

**Shenandoah.**

[Continued from page 6, Col. 4.]

the intolerable annals of captivity and to bring a passing flush of excitement to wan cheeks—and that was about all.

A warm brotherly affection had sprung up between Captain Ralph Hunt, the weak but courageous and presumptuous, and Lieutenant Frank Bedloe, the youthful spirit of that self-communism, who was more or less a mystery to his closest comrades, yet who bore a sort of "daredevil" reputation even among those who knew him but slightly or not at all. Bedloe fairly burned to be free and fighting again, and he lost sleep straining at the idea of escape. He had been in every forlorn hope of the kind since his arrival and was under special surveillance, perhaps on this account, perhaps at the instance of a certain Confederate secret service officer, Thornton by name.

Other Union prisoners in Libby were allowed occasional visitors and received presents of food and clothing from home. No such remembrances ever reached Lieutenant Bedloe. No letters came to him, nor was he known to write any. It was even uncertain to what state he belonged, and if he had a home, relatives or friends he never made any allusion to them. War was war, not a picnic, he said. Once a soldier, it was "all off" with other ties. His one object was to win military distinction, meaning rapid promotion for conspicuous gallantry.

Precisely the opposite of this fierce and somber obsession was the character of Ralph Hunt—frank, gentle, confiding, childlike in some qualities as well as in some weaknesses. But he loved Bedloe, and his own ambitions, as the tide of a blighted life slowly but surely ebbed, merged into one grand desire to do something for the strong, high spirited, dashing comrade who had contributed so much to cheer the horrible gloom of prison existence.

The opportunity came in an odd and unexpected way. Hunt's kind southern friends had the happy thought to replace his dilapidated uniform with a new suit of clothes—citizen's clothes, of course, and of the good homely material known as "butternut." As a matter of fact, the whole Confederate army, especially after the first year of the war, was sprinkled with butternut of various shades. The "uniforms" were anything but uniform. A gray coat, a gray pair of trousers, or a gray hat, sufficed to mark the followers of Lee and Jackson, and some soldiers went through all the campaigns clad in their home garb as farmers or mountaineers. A supreme service was devised for Ralph Hunt's new suit the very day it arrived.

"You are the man to get away with it, Frank," insisted the owner of the clothes. "The opportunity is wasted on me."

"Ralph is right," declared Captain Cox, "You can make as good use of your liberty as any officer here, Lieutenant Bedloe. No, don't think of me. I have something else in view for myself."

So it came about that one morning when Captain Warner had been replaced by a subordinate named Turner as acting commissary and the guard for the Potomac room had been newly changed, a gawky youth in butternuts (Frank had contrived to shave off his beard and mustache) slipped out behind the officer who had perfunctorily counted the prisoners and in a twinkling was mixed up with the free southerners who lounged about the place on one pretext or another, though he was still on the wrong side of the railing that constituted the dead line. Here Turner was stationed, sitting at a desk just within the pale.

"Hello, cap—do they keep you busy?" drawled the youth in butternuts, matching his clothes with the assumed accent of a North Carolina tarheel.

"Who the devil are you?" demanded the official, glancing up from his records, "and what are you doing here?"

"I'm from No'th Ca'liny, and I fol'owed the gyard in so's as to git a look at them 'ere Yankee prisoners. I'm goin' to the front tomorrow an' I thought before I went I'd like to see what these Yanks looked like."

"Go to the front and be cursed, and there you'll see more Yanks than you want to. Now, get out of here and stay out."

"All right, cap, you needn't be so sassy about it," retorted the supposed tarheel as he lurched out through the wicket and made for the door, where, rolling a quid of tobacco in his cheek, he winked at the armed guard and passed out.

Here was where Lieutenant Frank Bedloe, daredevil, demonstrated his old self again. Instead of disappearing with all possible celerity, as any man of ordinary nerve would have done, once escaped from Libby prison, he deliberately crossed the street to the vacant lot opposite and stood there a minute or two with his hands in his pockets, gazing up at the barred front windows of the big brick building to see if any of his late comrades in captivity had ventured across the dead line to catch a glimpse of his actual departure for "God's country."

A few pale faces could be dimly discerned within. To these Frank waved a parting salute, murmuring, "Goodby; I hope we'll meet again somewhere else."

Then he slouched off in the direction of the Rocketts, down the bend of the James river.

**CHAPTER X.**

**Lights and Shadows.**

**T**HE Federal army had been repulsed from Richmond, but the southern capital was still its objective. The Confederate forces in the meantime could play their trump card and by menacing Washington draw McClellan's formidable army away from the banks of the James.

The setback of McClellan prompted Mr. Lincoln in the first place to gather up the armies which "Stonewall" Jackson had scattered in the valley and put them all under the command of one officer, who should be charged with the protection of Washington, and, secondly, to fortify his own council by the appointment of a supreme military adviser, who should be commander in chief of all the Federal armies.

For the first named commission Major General John Pope was the unfortunate choice. For the second Major General Henry W. Halleck was brought out of the west, and the whole land force of the United States was saddled with a bureau-rat whose own soldiers could not help ridiculing the bombastic declamations from his "headquarters in the saddle," enjoining the troops who followed him to take no account of strong positions, lines of retreat or bases of supply, but to keep always on the flank of the enemy, of whom thus far he had seen nothing but their backs.

He saw their faces presently at Cedar Run, where Jackson administered a signal defeat, and later in Augusta, when Lee and Jackson and Longstreet, who had taken his measure from the start, finished him at Manassas on the old battlefield of Bull Run in a series of quick actions.

Antietam's day of carnage passed into history as a drawn battle, because on the day following neither side felt

swept plain in heroic but futile attempts to scale the Marye Heights, until the field as far as eye could reach was covered with Union dead and wounded, among which the survivors ran to and fro, their ranks decimated by the most withering fire that ever brave troops charged upon undaunted.

In vain, alas! Again had Lee and Jackson, Stuart and Longstreet fought a defensive battle to the finish and won with absolute ease at comparatively little cost. Burnside recrossed the Rappahannock at night under cloak of a violent storm, with a loss of more than 12,000 of the superb soldiers of the Army of the Potomac.

The spring of 1863 approached with brighter prospects for the Army of Northern Virginia than those which had confronted it a year previously. The victories of Cold Harbor, Cedar Run, the second Manassas and Fredericksburg had inspired new enthusiasm. In Virginia two years of hard struggle had passed, and still the Federal armies held no ground below the Rappahannock.

The Confederates lay entrenched along the southern banks of that river, their long lines of pickets on the quiver to give warning that any attempt to cross would be met as Burnside's had been in December. Meanwhile Burnside had been replaced in the command of the Union forces by General Joseph Hooker, sometimes called "Fighting Joe."

Hooker's well conceived plan for the spring campaign was to flank the Confederate left with four of his seven army corps at Chancellorsville, some eight or ten miles up the Rappahannock west of Fredericksburg, while the remaining three corps crossed the river in Lee's front, a la Burnside, at Fredericksburg, and Stoneman's cavalry made a wide detour around the southern left and rear, throwing 10,000 sabers between Lee and Richmond, cut-

ting his communications, stopping his supplies, and being in a position to obstruct the Confederate retreat while Hooker administered the coup de grace.

"Don't stop him," said Lee to Jackson. "When the enemy is busy making a blunder, he must not under any circumstances be interrupted."

They readily perceived that with Hooker at Chancellorsville and Sedgwick three miles below Fredericksburg the two wings of the great Federal army would be thirteen miles apart, with Lee's army directly between them.

On May 1 Hooker, having crossed to the south of the Rappahannock, started to hurl his army of four divisions on the enemy's flank, but Lee was too quick for him, and after a sharp encounter at Tabernacle church, halfway between Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg, Hooker was forced back into

the woods, there to adopt the defensive tactics that were to lead to his destruction. For then and there the Confederates conceived the bold idea of turning the tables upon him by flanking his right. Jackson was to march with nearly 30,000 troops along the entire front of the enemy, and in close proximity to their lines, without being discovered—to make his way by unfrequented roads and through dense thickets to their flank and rear, there to attack the force of General Hooker, three times outnumbering his own.

General Lee meanwhile was to hold Hooker's front with only 14,000 men. Such was the bold strategy of the Confederates at Chancellorsville.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon Jackson's van had safely reached the plank road three miles to the west of Chancellorsville. The march had been observed by the Federals, but owing to the roundabout direction it had pur-



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"General H. W. Halleck was brought out of the west."



General A. E. Burnside.

strong enough to renew the struggle. It really amounted to a disaster to the Confederate army, having abruptly checked what had looked like a victorious invasion and demonstrated Lee's present resources were entirely inadequate for offensive operations.

Three days after the withdrawal of the southern army from Maryland President Lincoln issued his proclamation of emancipation to the negro slaves. This measure, in its war relation, was expected to fan reactionary flames in the south and so aid the Federal arms in crushing the rebellion. Its immediate result was to precipitate heated political discussion at the north.

General McClellan's suggestion to his army that the remedy for past errors was at the polls in the next presidential election naturally aggravated the growing breach between him and the Washington administration. The final outcome was that early in November McClellan was relieved from the command of the Army of the Potomac, to be succeeded by Major General Ambrose E. Burnside, fourth successive commander in the field of the Union forces in Virginia, third to head the superb Army of the Potomac organized by McClellan hardly more than a year previous.

Burnside conceived the idea of concentrating his army on the Rappahannock river, opposite the historic Virginia town of Fredericksburg.

Lee ordered Jackson and Longstreet to Fredericksburg and entrenched his army on the heights back of the town, on the same (right) bank of the river, knowing that the enemy, changing his line of communication with his base of supplies, would require time before assuming the offensive. The plans of Burnside were indeed unfathomable, but the calculations of the Confederate chieftain were fulfilled to a nicety.

On the morning of Dec. 13, having brought his army across the Rappahannock on pontoons directly in Lee's front, Burnside opened attack with misdirected valor upon an impregnable position, strong by nature and made doubly so by impeccable military art. A dense fog overhung the river, town and plain until after 9 o'clock, when the sunlight burst through, revealing in terrible splendor the spectacle of 100,000 men in line of battle, their bristling bayonets gleaming through the mist, while the roar of 300 cannon shook the earth and sent red meteors flashing along the sky.

"It is well that war is so dreadful," said General Lee as he looked upon the unparalleled pageant from his position on Telegraph hill, "else we should become too fond of it."

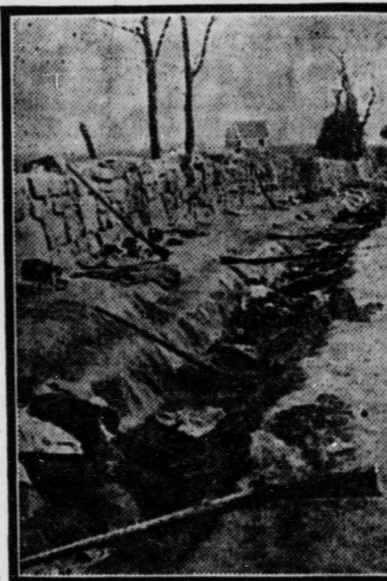
On came the lines of blue, the golden harp flag of Meagher's Irish brigade in the van, charging across an artillery

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The Stone Wall at Fredericksburg.

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**Clothing.**

posely taken they supposed it was a retreat, not an advance.

Toward 6 o'clock in the evening all was in readiness, and Jackson ordered his advance. Like an avalanche the Confederate rush descended upon the Union line, driving everything before it, capturing cannon before they could be reversed to fire, rolling up whole divisions and hurling them back upon the enemy's center until the Wilderness was an inferno of smoke and flame, of roaring guns and trees crashing down, riderless horses and men without arms running about frantically; mules carrying ammunition that exploded as they fled; guns, caissons, forges, ambulances and wagons tumbled in a mad, terrified scramble as it became apparent that the brilliant tactics of Lee and the dashing execution of Jackson had succeeded and Hooker's right had been irresistibly forced back upon his center.

"If only I had another hour of daylight!" cried Jackson. He would have completed his work by surrounding the enemy's army in the tangled woods and cutting off its retreat to the fords of the Rappahannock. As it was, the Federals finally checked their flying columns and made a stand at Chancellorsville, where they were pouring an appalling artillery fire of double canister up the line of the plank road. Darkness or no darkness, flight or resistance, the fury of battle was unchained in Jackson's soul, and his cry was still "Press on!"

[Continued next week.]

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