W. Brett,

of Georgia, with the Army of Northern

Virginia, Confederate States of Amer-

ica, in the Civil War, 1861 - 1865;

written by himself.

In the early part of 1861, I was in the service of the Confederate States of America, in the Army of Northern Virginia, and was captured by the Union forces in 1865.

I was captured in 1865, and was held in a prison camp in Milledgeville, Georgia.

Martin W. Brett, the writer, served throughout the Civil War, 1861 to 1865, as a member of Company "F", 12th Regiment, Georgia Volunteers, in Trimble's Brigade, afterwards commanded by George Doles, and later by Phill Cook. The Brigade was, at various times, a part of the Divisions and Army Corps of Generals Stonewall Jackson, Ewell, Rodes, John B. Gordon, Jubal A. Early, and others; always in the Army of Northern Virginia, Confederate States of America, under the command of General Robert E. Lee.

In narrating some of the events of my personal service in and connection with the Confederate Army, my purpose is that should any members of my family feel in the future sufficient interest in these happenings, and choose to give attention to them, some few facts in relation to the part I took in what is now known as the late Civil War may be preserved. In doing so I wish it were possible for me to describe at length the many scenes I witnessed and participated in: but it is not. However, I trust that none of those for whom these pages are written may at any time meet with such experiences as I did then.

In the early part of 1861 came the bursting of the darkest political cloud that has ever cast a shadow over our lovely Southland; bringing, in the mad fury of a great civilized nation, all the hurried preparations for war that were possible at that period.

I was, and had been for a few years, a citizen of Dooly County, Georgia. My avocation was farming. During the months

of March, April and May, 1861, while the war excitement was running high, the citizens of our County began and completed the organization of a military company of infantry. This was the first attempt to recruit a military company in Dooly County. The company was composed of about one hundred and fifty picked men from the County and was named the "Jeff Davis Rifles". At the end of this volume will be found a muster roll of our Company which is not complete but which includes all the names I can now obtain. While in process of organizing we went into camp at Drayton, Dooly County, for the express purpose of learning to drill, maneuver, and practice the Regular Army tactics, in order that we might be better fitted for the duties of soldiers, as well as to procure uniforms, camp equipage, and arms; all of which, with the exception of muskets, we furnished at our own expense.

So soon as we were fully equipped, finding that our Governor, Joseph E. Brown, did not at once assign us to duty, we tendered our services to Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, for a period of three years, or during the war. Very soon thereafter we received orders from the proper authority to report immediately to the War Department at Richmond, Virginia. Then came the sad partings from friends and "The Girl I Left Behind"; lightened to some extent by the frolic of breaking our camp at Drayton and proceeding, on May 9, 1861, in full strength of our Company, to Montezuma, Georgia, eighteen miles distant,

where we boarded a north bound train held in waiting for us. In due time we arrived at Richmond, where we camped and drilled for several weeks.

We had left home equipped with nearly everything necessary to make camp life comfortable. Our outfits consisted principally of a large camp chest, with folding lid to form a dining table, for each mess of eight or ten men, with cooking utensils, plates, cups, saucers, knives, forks, spoons, etc. Each man had also, in addition to his arms, which consisted of a gun, bayonet, and cartridge box, - a canteen, haversack, and a large knapsack well filled with civilians clothing besides regular military uniforms and fatigue suits.

Such was the beginning of a series of events which yet lingers fresh in my mind, and looking back across the intervening years to the pleasant as well as horrible scenes of war I am impressed anew with the fact that in those uncertain days the love of strong men was born in fire and battle, pledging each to the other by bonds sealed with the life blood of gallant comrades who stood shoulder to shoulder in defense of each others' lives, as well as by the common cause of our beloved country. Those who lack such experiences can form but a faint idea of the holiness and sacredness of the memories which are the heritage of the survivors of the "days that tried men's souls".

We remained in camp at Richmond probably about six weeks pre-

paring to take our place in the Army. On June 11, 1861, our Company, together with nine other Georgia Companies, was formed into a Regiment, and mustered into the service of the Confederate States for a term of three years, or during the war; and our Company was thenceforth until the termination of the war designated "Company 'F', 12th Regiment, Georgia Volunteers, Army of Northern Virginia, Confederate States of America", and was commanded first by Captain William F. Brown, and later by Captain James Everett and subordinate officers. Our Regiment was commanded at various periods by Colonels Edward Johnson, Z. T. Conner, J. G. Rodgers, Edward Willis, and others.

We were speedily assigned to duty and started at once on an active campaign, going out through the Valley of Virginia by way of Staunton, penetrating the Alleghany Mountains in West Virginia in the vicinity of Greenbriar River, Cheat Mountain and Green Bank, and some times reaching the Ohio River with small detachments and scouting parties. We proceeded from Richmond to Staunton by rail, and our baggage was transported with us. Upon arriving at Staunton we received orders to cook three days' rations and prepare to move early the following morning. There had been fighting at Laurel Hill about this time, and we supposed we were bound for that section. As our Quartermasters could not furnish transportation for our immense camp equipage we attempted to hire private wagons to carry our belongings, and succeeded in getting a few, but not a suffi-

cient number for the occasion. Then arose the question of what to do with what we had, there being no place to deposit it except in the open country. Each soldier was permitted to exercise his own discretion in disposing of or carrying his personal effects, provided he kept his place in ranks armed and equipped as a soldier should be. When the march begun we were nearly all loaded to our utmost carrying capacity, being unable at first to make selection of what we should or should not cast away. On the first day's march our Company was assigned to duty as rear guard to keep up the stragglers. This gave me opportunity to observe the amusing and ridiculous spectacle of soldiers carrying their choice belongings until compelled by exhaustion to discard them. Then others, whose strenght was somewhat greater, would pick up and carry for a while the cast off valuables until in turn their endurance succumbed to stress of fatigue, compelling them also to relieve themselves of superfluous weight. We had one peculiar man in our Company, Richard Greer, whom we called "Harness". All through the day, at different times, he would load himself with such abandoned articles as struck his fancy, and when he could carry them no further would begin to cast them off. Late in the evening when his strength had left him he had thrown away everything he had started with and had picked up, except his gun and accouterments; and then swore he would never, while he was a soldier, carry more than that; so afterwards it was his usual custom to

draw three days' rations and cook and eat them at once to avoid having to carry them. When winter came on, however, he found it necessary to carry a blanket or freeze.

The second day of the march reports were constantly coming from the front that the Yankees were just ahead in heavy force and that we would soon meet them. This had the effect of keeping up excitement, especially as, up to that time, no ammunition had been issued to us. That night while the entire camp, except the guard, was sound asleep, an alarm was caused by the discharge of a few muskets on the outer edge of the camp, which created quite a scare among the men. The incident was prearranged, and the officers had knowledge of it, but the privates had not. I was fortunately on guard at the time; otherwise I might have acted as ridiculously as a good many others did. The firing, the beating of the long roll, and the cry "To Arms!" brought the men out of their slumbers, and naturally caused them to imagine that the camp was full of Yankees, whom some of the men claimed to have actually seen in the surrounding brush. Some got in ranks fully armed and equipped, some without arms, some fully dressed, some without pants, coat, boots, or hat: they indulged in various kinds of language to give fitting expression to their feelings. Many laughable scenes took place on that occasion.

On July 14, 1861, we did actually meet a few Yankee scouts who had guns in their hands. Our column was halted and ammuni-

tion (forty rounds of cartridges) was issued to each man. Excitement ran high. Many of our men asserted in very strong terms that we could whip the entire Yankee army. Fortunately for the Yankees it was not all there; and if we hurt anyone we did not know it, though we got a few of the first prisoners we captured. Two of our men were killed, the first of our comrades we saw cold in death. I thought then that it looked like war.

We were in that section of country, and about Greenbrier River and Camp Alleghany, until April 1862. While there we were in very active service, making the successful fights at Cheat Mountain, Greenbrier, and Alleghany Mountain, it being our particular duty to constantly observe and report as nearly as might be the location and strength of the enemy who then occupied that section with a force considerably outnumbering ours. Besides, they were assisted by Union men, natives of those mountains, who were as good rifle shots as we cared to meet in that rugged country. Hence, we were then engaged in something like frontier or guerilla warfare, fighting day and night, frequently from ambush or places where we found the enemy secreted and lying in wait for us. We most commonly encountered them in small detachments or scouting parties, the locality being peculiarly well adapted for that dangerous style of fighting.

One very cold day there was an alarm at our out picket post caused by the sudden approach of a Union man, with his squad of

scouts, who had for some time previously been giving serious trouble to our out pickets. Thinking it a good chance to catch him and his party, there was a special call made by Lieutenant Samuel Dawson for fifty picked men from our Regiment. We chased the Union party down the mountain about nine miles, but did not get them. A cold rain was falling and freezing on the ground, making the way so slippery that, confronted also with darkness and cold, our return, up grade, to camp was very difficult. When we did get there our outer clothing was frozen stiff as boards, and icicles four to five inches long were hanging from our hat brims and the capes of our over-coats. Even then, but for my wet feet, I was comfortably warm. One of my chums, Bob Young, knowing I had left camp that morning without having had anything to eat except a small piece of cold bread he brought me after I was in the ranks, was keeping my supper warm, the meat boiling in a large camp kettle. In taking it off the fire I turned it over and caught part of the boiling water in one of my shoes. Alex Rowell bounced up and pulled off my shoe, sock, and part of the skin with them. He at once applied a lot of flour and bound it up, and my appetite soon called my attention from the scalded foot. After eating I slept till next day, when, on getting up, I found there was no serious trouble with the foot, and in a few days it was all right. One man of our squad, Samuel McKinzie, was so badly frozen on that occasion that he soon died from the effects of

it.

It had been an unusually rainy season that fall, the winter was very cold, and it seemed especially disagreeable to us South Georgia men who had before that time scarcely ever seen so much as an inch of snow on the ground at one time, and were entirely unused to the life we were then leading. For these reasons there were many of our men who suffered greatly, and some actually died of frost-bites. Many others, unable, apparently, to endure the hardships and exposures of camp life, contracted such diseases as mumps, measles, dysentery, colds, fevers, and small-pox, (all of which I had myself, except the latter,) frequently with fatal results. In fact, our loss of men that winter was almost as great as it was in any summer campaign of hard fighting that we afterwards went through.

On April 2, 1862, we left Alleghany Camp and went down into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, where we camped a few days, going thence to Buffalo Gap, near Staunton, where we found Stonewall Jackson. He took command of us there, and from that time until May 3, 1863, when he received his death wound, we were a part of his Army.

I am proud to say that I was one of his gallant band, and helped to execute his orders, gaining for him throughout the civilized world military honors as high and fame as great as was ever bestowed upon any man. Under his leadership we covered more ground, and accomplished as much hard fighting, as

was ever done in the same space of time by any infantry command of equal numbers.

We commenced the series of engagements that composed the summer campaign on May 8, 1862, with the noted McDowell battle, in which the 12th Georgia Regiment bore the brunt of the fighting. On that occasion, about nightfall, I received my first wound by a minie ball through the left arm. It was a new experience to me. Soon after being shot I was seized with the most intense craving for water I had ever felt. It seemed as though my insides were burning out. I stood several minutes watching other men fall near me. I heard others calling for water. I did so too, but there was no one to supply our wants. I watched the blood spout freely from my arm. Very soon the gray mountain rocks turned green. The mountains seemed to spin around in the air like a boy's toy top. My desire for water overcame all pain caused by the wound, and I staggered back about fifty paces to a little branch we had fought over about an hour before. The water was cool and refreshing and I drank my fill.

A doctor who was working among the wounded found me there and applied a wad of raw cotton to my arm where the ball had entered and also one where it passed out, and bound it up very tight to stop the bleeding. I had no other attention or advice then, and did not know that it was proper to keep the bandage wet. It soon got thoroughly dry, and I suffered un-

told misery until the next day, when the doctor came and gave me temporary relief. I was then, with many other wounded men, sent on to the hospital at Staunton, and while there suffering from my wound I came near losing the arm. The doctors in charge said that in order to save my life it was absolutely necessary to amputate, and actually had me on the table for operation. I fought against it in every way I possibly could. If I had consented, they would have cut it off.

I soon began to improve and was sent home on furlough, where I had a good time, and shortly returned to my command, which I found near Culpepper Court House, Virginia, July 22, 1862. We did some little skirmishing, and on August 9, 1862, commenced and fought the well known battle of Cedar or Slaughter Mountain. From then until the following December our marching and fighting was so rapid and regular, continuing almost day and night, that I can not here name all the places and times we were engaged. I will say, however, that we "did" the Yankees beautifully at Manassas Junction, capturing a few hundred men, and army wagons, stores, and munitions of war in such vast quantities as we could not use, care for, or move; so we burned most of them. Also, at Harper's Ferry, on September 15, 1862, we captured more men than we had in our little army, and such an amount of stores and munitions that we had no alternative but to apply the torch to the surplus booty.

We fought hard at those places, and also at Chantilly, where

our Captain, W. F. Brown, was killed; and again, on September 17, at Sharpsburg, Maryland, sometimes called Antietam; in all of which engagements our Regiment suffered heavy losses. We crossed and recrossed the Potomac River at Shepherdstown and Williamsport, fought at Winchester, Port Republic, Cross Keys, Brown's Gap, and many other places, and marched by way of Mechum's River, down to the low lands of the Rapidan River. On account of our rapid marching we were often called "Jackson's Foot Cavalry". We subsisted on the meagre rations issued by our Commissary when he had them and could find time to do so; and on what we captured from the Yankees; and on green corn, garden truck, summer fruit, cows, sheep, etc., that we picked up in the country through which we passed. During the greater part of that time our fighting as sharpshooters or in regular battle was almost constantly day and night. It is sufficient to say that we were the Stonewall Jackson. His fights were our fights, his victories were our victories. My individuality, with that of thousands of others, was represented in the power wielded by that great military chieftain.

Alter the first year of the war I was generally with the sharpshooters of our Regiment, and our object was to test the strength of the enemy and locate his position. Usually we fought in front until checked or forced back on the line, or until the main line would come up with us, when we would take our places in the ranks of our respective Companies. That

was the way we worked, moving forward or falling back: and, as the case might be, were either in front or rear: so, if there was any fighting to be done we always had a chance at it first and last. In this connection I will say that I have not in these papers mentioned any battle, little fight, or skirmish, in which our Regiment was engaged except those in which I personally took part: and probably not nearly all of them.

On the morning of December 13, 1862, while the air was cold and bracing, we commenced the first great battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia. It was a terrific and hard fought engagement. Time after time during the day the enemy rushed one column of fresh troops after another against our lines, only to be mowed down by the instruments of death in the hands of our men who stubbornly stayed their progress in many hand to hand struggles where we were outnumbered two or three to one: and yet we held our ground and forced them back. Such conduct certainly resulted in great slaughter. When the battle was fully on the constant firing of one hundred and fifty thousand muskets or more made such a solid roaring that the sound of one musket could not be distinguished from that of another. At quick intervals one volley of artillery after another would boom above the crash of small arms. From bursting shells, or from some other cause, the city took fire. The flames spread rapidly from house to house, and the terror stricken women and chil-

dren, and old, decrepit men, wandered over the frozen fields, along the roads, and by all available outlets from the city, not knowing where to go or what to do: and there sounded the pitiful groans of the many wounded and dying of both armies whose life blood had that day so freely gushed from each stricken antagonist and mingled cold together on that memorable field of carnage, never again to be separated except by the Divine Power of the Great God of the Universe. Long after nightfall, when seemingly both armies were completely exhausted, we attempted successfully the closing up of the broken gaps in our lines, which occupied some of the same ground that had been occupied by the enemy in the early morning and which they had abandoned, leaving their dead and wounded, as well as some of ours, on the field. As the sounds of battle died away there came from thousands of suffering and dying men the most heart-rending prayers, begging and pleading for help and water: and also the hideous, unhuman sounds produced by the many wounded and struggling horses that had been stricken down in the battle: and all being shrouded in total darkness it was of such a dismal nature as to be long remembered by all who witnessed it. Such was war! and many were the similar scenes I witnessed before that cruel war was over.

Within a few days after the battle the Yankee army fell back north of the Rappahannock River.

The winter was hard on us Southern men who were generally

thinly clad, with but little protection from the freaks of the extreme weather, and on short rations, all of which caused much suffering among us. Hence we claimed some excuse for indulging in a little illegal foraging in order to occasionally procure for ourselves something in the way of fresh meat or other eatables: and as such crime, if crime it was, was not usually ferreted out by the officers unless it became of such aggravated nature that they were compelled to take some official notice of it, we had some funny things to happen on that line. On one occasion when our Company went out on the river to relieve a Company of the 44th Georgia Regiment from picket duty, in changing our position two of our men found, about a half mile from our picket post, a nice, fat young beef, which they killed and skinned and then came in to us for help to bring the meat in. Three others, with myself, were assembled for that purpose. It so happened that five or six men of the 44th Georgia had knowledge of the whereabouts of the same beef, and they also went, prepared to kill and carry it away. When our party arrived at the place and secured the meat, their party also appeared upon the scene, and realizing the situation, they claimed to be guards authorized to arrest and escort us to headquarters. As we had left our guns at our picket post, and they had theirs, we quietly submitted to arrest, but soon found they did not want us but the beef, so we broke away and ran. We soon got our guns and returned by a nearer

route, and found them in possession of the beef, of which we relieved them and allowed them to pass on. Afterwards, while in camp or on the march, we would frequently "guy" them about their failure.

But Stonewall kept us moving in the vicinity of the Rapidan and Rappahannock Rivers, out on the mountains and brushy regions of that country, and at nearly all times in front of and at close range to the Yankees. Our men generally moved so rapidly that the people who knew the distances we covered in moving from place to place and the time in which we made them, were surprised at the results, and the enemy especially was so often surprised that it kept us fighting frequently.

About May 1, 1863, Jackson commenced one of his continuous movements which caused his men, who were accustomed to his methods, to expect to meet danger at any moment. Our route lay principally through the broken, brushy wilderness of that section, almost devoid of roads, and where we had before been led by him. We also knew that "Fighting Joe Hooker" was somewhere in that vicinity with a large force. The days were extremely hot for that season of the year, and a great many of our men were overcome by heat while marching. Many of them fell by the way, some dying where they fell, some being temporarily disabled for duty, but afterwards recovering. Those of us who proved equal to the occasion were, on May 2, 1863, suddenly plunged into the Chancellorsville battle which was begun

two or three miles west of the town of that name. Our beloved Stonewall Jackson received his death wound that night, but that fact was not immediately made generally known among his men. The battle was then conducted to complete victory by our distinguished cavalry General, J. E. B. Stuart. On Sunday morning, May 3rd, the engagement was terrific. On the previous night the Yankees had strengthened their breast-works, and recruited their lines in every possible way, and early Sunday morning we found their position bristling with all the artillery, small arms, and men they could bring up. We were in position to see the work before us, which we began at once and continued well up into the day, knowing that our only relief was to silence their batteries and break the lines of solid fire from their small arms. We made one desperate charge after another, at times beating down their cannoneers with our clubbed muskets and killing many of them outright with the bayonet while they were making valiant efforts to man their guns.

We succeeded in breaking their lines: but oh! the horrors of war. When that awful scene flits through my mind my eyes fill with irrepressible tears, and I pause before proceeding---

The Chancellorsville Hotel, which was being used by the Yankees as a hospital, then took fire and numbers who were helpless perished in the flames. There was also an extensive tract of woodland where a carpet of dry leaves, the accumulation of years, had become very thick on the ground, and adjoining that

was a field covered with a dense growth of dry grass in condition to burn like tinder. We had done considerable fighting over the place that day, and there were many wounded, dying, and dead men and horses scattered about over the ground when it took fire. Lying, as it did, between our lines and those of the enemy, we could not extinguish the flames nor render the sufferers any assistance. So there were many burned to death who might otherwise have lived and recovered from their wounds.

The Yankees were forced back to the north of the river again. We lingered about that vicinity a few days. The lamented Stonewall Jackson was dead. General Early was in command of his old Army Corps.

On June 4, 1863, we again left Fredericksburg, driving the Yankees before us, by way of Culpepper Court House, Flint Hill, Front Royal, Mount Jackson, Winchester, Harrisonburg, New Market, Martinsburg, Bunker Hill, Smithfield, and several other places in Virginia; marched through Hagerstown, Funkstown, Middletown, and other points in Maryland; Greencastle, Chambersburg, Shippensburg, and Carlisle, to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. There, on July 1, 2, and 3, 1863, we fought the famous Battle of Gettysburg. On the Second day of the engagement I was wounded by a minie ball through the right leg, and lay there under the roar of the battle and the cannonading of the second and third days. It seemed to me that there could not have been fewer than four hundred pieces of artillery in action at

once. It was certainly the heaviest cannonading with field pieces alone that was ever known.

With a great many others of our wounded I was, on July 5, taken up by the Yankees and very well cared for at their field hospital until July 21, when, with other wounded Confederates, I was moved to Davis's Island Hospital in New York. In making the journey by railway we passed through New Oxford, Hanover, Hanover Junction, York, Goldsborough, Harrisonburg, and other places in Pennsylvania, and by Easton to Elizabethport, New Jersey. At the latter place we were put aboard a steamer, and after passing New York City, landed at Davis's Island Hospital.

There I was carefully nursed and kindly treated until my wound was sufficiently healed for me to get about on crutches. When we landed I was taken on a litter by two men from the vessel to the hospital, and carefully deposited on a straw bed. Shortly thereafter a stout Irishman came to me armed with soap, towels, and tub of warm water, and at once proceeded to take off what clothing I was wearing and even the bandages from my wounds; and, without asking my consent, dumped the whole lot of them out of the window. He handled me as tenderly as though I were a new born babe, bathed and sponged me, redressed my wound, clothed me in fresh laundered linen, and put me to bed again. To meet with such tender care was so delightful an

experience that just then I felt as though I were in luck to have been shot. Soon I was lost in sleep, and until far into the next day I knew nothing more.

I was gently roused by a lady equipped with a pan of water and towels, who had come to prepare me for breakfast, and whom I soon learned was a professional nurse. She tended me very carefully during the remainder of the time I was confined to the bed. During that time my meals were prescribed by the doctor, and prepared and given to me by that lady. If I asked for anything other than what she brought she would only say that the doctor's prescription had been filled. While there I could, whenever I called for them, have fresh laundered clothes, which consisted of a cotton shirt and knit drawers when in bed, and when up and about the hospital yard, a further outfit of socks, slippers, and a kind of knit dressing-gown long enough to reach below the knees when standing. As little attention was paid to the fit of any of the garments, the suits were not very stylish, and when a lot of men so costumed were parading around, their appearance was rather funny. Still, it was far better than we had usually had at our home hospitals.

On August 24, 1863, I was sent South by a vessel passing New York City, and landing at City Point, Virginia; and on August 28 was passed into the Southern lines as a disabled paroled prisoner of war. I was sent by our people to the hospital at

petersburg, Virginia, and on September 6 was transferred to Camp Lee, at Richmond, where the examining board recommended a sixty days' furlough, thinking that, should I be exchanged earlier, at least that length of time must elapse before I would be fit for service.

My furlough was granted on September 12, and on the 18th of that month I reached my home in Dooly County, Georgia.

On November 1, I received official notice that I had been legally exchanged, and thus restored to my original fighting privilege. My furlough had not expired; my wound was not thoroughly well; and it was indeed pleasant to be at home; but I felt it my duty to be with my command, and on November 4, 1863, reported to my Company for duty. I found my command in camp on the Rapidan River in Virginia. About November 10 we commenced marching and fighting in small squads. The Yankees were trying to cross the river and we were meeting and repulsing them. At times, for five or six days on a stretch, we were in line of battle in water, slush and mud. Finally the Yankees gave up the attempt to cross and retired to a respectful distance. Then we had several days of quiet, watching Brownlow's system of balloon observation of our Army.

Our Brigade consisted then of the 4th, 12th, 21st, and 44th Georgia Regiments. On December 12, 1863, our Regiment, the 12th Georgia, was detached from the main Army and sent out into the mountains of Virginia for the purpose of breaking up

some gangs of desperadoes and Union deserters who had banded themselves together and frequently committed depredations on the few helpless good citizens who were trying to live in that part of the country. It was the custom of these outlaws to secrete themselves in caves and the most rugged places in the mountains, and make themselves a holy terror to the good people who lived within their reach by exacting a liberal supply of eatables and such other booty as could be carried away.

When we reached that section, after some scouting over the mountains in order to gather information as to the manner of men we had to deal with and their probable location, we established our base of operations by making camp near New Hope, Virginia, about twelve miles from Staunton.

While on that mission we had dangerous as well as pleasant and funny experiences. Our work was done principally in small detachments, usually six, twelve, or twenty-five men in a squad. When we met these desperadoes, or run them down and surrounded them, which frequently occurred, they would fight to the death if there was a fighting chance. The result was that we killed several of them whom we could not capture or otherwise subdue and they killed and wounded some of our men.

The work was rather dangerous, but it furnished us a good deal of sport. On one occasion one Thomas Frazier, the leader of one of their strongest bands, a man capable of any mean act within his power against citizen or soldier, was especially

pointed out for our consideration. I learned from some citizens whom he had just robbed and terrorized that he and his men, supposed to number about thirty, were occupying as a hiding and living place a large cave in the mountain, located about opposite Lexington, Virginia, and near Massie's Mills, in Nelson County, distant about forty miles from our camp. When I reported the matter to our Colonel, Ed. Willis, he gave me charge of six other men, with instructions to make a thorough examination. We soon reached the locality occupied by the man we were after, and by chance I obtained from a young lady information which led directly to the discovery of their hiding place. However, we found and captured Frazier before finding the cave he usually frequented. We caught him at a little cabin occupied by a woman and two young children. The woman was evidently friendly to him, and on account of her efforts to prevent his capture I was very near to shooting her as well as Frazier. I got the drop on him, but saw at once that he would not surrender to one lone man, so I signalled my men, who came forward at once, and we soon had him securely tied; but we could no more extract information from him or the woman as to the hiding place of his men than we could have from the wind.

We kept him through the night and the next morning we fortunately found his cave, where eight other men were concealed. They gave us a sharp little fight, but, to my surprise, after

about an hour, Frazier, with my permission, caused them to come out one by one and submit to us. There we were then, seven of us, with nine ruffian prisoners, whom we tied that we might better control them. Frazier gave as his reason for bringing out and surrendering his men, that it was then about time for more of his band, who were out foraging under the leadership of his brother, to come in, and he did not want us to capture them too. The cave was empty except for the men we captured and the evidences that they had frequented the place quite a while. The men were very dirty and ragged. Their clothing had been patched so much that one could scarcely tell of what fabric the original garments were made. In about two days we got our prisoners to camp and turned them over to Colonel Willis, who sent them away.

On another occasion we had orders to arrest and bring in to camp a certain man and woman who lived at a place in the mountains where a wagon could not go. When we arrested them the woman refused to travel. We tied her up in a quilt, and, by putting a pole through its folds, and a man at either end of the pole, we carried her down the mountain about two miles to where we were able to secure a wagon to convey her to camp.

The people who were in sympathy with the Yankees were as hard on us as they could be. They often tried to decoy us into places where they thought they could overpower us; but these attempts did us little hurt. The good citizens in sym-

pathy with us treated us as kindly as they possibly could, and were as liberal with us as their poverty stricken condition would permit.

We left our camp at New Hope, Virginia, on April 14, 1864 and rejoined our command on April 19 at Hampton's Crossing, Virginia, where for several days the Yankees made various attempts to cross the river, and we occasionally exchanged a few shots with them.

Just to put the ball in motion, on May 5 we struck the enemy in heavy force in the Wilderness and fought another celebrated "Wilderness Battle" in which I was wounded by a minie ball through my right arm. I was sent to the hospital at Lynchburg, but found the fare there so unattractive that I soon made application to be returned to my command. My application was granted because I was able to walk about and attend to my wound without assistance.

I found my command, May 21, 1864, near Hanover Junction, Virginia. We kept up a continuous movement and skirmishing between there and Richmond until about June 13, when Early's Corps was detached from Lee's main Army and marched towards Lynchburg, arriving at that city on June 18. My wound was not healed and the doctor proposed leaving me in hospital, but I preferred to take my place in ranks, and did so. From then until the 27th of June we fought nearly all the time, forcing the Yankees from Lynchburg across the mountain at Salem, Vir-

ginia. On the 23th of June we remained in camp and the next day moved down the Valley by way of Buchanan, on through Bote-tourt County, crossing the Natural Bridge, and by Lexington, where we stopped long enough to pay the usual military respects to the memory of our former General, Stonewall Jackson, whose remains were buried there.

We continued our march by way of Staunton and on to Harper's Ferry, reaching the latter place on July 4. There we met the Yankees in considerable force, this being the first we had seen of them for several days. They certainly were not expecting us, for they were preparing an elegant picnic dinner and a Fourth of July celebration which, with a very little persuasion, they readily abandoned and generously donated the dinner to us. We hurriedly consumed it and continued the celebration by a considerable display of fireworks - or firearms - chased the Yankees through the town, across the Potomac, and rounded them up on the Maryland Heights. During the progress of this running fight through the town some of the few citizens became panic stricken and so exposed themselves as to lose their lives.

On July 6 we moved up and crossed the Potomac at Shepherdstown. The enemy was falling back but still fighting. They made a stand at Rossville and, on July 7, at Brownsville, Maryland. We then had them on the Maryland Heights, but rather than attempt to storm the works we allowed them to withdraw.

On July 8 we fought and defeated them at Frederick City, Maryland, and after doing considerable work tearing up railroad tracks and bridges, we started towards Baltimore, and then turned towards Washington City. The Yankees were fighting back at us very weakly and giving us room to move with the head of our column in front. We reached the suburbs of Washington City, near the Blair residence, on July 11, 1864, and kept up a heavy skirmishing until the following night. While the Army was being withdrawn, our Regiment, the 12th Georgia, was advanced to hold the enemy in check. There were several buildings on fire in and near our lines, and we were hard pressed. There were only a few of us engaged but the fight was severe and the loss in our Regiment was very heavy indeed. This was General Early's raid on Washington City.

Our Army then fell back, crossing the Potomac into Virginia on July 11, and making camp for a few days. We then crossed the Shenandoah River at Snicker's Ferry and stopped. The Yankees had kept close up to us all along, harassing our rear guards and sharpshooters. Near Snicker's Ferry, where we made a stand, they came up with us July 18 in heavy force. We gave battle and almost filled the river with their dead. The next day we spend in collecting and caring for the wounded as best we could, and in burying the dead.

We reached Strasburg, Virginia, July 22, Winchester July 24, Kernstown July 25, Martinsburg July 26, thence to Williamsport

where we crossed and recrossed the Potomac and returned to Martinsburg by July 30; then to Bunker Hill and Falling Waters, again crossing and recrossing the Potomac, and returning to Bunker Hill by August 7; thence to Winchester and Strasburg by August 12. All this time our sharpshooters were fighting day and night. On the 17th we had a sharp little battle in which we routed the Yankees, drove them through Winchester, and went back to Bunker Hill on the 19th. We drove them on the Charlestown on the 21st; where we fought again. Our sharpshooters were engaged until the 25th. Then we went to Shepherdstown, Leestown, and back to Bunker Hill by August 31. From there we moved to Martinsburg, drove the Yankees from that place on to Winchester and back through Bunker Hill by September 3. We then went to Berryville in the rear of the Yankee camp, fought there the 5th and drove them back through Bunker Hill again. Our Regiment was then on picket duty. The Yankees kept bothering us until the 10th, when we pitched into them and ran them away. They attacked us again on the 17th and we repulsed them.

We had kept the Virginia Valley warmed up quite a while, and on September 19 we again met the Yankees near Winchester. They had a strong force and gave us a hard fight. Our loss was heavy. General Rodes was killed there. Late in the evening, after we had fought for several hours, the Yankees beat us back, stampeded, and utterly demoralized our entire force, the first time such a thing had ever happened to us. We fell back through

Strasburg and formed a new line at Fisher's Hill, where we fought September 21, 22, and 23. Late in the evening of the 23rd our lines gave way again and the result was another general stampede. The Yankee force outnumbered ours fully three to one.

I ran till almost exhausted. Suddenly I discovered a single Yankee cavalryman sitting his horse broadside to me about twenty paces distant. He had not seen me. I fired on him but did not hit man or horse. He did not give me time to reload. I jumped behind a small tree that would cover my body the thin way and turned my shoulder to it as he commenced shooting at me with his carbine, or repeating rifle. My little tree saved me, for he put several balls in it very close to my breast and head. Finally he dropped his gun, which was swung by a shoulder strap, and drew a large pistol. I asked him what he was going to do, and he told me to surrender, which I gladly did. He said that I had acted in a cowardly manner in shooting at him as I did, or something to that effect, and told me to go to the rear. I was in no condition to dispute with him, and he was too good a soldier to fool away his time with a prisoner.

Instead of going to the rear as I was told, however, I succeeded that night in making my escape. I accomplished this by getting in the moving Yankee column while they were following up our retreating men. They paid no attention to me and, as

I knew the country well, I bore to the left until I succeeded in getting outside of their line of videttes. Then I made for South River, crossed it, entered and made my way through Green Mountain, Luray Valley and Honey Valley, and struck the railroad at Mechum's River on September 30. From there I went by rail to Waynesborough, Virginia, and on October 6 found my Regiment on picket at Bull's School House, Virginia. Then for a while we were marching and fighting regularly in the vicinity of Harrisonburg, Martinsburg, New Market, Mount Jackson, Edonburg, Cedar Creek, Strasburg and Fisher's Hill.

Just about daylight on the morning of October 19, 1864, after we had been marching and slipping along all the previous night, under command of General John B. Gordon, we waded through the cold water of the river, crossing it in the rear of the Yankees' camp, surprised them, and commenced the famous battle of Cedar Creek. We were in their camp before they knew it, but they seemed to come out of their bunks fighting, and fought very stubbornly as they slowly fell back. During the first few hours of the day the fight was almost wholly with small arms, and generally at close range, it being difficult to get the artillery in fighting position; and even when that was accomplished, almost before the enemy could unlimber, we would capture their pieces. The loss was very heavy on both sides. When we had driven them slowly some three or four miles and were rejoicing over our victory, I was again wounded by a minie

ball through the left thigh. I was left on the battlefield, which was far from pleasant for a man in a helpless condition, and was reported to our headquarters and published as dead. But I was not. I had been carried to the field hospital by some litter bearers who did not know me.

That afternoon the Yankees forced our men back six or eight miles, retaking the position their camp had occupied that morning when we found them and commenced the fight; and our dead and wounded were left in the enemy's possession. During the night, with some assistance, I got out of their camp, and the next day was carried across the river by a young lady who took me to her mother's house, where the two ladies dressed my wound and made me as comfortable as they possibly could, giving me food, and drying and putting me to bed on a pallet in the hallway. We feared that if I should remain there and be found by the Yankees they would impose on the ladies because of their kindness to me, so it was arranged the next morning that I should be carried to the mountains by some boys who were going to hide a few cows and horses from the Yankees in order to save them from being confiscated.

After reaching the mountains I was assisted by several men and boys who wanted me out of that neighborhood, and by this means I found and rejoined our Army at or near New Market, Virginia. Then I was sent on by way of Lacey Spring to Harrisonburg, and from there to Staunton, where I remained in the Vir-

ginia House Hospital until December 16, 1864.

While there I had a personal difficulty with a straggling soldier who had been allowed to sleep one night in the hospital with another soldier and myself. In the morning I had gotten up and hobbled out on the street, thinking I had left him asleep, but soon I saw him coming down with my blanket rolled up and over his shoulder. (Most soldiers who tried to take care of themselves thought a good deal of their blanket, as I did of mine.). I attempted to prevent him from carrying it away, and, after words had failed to secure the desired effect, made use of a stick I had to assist me in getting about. When I applied it to his head the stick suddenly broke, and then he proceeded to carve me up considerably with a small knife. He cut me about the face, head, shoulders and hands in several places. The wounds were not very deep, but when the provost guard took charge of him and gave me my blanket I was as bloody as a fresh stuck beef. They carried me into the hospital and when the doctor came around to dress my little injuries he spoke very roughly to me for having been in a "street fight", as he called it, and proposed to put me on hospital duty as a punishment. I felt justified, however, in what I had done, and refused to act in that capacity, so the doctor had me placed under guard for a few days.

Soon after that I learned that Early's Army was leaving the Virginia Valley and going towards Richmond. I immediately

made application for discharge from the hospital, but the doctor refused to grant it on the ground that I was not yet fit for service: whereupon I slipped off from the hospital and got to the depot at Staunton, where I boarded a train of box cars on which was a Louisiana Regiment, and went through with them to Dunlop's Station, to the south of Richmond. On December 24, 1864, I found my Regiment at Camp Rodes, a few miles from Petersburg, and reported to my commanding officer, Captain Everett, the manner in which I had left the hospital. He approved it by allowing me to remain about the camp and not on duty until February 23, 1865. Then I took my place with my Company in the ditches on the front line before Petersburg, where our lines and those of the enemy were very close together. We remained there until March 25, 1865, keeping up skirmish firing every night. During the day we frequently ceased firing and exchanged papers, tobacco, coffee, and other articles with the Yankees.

On one occasion the enemy made an attempt to turn our right wing. We were called out of the ditches and hurried down to Hatcher's Run, about six miles away, where we had a sharp little fight, defeated the Yankees, and returned to our old position in the ditches.

Early on the morning of March 25, 1865, under command of General John B. Gordon, we charged the Yankee works where they had been made as strong as possible, near the center of their

line, near Fort Stedman and Red Fort. We broke through and captured the forts, a good many men, pieces of artillery, and small arms, most of which the Yankees recaptured during the early part of the day, when we were forced to fall back. The fight was very hard, which was always the case before our men would give way.

My old wound was not yet well, and it was hurt again in the early morning, either by a piece of shell or by over exertion; and when our people began to fall back I could not make it in time, and was captured on the battlefield. That day I did my last fighting in the Civil War.

After being captured I was, with many other prisoners, taken by the guards in charge of us to General Meade's headquarters for the pleasure, it seemed, of President Lincoln, Generals Grant and Meade, their families and lady friends who were present. We were passed in review before them and they appeared to be delighted to see a lot of dilapidated (but honorable) Southern soldiers who had so recently been engaged in killing off the surplus members of Grant's vast Army.

I was then taken to Point Lookout, Maryland, a Federal prison, and held there as a prisoner of war until June 24, 1865. From the time I reached the prison until the time of General Lee's surrender and up to the time of the assassination of President Lincoln, our fare was pretty tough. Prior to General Lee's surrender the Yankees had accumulated about forty thousand

prisoners at Point Lookout, sending them in daily as they were captured from Lee's ranks: and possibly this great influx was the reason why we were for a time on short rations. The water there was very bad, though there were some places where tolerably good drinking water could be had if one could get a permit, nothing short of which would pass the guards. We were guarded in part by negro troops who delighted in treating the "Johnnys", while they had them in their power, as cruelly as they dared. After the negro troops left, our situation was more bearable, but not at all pleasant: though there were many little funny happenings among us while there.

On June 24, 1865, I was regularly discharged from Point Lookout Prison, as will be seen from the following

---Copy---

Seal of	Certificate of Release of Prisoner of War.
War Dept.	Headquarters, Point Lookout, Md.,
	Provost Marshal's Office,
	June 24th, 1865.

I hereby certify that Martin W. Brett, Prisoner of War, having this day taken the Oath of Allegiance to the United States, is, in conformity with instructions from the War Department, hereby released and discharged.

In witness whereof I hereunto affix my official signature and stamp.

A. G. Brady,
Major and Provost Marshal.

(Stamp)
A. G. Brady
June 24, 1865
Maj. and Provost Marshal.

I was then sent South on a vessel with a lot of other Southern men, and landed at Richmond on June 26, 1865. There I was

furnished by the United States authorities with papers which entitled me to draw rations at any Government Commissary I might find, also entitled me to transportation to any point in the Southern States to which I could find public conveyance: otherwise, on my good behavior, I was permitted to walk where I chose.

I found the railroads badly torn up from Richmond south, and rode a little and walked more, until I reached Atlanta, Georgia, July 6, 1865. From there I went to La Grange, and from there went ten or twelve miles out in the country, where I stopped two or three weeks, returning to Atlanta and from there by railway to Dooly County, Georgia, reaching Drayton, from whence I had started May 9, 1861, on August 9, 1865.

Muster Roll of Company "F", 12th Regiment, Georgia Volunteer Infantry, Army of Northern Virginia, Confederate States of America, from Dooly County, Georgia.

(The following is not the complete muster roll, but contains all the names I can now obtain. The roll covers the time the Company was mustered into service at Richmond, and later dates as recruits came in.

Names.	Rank.	When enlisted.	Where enlisted.
Brown, W. F.,	Captain.	June 11, '61	Drayton, Ga.
Everett, James,	1 st Lieut.	"	"
Brown, John G.,	2 nd Lieut.	"	"
Thompson, W. Y.,	Junior	"	"
	2 nd Lieut.		
Howard, N. M.,	1 st Sergt.	"	"
Redding, Jas. R.,	2 nd Sergt.	"	"
Osteen, Joseph E.,	3 rd Sergt.	"	"
Deveraux, A. C.,	4 th Sergt.	"	"
Yawn, Thomas R.,	1 st Corpl.	"	"
Paul, H. J.,	2 nd Corpl.	"	"
Collins, J. T.	3 rd Corpl.	"	"
Penny, Jas. M.,	4 th Corpl.	"	"
Wright, Jos. B.,	Musician,	"	"
Summerford, W. H. H.,	Musician,	"	"
Adams, H. L.,	Private	"	"
Bond, J. U.,	"	"	"
Bronnan, Jas. K.,	"	May 1, '61	Decatur, Ga.
Bronnan, John A.,	"	"	"
Brett, M. W.,	"	June 11, '61	Drayton, Ga.
Brown, Jas. M.	"	"	"
Brundage, Joseph,	"	Sep. 28, '62	Decatur, Ga.
Butler, Adam J.,	"	June 11, '61	Drayton, Ga.
Butler, George W.,	"	"	"
Butler, John E.,	"	"	"
Butler, John K.,	"	"	"
Butler, Robert,	"	"	"
Byron, John H.,	"	May 1, '61	Decatur, Ga.

Name.	Rank.	When enlisted	Where enlisted
Clark, James,	Private.	June 11, '61	Drayton, Ga.
Clark, Samuel R.,	"	"	"
Collins, Frank L.,	"	"	"
Collins, Jas. T.,	"	"	"
Collins, Thomas L.,	"	"	"
Collins, Wm. G.,	"	"	"
Culpeper, Ambrose,	"	"	"
Dinkins, J. W.	"	"	"
Dinkins, William,	"	"	"
Dozier, John A.,	"	"	"
Durham, John H.,	"	"	"
Forehand, Geo. W.,	"	"	"
Forehand Jas. A.,	"	"	"
Fudge, Jas. D.,	"	May 1, '62	"
Gear, R. R. M.,	"	June 11, '61	"
Godwin, Solomon,	"	"	"
Going, James,	"	"	"
Hamill, Thomas,	"	"	"
Hamilton, P. N.,	"	"	"
Harrison, A.,	"	"	"
Hayman, Archibald,	"	"	"
Hodge, B. Frank	"	"	"
Johnson, R. Allen,	"	"	"
Johnson, Solomon D.,	"	"	"
Joiner, J. Andrew,	"	"	"
Jones, D. Wright,	"	"	"
Kelly, B. F.,	"	Apr. 25, '64	Decatur, Ga.
Kendricks, A.,	"	Mar. 1, '62	Drayton, Ga.
Kendricks, B.,	"	"	"
Kendricks, H.,	"	June 11, '61	"
Kerbin, John F.,	"	July 25, '64	"
King, William	"	Mar. 22, '64	"
Lamb, S. E.,	"	June 11, '61	"
Lane, William,	"	May 12, '62	"
Laws, Thomas	"	June 11, '61	"
Lewis, Green W.,	"	"	"
Lewis, Thomas S.,	"	"	"
Lewis, W. H. H.,	"	"	"
Lowe, James,	"	"	"
Lowe, J. A.,	"	"	"
Lowe, Thomas H.,	"	"	"
Lowe, William F.,	"	"	"
McClure, Andrew J.,	"	Mar. 24, '64	"
McCurvey, Daniel	"	June 11, '61	"
McKinzie, Samuel,	"	"	"
Minor, William,	"	"	"
Oliver, William,	"	"	"
Penny, H. Frank,	"	"	"

Name	Rank.	When enlisted	Where enlisted
Powell, W. J.	Private.	June 11, '61	Drayton, Ga.
Raines, G. H.,	"	"	"
Raines, Richard,	"	"	"
Redding, I. Y.,	"	May 12, '62	"
Redding, James,	"	June 11, '61	"
Redding, W. B.,	"	"	"
Redding, W. G.,	"	"	"
Rodgers, John R.,	"	"	"
Royals, Tiller,	"	"	"
Rowell, A. J.,	"	"	"
Rowland, W. F.,	"	"	"
Royals, J. P.,	"	"	"
Rutland, J. W.,	"	"	"
Rutland, Wm.,	"	"	"
Sushburn, Allen,	"	"	"
Silver, E. B.,	"	"	"
Slade, Jerry,	"	"	"
Slade, J. Z.,	"	"	"
Slade, Thomas G.	"	"	"
Slade, Wm.,	"	"	"
Smith, Obe M.,	"	"	"
Smith, W. Ambrose,	"	"	"
Summerford, J. H.,	"	"	"
Summers, Joe,	"	"	"
Swearingen, D. T.,	"	"	"
Swearingen, Rice,	"	"	"
Taylor, J. Tim,	"	"	"
Thomas, Charles R.,	"	"	"
Thomas, H. J. B.,	"	"	"
Thomas, Wm. C.,	"	"	"
Turner, Wm., B.,	"	"	"
Varnedore, J. H.,	"	"	"
Walton, E.,	"	"	"
Ward, Jeff C.,	"	"	"
Ward, Lewis,	"	"	"
Waters, D. A.,	"	"	"
Waters, Jas., A.,	"	"	"
Webb, W. F.,	"	"	"
Wiggins, W. L.,	"	"	"
Watson, Allen,	"	"	"
Watson, D.,	"	"	"
Watson, R. J.,	"	"	"
Yawn, D. S.,	"	"	"
Yewbanks, Jas. E.,	"	"	"
Young, Robert H.,	"	"	"
Youngblood, E. C.,	"	Oct. 1, '63	"