

3-1971

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James L. Nichols

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Recommended Citation

Nichols, James L. (1971) "Reminiscing from 1861 to 1865: An "Ex Confed," H.P. Morrow," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 9 : Iss. 1 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ethj/vol9/iss1/5>

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REMINISCING FROM 1861 to 1865

An "Ex Confed," H.P. Morrow

Edited by James L. Nichols
Editor's Introduction

Henry Preston Morrow, Louisiana-Texas Confederate veteran, originally from St. Landry Parish, Louisiana, enlisted "for the war" September 29, 1861, at Camp Moore, Louisiana. He served until April 18, 1865, when he was honorably discharged because of disability resulting from a wound received at Jonesboro, Georgia, on August 31, 1864.

Morrow served with the Army of Tennessee from Shiloh (though he was ill and not actually in the battle) until the loss of Atlanta. All of this is of interest to students of the War Between the States, of course, but perhaps the major contribution of his memoir narrative is his account of the manner in which he crossed the Mississippi in his effort to get home in the Spring of 1865. Although written at some time in later years (the memoir is undated), Morrow's manuscript is remarkably clear, honest and modest in its presentation.

The original manuscript, consisting of eighty-seven handwritten pages, is in the possession of Morrow's granddaughter, Mrs. Henry H. Nichols (nee Viva Fitzgerald) of Nacogdoches, Texas, to whom the editor is beholden for permission to publish these reminiscences. From other papers in the possession of Mrs. Nichols, and from her own recollections, it is possible to piece out some of Morrow's post-war story.

Morrow was five feet, eight inches in height, gray-eyed and light complexioned in appearance. When discharged from Confederate service, he was twenty-eight years old. He married Miss S. A. Brenkley and the couple had five daughters, all born in Louisiana. After his wife's untimely death, Morrow brought his family to East Texas, residing principally in the area of San Augustine. He died in 1905 at the "Confederate Home" in Austin.

The title "Reminiscing from 1861 to 1865" is Morrow's own. He signed the account "An Ex Confed". His spelling is superior, relatively, although he spells "cavalry" as "calvary" as so many did and do. Because of the author's clarity, therefore, the editor has had little need for "sics", etc. The notes, thirty-one in number, are intended simply to keep the reader oriented as to Morrow's whereabouts and itinerary.

REMINISCING FROM 1861 to 1865

AN EX CONFED - H. P. MORROW

Having business at Shreveport, which was some distance from where I lived, I went out to a place on the Red River which was then known as Barbin's Landing which afterwards became famous as Port De-Russay [Fort DeRussy]. There I boarded a steamboat for my destination. On board of the boat were the returning delegates from the convention that put Louisiana out of the Union.¹ It was a sure jolly crowd. Did not stay in Shreveport but eight hours; left that evening. Had to make several trips, one right after the other, until sometime in June. Had varied experiences on the trips. One time, water was very low and we grounded every once in a while; but we had plenty to eat and drink, and that of the very best. (Ah, those good old steamboat days, gone to never return. I enjoyed myself better those several trips than I ever did in my life, since or before). On my last trip up, there were aboard parts of three companies which went down to New Orleans as Twelve Month Men; but the C.S.G.² would not take any - only three years or the war. One-half or over joined other commands and went on to Richmond, Virginia. Those aboard did not think they could serve that long (but digressing a little, I saw a good many of them afterwards in the ranks). With such crowd aboard, you can imagine that chairs were at a premium. We only got two meals a day. There were just six passengers aboard; a lady and her daughter, two men from New Orleans, an old Baptist preacher from my neighborhood, and myself. The passengers occupied the end table near the captain at mealtime where the delicacies were put. The roll was called for the others so there would be no rush, for there had to be several tablefuls before all could eat. We divided up in two crowds on the last day and made the steward give us three meals. Supper was the last meal, at which hot words got to passing across between the two wings. Then goblets began to fly. The cool heads had to intervene to prevent a fight. Just before the boat landed, one man had to board a skiff from the stern and cross over the river on account of several of the men were going to tan him when they got on ground. Both dailies came out next morning with counter-resolutions, heavily signed, in regard to that trip up the river. I sometimes stayed several days in Shreveport. War spirit was strong and several companies left while I was there. Was at the landing the evening the Greenwood guards left. Was standing near a very pretty young lady. One of the guards was talking to her. At last all aboard rang out. He had to bid her adieu. He stooped to give her a kiss but, alas for his peace of mind, she scornfully turned her head. Never witnessed a much more crestfallen chap than he was, for he did join his comrades of the Gray and took himself off to a corner behind the pilot house. Several country boys from a distance came in and waited several days to get to enlist in the first company that left. Was boarding at the same house; had to go out with them, stay sober so I could bring them to bed sometime in the night, which you can bet was no sinecure. Their company formed part of the 3rd Louisiana Regiment.

Will turn back to my Baptist. He left on the way up. Corn was tolerable scarce in the Red River country that year, and he had bought a boatload in Illinois and chartered a steamboat to bring it up Red River and leave so many bushels at various places along the river, Shreveport being one point. Before the boat got there, went down on the Front one evening and saw there was considerable excitement among the crowd on the levee. Saw there was a small cannon pointing down the river; asked what was the matter. The reply was that there was a yankee boat loaded with corn coming up and they aimed to sink her, corn and all. I explained the matter to them. I told them who owned the corn, and that it was badly needed and would be the last from the North for some time to come. The old gentleman came up the next boat and went up as high as Jefferson. I stayed until he came back and as the river got so

low nothing but small stern wheel boats traveled up and down, we bought a buggy and horse and made the trip by land, some two hundred and fifty miles, we stopped the second day at Mansfield about ten a.m., found out there was to be preaching for the benefit of several young men who were on the eve of leaving for the seat of war. We took in the meeting. It was lucky we did as the preacher became sick after he entered the pulpit. My old brother had already made known to the landlord that he was a soldier of the cross. He therefore filled the vacancy in a very creditable manner. Several incidents happened which I will not mention here. We arrived safe and sound which was sometime in June. We found a good deal of drilling going on in both ends of the community. Did not drill any myself, always claimed the place where no drilling was going on when I was present. Thought I might get enough when the time came, for I did not think, like a good many, it would be over before I got there, nor prepare to kill three or four Yankees before breakfast. Several I know of never went until the conscript law ran them out — one in particular.³ When he did have to go, went and joined a Tennessee regiment as a surgeon (nearly bombproof as he could find). Sometime in August several of us boys went to Ville Platte,⁴ a little town where we met with enough to organize a company. My position in said company was 4th sergeant. On the eleventh day of September we boarded the steamboat at Washington⁵ bound for New Orleans and no telling, at the time, where else. In due time we arrived at the port. As we landed, the roll was called for the first time. We had several French in our company that could not speak a word of English. Our orderly was an American. In calling the rolls, he called Mikel Devil for Michael Deville. You can bet there was no response until the Captain called. We were marched up in the city and quartered in the old Citizen's Bank for several days, during which time we were in the hands of tailors. The state decked us out in a new suit of clothes consisting of a jacket and pants. The jacket had red strips around the collar and wrist bands, also three on my sleeves about my elbows to designate my rank as sergeant. The next move was up the Jackson Railroad⁶ to Tangipohoa, then out about a mile to Camp Moore which the state had established. We had been sworn in as state troopers at the landing in New Orleans. Our time was pretty much occupied in drilling, guard duty, and picketing. We had guardhouse near camps and about eighteen or twenty posts. One picket post was on a road about three-quarter miles of camp, one at Tangipohoa. Each consisted of a lieutenant, sergeant, a corporal and several privates. After as many as ten companies were in camp, they were organized into a regiment and elected a set of field officers.⁷ In the mix-up, our company became known as company "K", 16th Louisiana Infantry.⁸ Our captain was elected major. That caused a new deal in our set for company officers, I was very lucky in being detailed for guard duty — if you could call it luck — changing guard every two hours and corporal of the guard yelled out every few minutes. Does not make a fellow think he is at a picnic. A new company came in one day from Caddo Parrish under Captain Winan, a lawyer I got acquainted with at Shreveport. He was detailed in a few days afterwards as officer of the day and had to make the grand rounds after night to the two outposts to see that everything was all right. I happened to be detailed at the guardhouse the same day and night. When he came for his escort to make the rounds I went with him. At the first post the sentry was a little green and we did not march up with much eclat to the post as is normal on the grand rounds. At the second post the sentry was the only one awake. The lieutenant was stretched out on a bench, fast asleep. I went up to him and unbuckled his sword but the captain would not take it. We woke him up and gave him back his sword and a small bit of advice. Found all the sentries awake on the balance of the round. Winan's company got into the 19th Louisiana (but alas, poor fellow, he was shot in the neck at the Battle of Missionary Ridge and died in a few minutes). I got a furlough and went out in the country a few

days. On the 26th of September, 1861 we were mustered into the service of the C.S. Government by Lieutenant R. Agar, Agt. for said government. We got plenty of rations at the camp but no variety: flour, bacon, coffee, but our cooking utensils were slim, consisting of a frying pan and camp kettle. The flour was cooked most of the time in flapjacks. Some of the men became so efficient at it that they could throw the flapjack up the little chimney and run out and catch it turned over ready for cooking on the other side. I was a failure as a cook, never cooked over a half a dozen meals my entire time in the service. Never made up a batch of biscuits at that time nor since. Sometime in November we moved our camp below New Orleans to camp Chalmette where General Jackson had his famous breastworks of cotton bales. Nothing but the usual routine of camp duty was all that went on or took place there worth noting. About the first of January, 1862 we moved up to New Orleans just back of the city - Camp Benjamin, it was called. While there I managed to get a ten day furlough. As I landed in New Orleans on my return back to camp, one of the first blockade runners steamed out down the river loaded with cotton for a foreign port. She was cut down very low and did not show up much, a black rakish thing as she went steaming down the river. Every man aboard her took his life in his own hands. Just one shot from a Man-of-War, to the bottom she went. Generally such daredevils aboard they would run all kinds of risks rather than surrender to the enemy. Sometime in March we were ordered to Corinth, Mississippi.⁹ Had a rough trip. It snowed and was very cold. Barring a few minor accidents we arrived safely at Corinth where we struck camp for sometime in about half a mile of the depot. My first detail was to take charge of a squad, go to the depot and place around the commissary stores. For some reason or neglect of duty we were not relieved for forty-eight hours. As it was very cold and our post being in the street with very little wood on hand, you can imagine it was not a time to be enjoyed. I taken a very severe cold from exposure and spit up considerable blood with the phlegm which put me on the sick list for a couple of weeks. About the third or fourth of April, the long roll rounded in camp for the first time. You never saw such a hurry to get into ranks. The yelling nearly deafening. The time had come to face the music. I bunked with the captain in his tent. He hurried out as quickly as possible. Came back to the tent and told me the adjt. said I must stay in charge of the camp with a few of the regiment, like myself, not well, and to keep regular guard which proved to be a bad job as most of the men as soon as they were relieved of duty, went to their tent in place of the guard tent to sleep; so there you would find them when their time came around for duty again. The regiment moved out with the rest of the troops to Pittsburg Landing near which they met the federal army and fought the Battle of Shiloh.¹⁰ My company lost its captain and several privates during that battle. The army came back to Corinth to its former quarters. There was a great deal of sickness after that among the troops. Myself among the number. Was sent to the hospital at Oxford, Mississippi where I stayed awhile. There was where I first got acquainted with the Grayback;¹¹ noticed them on my clothes. Thought they came off hogs as there was a considerable bunch about the place so I mentioned to one of the surgeons who told me better. Said they dropped on my bed from upstairs. One patient up there was covered with them. Had some experience afterwards with the pesky creatures. In the meantime the army moved up to Tupelo.¹² In consequence of said move the hospital was broken up. Got a furlough to go to east Louisiana. Got on the train to Tangipohoa. Got off and walked out to Greensburg,¹³ or partly walked. Overtook a one horse cart which had a driver and several large sacks in the cart. I got a lift. The driver wanted to go off the road a piece and got me to take charge and drive on as he would head me off. Told me to be very careful of the load which was mail he was carrying out to the river for all the western portion of the Confederacy, a shotgun was in the cart and to

let no one fool with the mail. Stayed near Greensburg for twenty days then left to join the command at Tupelo. On the way, had to ride on top of a boxcar, inside and top both were full of soldiers. We stopped at some point to take on wood, a sort of curve at the place. Was a train coming on behind us. Ran so close into us that a great many of the boys thought there would be a collision. You ought to have seen them jumping from the cars. It was a good jump too for the train was on an embankment. Myself and seventeen others did not jump, trusted to luck. She just did check up in time to keep from jolting us. Stayed at camp for some time. Nothing worth noting. Only, during the time the regiment was there, a laddie from the army of Virginia, when he got a discharge, called at our quarters and being some kin of the colonel's wife's folks, he appointed him to a vacancy in our company as 3rd lieutenant. (will mention this subject again later on). Do not remember the various places we were at when we left Tupelo until we arrived at Sequatchie Valley in Tennessee where we stayed for several days while General Bragg got everything in shape for his invasion of Kentucky.¹⁴ Our part of the army broke camp in the evening. We had to march up Waldon's Ridge which was a very steep road to travel and which wearied me a great deal. We went a considerable distance after we got to the top before we halted for the night. Near twelve o'clock when we stretched our weary limbs for rest on Mother Earth for a bed, which was all the bed we used summer or winter when we were on the move. Will say right here that was the last time I was ever wearied day or night. Soon learned not to set down or lie down when we made a halt on a march for a great many times you would hardly lie down before a movement began, maybe a double quick for awhile to close up caused from some obstruction in front. I found it better to stand up and rest on my gun and traveling of a very dark night I always managed to keep the man's head in view in front of me so if he stumbled I could avoid it. By the ducking of his head I knew where the obstacle was. Do not misunderstand me that we marched very much when you could not see your hand before you. When we got to Kentucky was well received by the citizens in general and we began to pick up recruits. General Kirby Smith and several other generals had command up there at the time and General Smith had several fights before he joined forces with Bragg. Every time the news came we were halted and same communicated to us by order of general commanding. We marched to Glasgow or near it, then to Munfordsville where the federals had a small force which most of them became prisoners after a small fight.¹⁵ Our destination was supposed to be Louisville, or so thought the privates. Cannot say what Bragg's ideas were. In the meantime the federal General Buell, who was at Nashville at the time we started for Kentucky, was hurrying across country by another route to head us off from Louisville. We marched in twenty-eight miles of the place then took the right hand toward Harrodsburg. Did not go very far before it was move up and stop every few minutes. Sometime after dark we came up with the cause which was a small creek about three feet in water and a foot log over it. Everyone ahead of us went one at a time on the log to cross but our colonel showed us a better trick than that. He checked his horse at the log and told us to take water which we did and double quicked a mile to close up rank with wet shoes and socks, but that did not matter as we belonged to the government. Buell changed his tactics and came out from the city to hunt us up or scare us out of the state. Somehow or other he fooled Bragg in the road his main army took and Bragg thought the fight would be on the road Smith's part of the army was marching on but the battle was fought on or near the road Bragg's main army was moving on at Perryville the eighth of October. As that was the first fight that I was in, the size of the minie sounded quite ominous but it only takes a few rounds to put a fellow where he does not mind the minie, then nor afterwards. Some, as a matter of course, was hard to get used to them, some never did. Managed to shun every fight by some

means or other. There was heavy artillery fire but the shells were too high and exploded in the air about where I was. But I guess they had a nasty sound from the way a good many would dodge when one exploded or went screeching through the air overhead. It was what you might call a draw battle.¹⁶ The next day we moved on toward Bardstown where we stayed several days preparing to move out of Kentucky by the way of Cumberland Gap to Knoxville, Tennessee. Bragg succeeded in gathering a quantity of commissary stores to bring out with him. It took our wagon train over a week to pass a given point. We burnt up several thousand barrels of pork for the want of transportation.¹⁷ On our way out everyone that used tobacco got without. Saw several using green leaves. Could not cut that part of it, our sutler got in about that time with a few plugs. Got part of a plug which done me until I met a man from Knoxville with a 50 lb. box. Got a plug from him. One poor Reb took sixteen plugs for fear he would get out again. When we got to the gap by going on top of the Mountain you could put yourself in three different states at one time.¹⁸ After passing Knoxville we camped several days to rest up. While there it snowed on us one night. In sleeping of a night I put the blanket on the ground, lie on one-half and cover with the other half. The ground was mostly rolling and you would wake up in the morning with the blanket up to your knees. I concluded I could beat that so put the head of the bed down hill. Next morning had the worst crick in my neck had ever had. All the weight of my body was against my head which was against a tree. Leaving there we went to Alsonia and stayed until near Christmas. While there, the 16th was consolidated with the 25th Louisiana.¹⁹ The day we left it was so cold there were log heap fires along the road. At night when we camped we had to rake snow out of the way to make down our blankets near a big fire, which was at our feet. Christmas day we were ordered into lines and double quicked about two miles from camp when we were ordered about face for camp. There was no enemy in miles of us, just wager to see how quick we could get to a certain point. In the last week of December we marched to Murfreesboro where Withers' troops was then fighting on the left side of the river. We crossed over and took position to right of railroad and pike. One of my shoes gave out. Marched all day barefooted in the mud. On the 31st we crossed back over to left of railroad to attack the enemy. General Bragg came to us and made a speech that the Yankees were in full retreat to Nashville. It was about one and one-half miles to there through an old field. Passed plenty of dead Rebs from the day before fight. There was a large brick house with a heavy picket fence around it near the pike on our line of battle. When we came near it, the Yanks' batteries turned loose on us. As we neared the fence we had to form in column and right face to pike. When we reached the pike, we left faced, still in column, and moved in that position until the obstruction was passed. We then formed in line and commenced firing for the yankees were putting to us pretty heavy. We advanced some hundred yards when we were ordered to fall back. It was all a mistake about the retreat. They were all massed together right on the pike. The minies appeared to be as thick as your fingers and shells would explode all around throwing dirt all over. Saw one of our men running at full speed for the rear but a minie was a little faster. We moved to the left and camped that night where Cheatham and Withers divisions had been fighting for several days. There were a lot of dead Yanks and horses at the place.²⁰ We moved back to our position across the river the first day of January, 1863. On the second day about two p.m. our brigade was ordered to move toward the river, attack the enemy and if they were too strong for us we were to oblique to the right and return to our position. Through some bad generalship, we struck the river too much to our left which caused the command I was in to take the river, which was very cold. The balance of the brigade went up river. We stayed in water waist deep for over an hour. Finally about fifty men and a lieutenant came to us from the lost crowd and we went

back to camp. That night we fell back until we got to Tullhoms [Tullahoma, Tennessee], where we stayed for some time. Our next camp was Martrau, then Beechgrove. We left Beechgrove sometime in May, took the train for Jackson, Mississippi. When we got to Pearl River, we got off and marched to the old fair grounds. The bridge had been burnt and the train stopped east of the river. Nothing but the usual routine of drilling and guard duty went on while we stayed at this camp. On the first day of July [1863] we broke camp and started for Vicksburg to tackle Grant in the rear.²¹ On the morning of the fourth we were near the Big Black River when we heard that Vicksburg had surrendered. We were ordered back to Jackson which we made in one-fourth of the time it took us to get to the Black River. Had little skirmishes with the enemy that evening. There were some breastworks at Jackson which the troops occupied during the several days of desultory fighting. At the end of a week we vacated the place one night. From there we went to Camp Morton, fifty miles from Jackson. We summered it at that place. The next move was to Chickamauga in September. Went by train via Atlanta, Georgia. The part of the infantry I belonged to was kept on the wings to relieve the calvary [cavalry] as they were moved to other points. In consequence of this, the Yankee calvary [cavalry] would run onto us. We were at this up to Saturday night when we were moved to the front. During the time our cooks lost us so there was no ration Friday night. Saturday during the middle of the day, we traveled thru a cornfield. You could see everyone eating corn, even the colonel. I had saved some crackers we drew at Atlanta so I fared very well. Guyed the others about the Confed'y feeding me better than them. The next morning, Sunday, we got into line of battle in the road. Then we were faced to the left. We moved about half a mile when we came up to where a Yankee regiment had just left. They left their knapsacks, which caused a scramble among the boys to see who could get the spoils. Did not want any myself. Did not know but what mine might be left before night. After advancing some distance, came to an old field. We could see the Yankees hospital way over in the far corner. We halted a few minutes then turned right square to the left, marched to the end of field to the woods. The first thing I saw was a couple of battery horses which the colonel ordered me to get and deliver in the rear to our battery. Advanced a few steps farther then the frolic came on. It was not long before they flanked us, which caused us to fall back. Late that evening, we advanced again. It was not long before we ran on to torn breastworks. We charged the same and was soon in position with a good many rifles they threw away. That charge wound up the battle of Chickamauga. [September 19-20, 1863].²² The Yanks were in full retreat for Chattanooga. The boys were willing to follow up that night but Bragg said no. The next night we moved out on our way to Missionary Ridge. We moved down in the valley in front of the ridge. There we made breastworks. We stayed down in the valley until the morning of the twenty-fifth of November when we took a position on top of the ridge. Had a few logs scattered along the top. We did not have troops enough to form a good line of battle. Cheatham's division with right flank in the creek, had the only line of balance stretched out in single file. I was near the extreme left. By using a glass, we could see the enemy when it formed in columns on the outskirts of town, see their officers riding in among them. It was about 2 p.m. when they got in motion. When they struck the woods we lost sight of them. When they did emerge from the woods and came into the valley it was a sight worth seeing, 75,000 men at one glance, seven lines of battle. They came marching up the ridge [Missionary Ridge]; saw the ends of our lines. They moved part of the two rear lines onto their two front lines and was ready to flank us when they came to the top. We did the best we could but had to give away or be captured. A good many was captured by not moving out but was afraid of being shot. But you can bet your last nickel this Reb will run every time he sees a chance to get away. Poor legs that will not carry a body out of trouble if they don't

get hurt. Cheatham's division protected our rear until everything crossed the Chickamauga Creek. Our next halt was at Dalton where we built little shacks and wintered there until the memorable Georgia campaign opened up in the spring of '64. We built very good breastworks near our camp. After spring opened up we stayed in the works a good deal. One night I went to sleep on the little space between the ditch and embankment. Sometime in the night a false alarm was given. Everything was soon under arms and in place. Did not know anything of it until next day. The boys completely hiding me from the officers. Well, Sherman flanked us and we fell back. Made another stand and built breastwork. Fought a few days, fell back to Risaca. Fought again and left in the night. My regiment was in rear of everything. Wagons crossed on pontoons; army crossed on Railroad Bridge which was littered with straw so it could be burnt. Our brigade crossed but our colonel did not make a move. I just imagined I could see yanks flitting between us and the bridge. But in a few minutes a staff officer came back: "What in the hell are you doing there? Move on quick." About 10 a.m. we came to a halt. The generals consulted their maps. My regiment was ordered to the left of the road, then we formed a line. The colonel told us that the enemy were in full force in front of us. That we were to draw fire of skirmishers but not to fire. To keep on and draw fire of main force then charge even if last one was killed. Mighty cold comfort, was it not? When one Johnny heard it, he went to a tree, sat his gun by it, pulled off his knapsack, laid it down, and left. Was gone a month before he was captured. Must have been a false alarm for we were soon moving again. On the 24th of May we halted for dinner, stacked arms in the road. About 2 p.m. my regiment was ordered out as skirmishers to the right of the road. Some of us believed there weren't any Yanks. We met some calvary [cavalry] coming out of the brush. Said we had better believe it. We moved nearly a mile and halted. I got so sleepy that I told the boys to wake me up if they moved, lay down and stretched out. Boom! Was not sleepy a bit. They were feeling for the road we left. We moved forward again. Word from the left look-out: "The woods is full of them!" We fell back to the main line which had built breastworks. We went to the rear about one hundred yards. In a few minutes our artillery turned loose, then infantry and for over three hours a hot fight was raging that ceased at dark. I got behind a small tree that received several minies. It was not large enough to protect me well but I was so busy watching the fight I was constantly exposed. The next morning we were ordered into line. Our position was pointed out to us, or as near as could be. Our side failed to post pickets after the fight which the yanks took advantage of. Their's was dangerously close so we made a break for our place but missed it fifty yards so we crawled down the line. One man was killed, shot in the back of the neck. Got his head too high. The enemy made no attack on us that day but it was a hot place all day. When we wanted water one man would take as many canteens as he could manage. He would crawl out a piece then jump up and run for life with several bullets helping his speed. Late in the evening they got their cannon trained so they could cut limbs down on us. But that night we silently stole away. The next point was Kenesaw Mountain.²³ As soon as we halted, a detail was made to get tools for building breastworks but the boys had made so many it was slow work until the Yanks sent their compliments in the way of a few shells. Breastworks went right up. Sherman tried right hard to drive us out of the breastwork but failed after several days fighting. He then flanked us, his usual mode of tactics. We fell back to Atlanta which had breastwork nearly all around the city. Our position was to the left of the Augusta Road. The time was passed by both sides, mainly engaged in artillery duels nearly every day. On the 23rd of July part of our army went outside the breastwork and attacked part of Sherman's army.²⁴ Had a hot time. Late in the evening we moved out to reinforce our men but we did not go far before we were halted, then moved

back to our former position. While waiting out there, the firing was still going on. A solid 12 lb. shot passed under my left arm. It did not break the skin but it put me out of business for a few days. Along sometime in August [sic] Johnston was relieved of the command and Hood placed in command.²⁵ Johnston had used the Fabian Policy on the campaign from Dalton down to Atlanta trying to get Sherman to divide his army so he could whip it in detail. When Hood took charge he sent all of the calvary [cavalry] out to harass the rear of Sherman's communications.²⁶ There Sherman divided his command and sent part to Jonesboro ahead of us and held the balance in front of us for 12 hours longer, then moved and joined the balance at Jonesboro. We stayed until next night, then we followed and got to Jonesboro at 12 m. next day which was the 31st day of August '64.²⁷ The battle was in progress. Then in a very little while we went in, found the Yanks had built good breastwork and had moved a fence and made picket stands in 30 yards of their breastwork. We made a charge on them but unfortunately those rail piles played thunder with us, the fire was so galling. Our men sought shelter behind the piles, the worst thing they could have done as the Yanks could crossfire on us. During the time we were there you could hardly peep over for they were waiting for your eyes and sure took a pop at them. While there, heard a yell on the left of me, supposed our men were advancing on the works. Jumped up to see. Saw it was a retreat. Zip! A bullet struck me and went through – that decided my movements. Went back cross railroad tracks to where we stopped before going in fight. Stayed there awhile then went to where the wounded was carried to. Saw some of the boys that night who came to me to get the orderly papers and payrolls which I were in possession of as acting orderly. Had made out all the payrolls up to that time. That night late as the last one to go was taken about a mile to the division hospital established in the woods near a small house. The next morning the doctor put me under the influence of chloroform and got all of the little bones out of the wound. Late that evening orders were issued to all of those able to make for the railroad track below Jonesboro. I started several others but was not able to go so I stayed. It may have been lucky for me as several were killed in a week. About 10 a.m. there was a skirmish between calvary [cavalry] all around us. Ought to have seen the cripple hunting shelter. I did not move, told them one place was safe as another for the bullets were coming from all directions. Later in the night we heard Hood had fallen back to Atlanta blowing up all the government property preparing to evacuate the place.²⁸ The next morning we fell into the Yanks hands but somehow or other I did not dread being a prisoner – had the same faith that I would not go North as I had that I would not be killed during the war. The next day they moved us into Jonesboro. I was sent upstairs in an old hotel. Told me to leave my knapsack – they would send it up to me – that was the last I ever saw of it. Left only with the clothes I had on and my shirt sleeves torn off up to shoulders, used my shoes for pillow – as I lay on the bare floor. Stayed there that day. In the night Sherman's infantry passed through. Always thought the Confeds could make noise enough, but the Yanks went them one better. Sherman and Staff called around next morning picking out men they thought would be able for duty soon and made them pile into wagons for a trip north. By a little acting at the proper time, they left me to die in the Confederacy, for which I was truly thankful. That night the Yank calvary [cavalry] passed through, and ours after them. Bullets flew in every direction, some passing in the building we were in. After a little our doctors came in. We needed them and some rations very bad as the Yanks left us nothing and took our nurses besides. The next evening we were loaded on boxcars and sent to the various hospitals. Along the railroad the cars had been hauling corn and there was a good many grains scattered over the cars, so you can imagine what a soft bed it was, nothing but a thin shirt between the hide and corn. I was put off at Macon, Georgia where I stayed two

months, one-half the time flat on my back, had to be helped up. At the end of two months got a furlough for 60 days to go down to Mississippi, as far as they could give a furlough at that time. Went down into east Louisiana near Greensburg. While there had to take to the woods part of day and one night, a detachment of Yankee cavalry [cavalry] passed through there, picked up several of the citizens, carried them fifty or sixty miles, then turned them loose to foot it home. I went back to Jackson, Mississippi, went before the board, had my furlough for 30 days. Then went into Meridian, tried to get retired for 6 months. That board refused as the papers would have to go through a regular course of red tape. Returned to Jackson, went to quartermaster, tried to draw pay but just out of money. Then went to the commissary and got \$1.50 on my commutation [commutation] ticket. But that kind of money was very weak in that part of the country. Should have said on my first, below, that from Brookhaven to Magnolia,²⁹ I rode on handcar with two other men, and on top of sixteen large boxes of tobacco. Just room for three abreast with legs hanging down, and nothing to hold to, the track had been burnt at all of the bridges but we crossed on what was left of them. At one place on one side nothing but the iron to hold us up for a few feet. I stayed at Magnolia until after dinner next day, then took passage in a one horse cart, a Negro driving it. In trotting along we ran over some large roots on one side of road which turned the outfit over and threw me a considerable distance from the cart so it did not fall on me. Stopped at Osyka at hotel but a young lady sent me to a private house where I stayed until next evening. I left that place afoot across country as I could go no further on railroad. The first night out tried to stay with an old gentleman I saw feeding hogs on side of road. Would not take me in, nothing to eat - war refugee from New Orleans - that was his summer residence - did not farm. I started on but he called me back, took me up to the house, told his wife to do her best for me as I was a Louisianan. You ought to have seen the table that night. It was loaded down with the best New Orleans afforded. The Madam noted my surprised looks and informed me that it was a birthday supper and her mother was a blockade runner and to cap the climax - after I went in the room for bed the old gent brought me a bran new shirt - so stiff that it would have taken the hide off my neck if I had not so well scaled up with dirt. Now I will go back and give my second trip for Jackson - this time I was making my way to the Mississippi River to cross to the west side. Left the wayside at Jackson for Brookhaven. Left latter place afoot for Whitestown to the left of the Woodville Road. It rained hard one night and caused a good deal of water in the flat places. Just after leaving the house I came to a little run, undertook to jump it, my foot struck in the edge, down I went as I could not use but one arm, had a time in getting up. The balance of the day just splashed through when I came to any in the road. During the day came to a creek with a footlog but over the log was a leaning tree that it required two good arms to bring around. But as luck would have it a gent came along and helped me over. When I got in six miles of Woodville, struck the road leading east that I was to take for Whitestown. As it was nearly night stopped at the house right in the forks of the road but when I went in the owner said could not stay but told right there I would. He gave in and treated me very well. The next day I went to one old gentleman's house where I knew I would find parties who had a hand in bringing over the mail whom I aimed to cross with the next time they were ready to send some over the mail. I stayed there off and on nearly two weeks. During the time footed it to Woodville, some seven or eight miles. On my way out there I met two men in a buggy who began to inquire about the army. Told them they knew as much as I did. Knew nothing only as it came out in the papers. One of them asked me if I had any money. Told them had a little of the new issue. Said it was not worth a darn around here. Pulled out a ten dollar bill greenback and gave me. Was so stumped

failed to thank him. Finally the mail came down from Brandon in a wagon and started for the river. Several of us were muleback. Stayed all night at a private house while there, several men came in who had been to the river all day gambling with the Yanks on a gunboat. We started next morning by leaving the road for the swamp. Came to a right smart body of water. Got a flat boat, put everything in it, got aboard and swam our stock to dry land. We loaded the mules again and struck out. About 2 p.m. we made a detour to the left. Struck a canal. Unloaded and carried everything over on a log. One man led a mule to edge of canal, one behind and shoved him in. After crossing over I footed it down the canal to where the road crossed it. Took left end but did not go far. Met a man who halted me. He went on and met the crowd. One of them came to where I was and told me to keep on down the road but as there was a gang of negroes working side of the road they would have to take to the woods and keep out of sight. I went on, passed the Negroes who were some distance from the end of the rows. They said nothing to me but several eyed me very close. After passing the field my crowd came back in the road but soon turned to the right and struck the river where a fence came to it. We halted there until after dark when we let down the fence and passed through to other side where we let down fence again. After getting in the road we detailed two men with guns as guards in rear of us. As we went down saw where the Yanks had found one boat and smashed her all to pieces. Had to make frequent changes in crossing points and watch the Negroes as they would report your presence to the Yanks at Fort Adams³⁰ which was just below where we were. After going some two hundred yards down the river we halted and sent two men as guards down below us. About eight p.m. we heard the skiff shove out from the other side. It came over and everything was put in the boat that went over including your humble servant. We bid the crowd farewell and shoved out to cross the father of rivers in the dark and a leaky skiff as we found out pretty soon. Knowing that we were near the Yanks, saw something coming down the river. Imagined it was a Yank yawl patrolling the river. About that time as we were nearing the bushes the man who was pulling the boat called out "Look for an opening and grab a bush" so we could go in. My yawl turned out to be the body of a tree with the roots stuck up in the air. When we landed we were met by several men that belonged to the detail who laid hold of the skiff and carried it out in the bushes and hid it. We went some one hundred yards when we came to a little clearing they had made there. There we heard the drums at Fort Adams sound the Tattoo and presently a gunboat went puffing down the river. We camped about a mile from the river. Next morning we started early, came to water, had to wade out knee deep to get in beside the boatman which was kept up until all were over. Then he tied the boat to his horsetail and drug it to the next water where we found a large skiff and a dugout. I got in the middle and sat down on the bottom while a man got in each end and done the paddling. About the middle of the day we struck a solid sheet of water that was at least from forty to sixty feet deep which finally led us into Red River which we crossed and kept through the swamp until we struck dry land. Laying all jokes aside - I felt safer in the hottest battle I ever was in than in that boat - did not see any chance if that little dugout had turned over. There was a considerable crowd at the place we landed. Some that belonged to the mail detail and others to pick up what news was floating. The first question I was asked did we get any Louisiana rum over our way. Nary drop. I was lucky enough to get a horse to ride out. Went with a good crowd. When we struck Bayou de Ghaize and the sugar houses rum was the first thing but I am here to say I got enough to last me until this time. Stayed all night with an old schoolmate. After staying around awhile started up to Nachitoches to the absentee camps. Went via Alexandria. Boarded the *Old Texas* for the trip up. After getting off the boat found that camp was seven miles from town. Walked out to camp. Went in

town next day and went before the medical board. Asked to be retired. They filled out my papers and sent them to Kirby Smith at Shreveport. In a few days they came back endorsed on back "Let General Hayes [Hays] order his men before the board."³¹ I went before the board. Went back to camp. Orders was to move to another camp. Still about seven miles from town. Asked lieutenant in charge to let me go to town as my papers would be ready that day but he refused. Went with the crowd to new camp. That evening our courier brought my papers. The lieutenant handed them to me. I said now I will go. He asked me to stay that night but would not. Started to town, got an awful wetting. When I got in it was after dark. Stayed at a saloon until the same boat, the *Texas*, came along. Boarded her and got up near boiler to dry my clothes. Got to Alexandria next evening. When we landed the list was called and each went ashore as his name was called. Knew my name was not on the list. Just waited. Got ashore and showed my papers to the provost guard. They said go to provost marshal's office, have them countersigned. Now there was a brigadier general's name signed to my papers but I thought would take the advice and get the marshal's name which I did. In walking around just afterwards two guards came to me to see if I had a pass, showed them, Goudan major commanding which was enough. Found out that a small wayside camp of the absentees had been moved. Concluded to leave town that night. Started for the Chambers' Plantation. About eight miles out on the way at the Williams Sugar Mill, found a calvary [cavalry] regiment camped with a guard in the road. The guard halted me. No sooner did he do it than I yelled for corporal of the guard. He happened to be absent at some other call. The lieutenant in charge started out. I told him to bring a light. When he got where I was showed him Goudan's name. He wanted to read the papers all over. Told him no. Stepped beyond the line and told him I was under no one's orders from then on (Lincoln had been assassinated a few nights before that.) That was the wind-up of my soldiering - left out a good many items and incidents I saw - tried to give as little as possible of the history of the war - as I saw it.

FOOTNOTES

¹The Louisiana convention "seceded" from the United States on January 26, 1861. John D. Winters, *The Civil War in Louisiana* (Baton Rouge, 1963), 13.

²The Confederate States Government.

³The Confederacy enacted a conscript law on April 16, 1862, by a vote of over two to one. Charles P. Roland, *The Confederacy* (Chicago, 1960), 58-59.

⁴Ville Platte, Louisiana is located in Evangeline Parish.

⁵Washington is located in south-central Louisiana in St. Landry Parish.

⁶The New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroad ran north and south from New Orleans, west of Lake Pontchartrain, to Tangipohoa, Louisiana and Camp Moore.

⁷The Confederate authority in organizing its troops for a long war decided to permit democratic election of officers.

⁸The 16th Louisiana Infantry served in the Louisiana Brigade of the Army of Tennessee. - John Dimitry, *Louisiana, in Confederate Military History* (Vol. X of 12 vols.; reprint edition, Thomas Yoseloff, 1962), 176-179ff.

⁹Generals Albert Sidney Johnston and P.G.T. Beauregard after the debacle of Forts Henry and Donelson in February, 1862, sought to concentrate troops at Corinth, Mississippi on the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, for the purpose of attacking Grant at Pittsburg Landing ("Shiloh") on the Tennessee River.

¹⁰At Shiloh in surprise attack, the Confederates drove back the Federals under Grant and Sherman all day on April 6. However, on the 7th the Federals, reinforced by the army of D. C. Buell, regained most of the field from the exhausted "rebels." Consequently, General Beauregard, who had replaced the mortally wounded Johnston, directed a successful withdrawal back to Corinth.

¹¹Louse

¹²Beauregard withdrew to Tupelo, Mississippi after holding on at Corinth against the huge army of Halleck as long as practicable.

¹³Greensburg is located west of the railroad above Tangipohoa and west of the site of old Camp Moore. It is the parish center for Saint Helena Parish.

¹⁴General Braxton Bragg replaced the ailing Beauregard at Tupelo, Mississippi. In May, 1862, Bragg launched his long march into Kentucky, having previously moved his army to the Chattanooga area before moving out northward,

¹⁵The Federals surrendered 4,000 men, having lost fifteen killed and fifty-seven wounded. The Confederate Chalmers lost thirty-five killed and 253 wounded in a premature charge on the works of Munfordville, Kentucky.

¹⁶As in the discussion of most Civil War actions, the debate persists as to the numbers and losses on both sides. The editor assumes each side had about 60,000 men in Kentucky, although only a fraction on both sides saw action at Perryville – Robert Underwood Johnson and Clarence Clough Buel, editors, *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (Grant-Lee edition, 4 vols., New York, 1884-1888), III, 29-30.

¹⁷General Joseph Wheeler of the cavalry describes the difficulties of protecting Bragg's extensive train on the retreat in his account in *ibid.*, 18-19. See also *ibid.*, III, 603.

¹⁸Presumably, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia.

¹⁹The 25th Louisiana started out as companies from Concordia, Louisiana, which went to the Army of Tennessee in March, 1862 – Dimitry, *Louisiana (Confederate Military History, X)*, 177.

²⁰The most extensive accounts of Stone's River or Murfreesborough are in *Battles and Leaders*, III, 603-633. For four days, December 31, 1862, to January 3, 1863, Bragg attacked and maneuvered against the Federal army under General W.S. Rosecrans. The Confederates won early success against the Federal right, but as Morrow reflects, finally lost the day on January 2.

²¹General Joseph E. Johnston assembled modest forces, all that could be spared, to try to take pressure off of the besieged Confederates at Vicksburg – without success, as Morrow says herein.

²²At Chickamauga, September 19-20, 1863, the combined forces of Bragg and Longstreet routed the Federals under Rosecrans and drove them back into Chattanooga. Fairfax Downey's *Storming of the Gateway* (New York, 1960) provides a convenient summary of the actions around Chattanooga.

²³The Confederate withdrawal from Dalton, Georgia to Atlanta is an oft-told tale. At Kenesaw Mountain (June 27, 1864) north of Atlanta some of the heaviest fighting of the campaign took place with considerable loss on both sides. Federal loss was greatest because of the well-located breastworks in the Confederate position.

²⁴Morrow probably is referring to Hardee's flanking column which moved out early on July 22 toward Decatur, Georgia to hit Sherman's left, opening the battle of Atlanta.

²⁵Hood assumed command on July 18, 1864.

²⁶Hood remained in Atlanta for about a month, until the end of August. The cavalry of "Fightin'" Joe Wheeler harassed Sherman at every opportunity throughout these operations.

²⁷Sherman's drive behind Hood to Jonesboro, on the railroad south of Atlanta, caused Hood to withdraw forces to endeavor to hold in that direction - to no avail; Atlanta and Jonesboro soon fell to the Federals.

²⁸Hood describes his moves in *Battles and Leaders*, IV, 343-344.

²⁹Brookhaven and Magnolia in southwestern Mississippi were stations on the New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroad.

³⁰Fort Adams, on the east shore of the Mississippi River, was situated just north of the Louisiana state line.

³¹Major General Harry Hays commanded in western Louisiana in the last months of the war. - Winters, *The Civil War in Louisiana*, 424-425.