

Shenandoah.

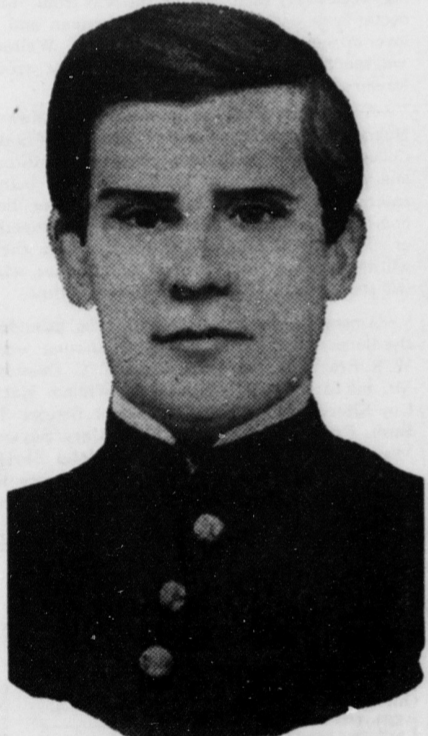
(Continued from page 6, Col. 4.) morning. This was sufficiently reassuring. The commander decided to take the night's rest in Winchester and proceed to the front next morning. When he was called at 6 a. m., faint sounds of irregular firing were heard in the distance to the southward, doubtless the result of General Haverill's reconnaissance. The firing did not cease, however, and after a while it was more distinctly heard, augmented by cannonading. Breakfast was ordered, and Sheridan's bold black, Renzi, together with the horses of the staff officers and couriers, stood pawing and champing before the door. It was nearly 9 o'clock when the general got away. Then he hit the pike at a fairly good clip, not liking the sounds of sudden battle ahead, and somewhat nettled at the jeers and taunts of women in the doorways along the route. It was plain they had heard something by "grapevine telegraph." What they heard soon became apparent as the horsemen went over the rise at Mill creek, a couple of miles south of the town.

There, as far as the eye could reach, up the long line of the valley pike, stretched and straggled the appalling spectacle of an army in broken retreat. Baggage wagons, wounded men, riderless horses and soldiers without guns told all too plainly a tale of panic and rout.

"Where are you going?" shouted Sheridan. "You should be facing the other way. What has happened?" They told him the army had been surprised, defeated and all broken up and was in full retreat.

Sheridan did not rip about, swear and threaten—as yet. He was the calmest man of his party as he rode forward, slowly at first, thinking what he should do. The signal message, "We will crush Sheridan's army," recurred to his mind with stunning force. But would the army suffer itself to be crushed, even in his temporary absence? He could not and would not believe it. The stragglers, being hurriedly questioned, described the situation as "awful."

"That means nothing from a pack of cowards who were the first to run away from the battlefield," declared Sheridan. "Come! We'll soon find out for ourselves. This retreat would never have happened if I had been here. What I want to find out now is where



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"On the right, general," shouted Major William McKinley.

Wright and the Sixth corps are and what the Nineteenth is doing. Wherever they are it's all right or we'll soon fix it right."

Sending a courier back with a hurried order that the troops at Winchester should be deployed across the valley and that all fugitives should be halted and sent back to the front again, he now gave Renzi his head. The gallant Morgan colt needed no spur. But the pike was so cluttered up with wagons and convoys of wounded soldiers and groups squatting around fence rail fires cooking coffee as a substitute for the breakfast of which Early's surprise had deprived them that long detours through the fields at one side or the other had to be made.

Nearing Newtown, about halfway between Winchester and Cedar creek, General Sheridan found numerous companies of uninjured and unscared men, with their officers, who needed only a word or the mere sight of "Little Phil," their magical commander, to turn about with cheers and march back toward the enemy. Among the first he recognized was an officer from his own state—Ohio—Major William McKinley of General Crook's staff.

"Where is the Nineteenth corps?" asked Sheridan.

"On the right, general—in the woods yonder," was the reply as the young officer sprang upon his horse, and, with a loud cheer, dashed away to spread the inspiring news of the chieftain's arrival on the field.

A couple of miles further on, in the rear of General Getty's division near Middletown, a whole bunch of regimental flags seemed to rise up out of the ground. These proved to be the colors of the main body of Crook's troops, which had not retreated at all but reformed after the surprise of early morning and were now holding the line to the west of the turnpike. In

one of the brigade commanders here Sheridan recognized another staunch Ohioan, whom he knew. This was Colonel Rutherford B. Hayes.

The meeting, in quick succession, of McKinley and Hayes under such momentous circumstances naturally impressed the general as of encouraging portent. Yet how little could he, or they, guess that within the span of a single generation both of these promising young Ohio soldiers, fighting shoulder to shoulder with countless others of equal or more promise, were to become presidents of the United States of America.

Far other and more immediately pressing concerns occupied them on this day of the battle of Cedar Creek. Colonel—or was it already general—Hayes was able to answer more definitely the oft repeated inquiry for the Sixth and the Nineteenth corps.

"Here are two divisions of the Sixth corps intact. General—and on their right are Haverill's and Enroy's divisions of the Nineteenth. General Crook is on the extreme left with Merritt's cavalry. All that they want is to know that you're here."

"And all I want, by —," cried Sheridan, "is to get those men up that went to the rear. We'll whip those rebel rascals back and sleep in our old camps tonight!"

He now came full upon the newly forming Federal line of battle. It was as if an electrical thrill had been shot through the entire army from the moment of Sheridan's arrival on the field. Cheer after cheer rang out, to be taken up front and rear and far around before the real cause was known. Had re-enforcements come? Yes. Little Phil was scorching down the pike, and he was a host in himself. Sure enough, there was his energetic small figure on the big horse, his eyes flashing and his face glowing as he galloped along, hat in hand, just to show himself to the troops.

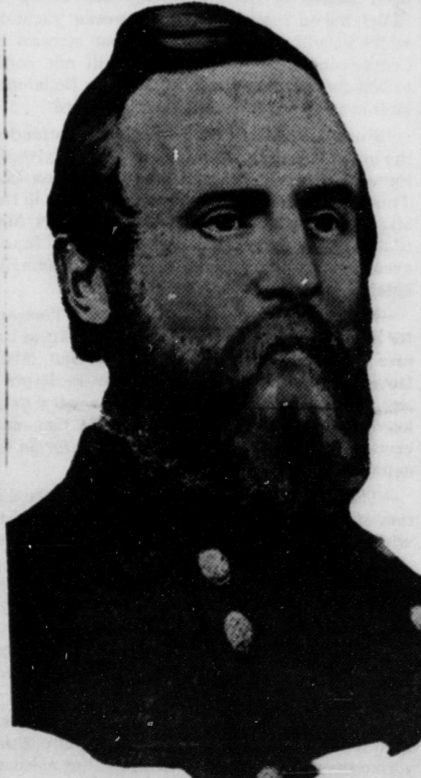
"It's all right!" he shouted. "We're holding them, and we'll lick them yet!"

The general rode on with his staff and escort, and in a minute more they were a distant, confused mass of dust and flying hoofs. Suddenly from the westward came another rolling cloud with a thunderbolt in its midst—the youngest general in the whole Union army, a dashing cavalry leader whom the enemy hesitated to shoot at, declaring that if he was not a southern cavalier he rode and fought like one. Custer, now at a tearing gallop, flew up to Sheridan, threw both arms around him and kissed him on the cheek in an irrepressible burst of boyish enthusiasm, then was off again like the wind.

It was not yet noon—Sheridan had come up at 10:30—and now the whole stream of men on Winchester turnpike was flowing southward instead of the other way, full of fight again. Another tense hour sped by—two hours—and still Sheridan was busy reforming and rearranging his lines, passing the whole front of his infantry in review, until satisfied that their shattered morale was sufficiently restored to be relied on once more for aggressive work. The enemy's fire had noticeably slackened, but this was a sign to be acted upon with extreme caution until its significance could be definitely ascertained.

General Sheridan was still obsessed with the idea that Early's aggressiveness must be accounted for by heavy re-enforcements and that possibly Longstreet had joined him, after all.

When toward the middle of the afternoon the Confederates made a bold, though unsuccessful, sally against General Haverill's division and the right of the Sixth corps, commanded by General Buckthorn, the suspense became unendurable. Buckthorn received a note from the commanding general conveying an order, which he promptly transmitted to General Haverill, as the latter occupied the position from which



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"Sheridan recognized another Ohioan, Colonel Rutherford B. Hayes."

the movement could be most effectively made: "Send Lowell's cavalry after that exposed battery at the edge of the woods, with the object of bringing in as many prisoners as possible.

"Colonel Lowell has just fallen. Will send his command under new leader, to be chosen at once."

A cavalry officer with haggard face and bloodshot eyes, bareheaded, jacketless, his shirt open at the throat, rested in a field to the east of Middletown after a hurried inspection of his troops to the left of the Union line. The colonel of a New York regiment rode up, proffered a flask and said:

"Colonel West, have a drink with me before you go in again. You seem to



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General Philip H. Sheridan Wearing the Very Hat He Waved to Rally His Soldiers on His Famous Ride From "Winchester, Twenty Miles Away."

need it, and I expect at this rate you'll be either in hades or in glory before another hour passes."

Contrary to his reputation, habit and principle, Kerchival West accepted the kindly offer and swallowed a full sized man's drink, known in trooper parlance as a "slug." Then, as if suddenly possessed by a demon, he swung out his saber and, turning to his men with the signal cry of "Now for the charge!" led the cavalry in a brilliant sortie across the fenceless meadows and at the line of straggly woods where the advanced Confederate battery still belched forth defiance.

There was no withstanding such impetuosity. The charging troopers came back with flying colors, several captured guns and a score of prisoners—first herald of the turning tide of victory. But now their wild leader was not riding at their head. No one had seen him fall. Whoever knew what had happened to the individual forgot it in the jubilant excitement over the general result achieved.

The Federal line was now invincibly re-established. At 4 o'clock Sheridan ordered the grand charge, which was begun under his personal direction by the Nineteenth corps on the right and taken up by the successive commands along the line to the left, the cavalry on the flanks charging at the same time. Then the Confederate batteries opened up, and the roar of artillery and the splitting crash of exploding shells mingled with the fierce roll of the musketry.

Colonel Robert Ellingham, in the southern ranks, wondered what was happening at Belle Bosquet. In the forenoon he had swept with his men past the old place, facing northward, and seeing everything in flight ahead, capturing prisoners and recapturing their own men who had fallen into Federal hands, including the elusive Edward Thornton. Now the Confederates were passing the same point again, hurrying and still more hurried in the opposite direction, driven from the field they thought they had won, in the worst rout of which poor Bob had ever been a part.

"By the great horn spoon!" said General Buckthorn to General Haverill. "We're going to have as much trouble in holding our men back from charging the enemy now as we did to stop their retreat this morning."

It had been the intention of General Sheridan to hold back his left after the enemy had been dislodged and by advancing his right to force the Confederates to the east of the valley pike, thus cutting off their retreat to Strasburg and Fisher's hill. But, even as the veteran Buckthorn had whimsically remarked, the troops were so bent upon avenging their reverses of the morning that there was no restraining them, and the whole line pressed on irresistibly until the old camps on Cedar creek had been regained, together with enough prisoners, guns, wagons and battleflags to turn previous mortification into riotous joy and make matter for a rousing dispatch to send to Washington.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Valley of Desolation.

WHILE Early's troops were still running and Sheridan's revelling, the customary sad truce was declared in order to permit the removal of the wounded from the field and the decent disposal of the dead. Not only soldiers, but civilians from far and near flocked upon the scene. From Winchester, Kernstown, Newtown, Middletown, up from the valley and down from the mountains came men and women, searching amid the heaped up horrors where late the battle lines had stood. Some came for love and some—alas! for loot. Sunset reddened the ghastly field; then fell the inky pall of night, and the lanterns of the ghostly ministrants twinkled in the gloom far beyond the circling camps.

Gertrude Ellingham, Madeline West and Jenny Buckthorn, led by Sergeant Barket and followed by the faithful Josephus, made up one of the most indefatigable groups of rescuers. They had ascertained that Kerchival West was not among the living Federal troops, either in the celebrating camps or in the hospital tents. Now at last they sought a pitiful, uncertain comfort in satisfying themselves that he was not among the dead on the field. "General Haverill told me," said Gertrude, "that although our—I mean the

southern—troops were defeated they managed to carry off a considerable number of prisoners. I believe Colonel West is among them."

"I know Captain Heartsease is," murmured Jenny forlornly.

"If nothing worse has befallen my brother than that," added Madeline, "I suppose I ought to be thankful, as at least he will now be out of the awful fighting. But it is a cruel injustice if that wicked wretch, Captain Thornton, is still to be at large."

They rode on in silence—for General Buckthorn had seen to it that they were provided with mounts—until at last Gertrude exclaimed:

"I can't rest anyway. I'm going on, Josephus will follow me. You girls will be all right—won't you, dears?"

"Where are you going?" cried the other two aghast.

"On to the ford, and then to Fisher's hill, or Strasburg, or wherever they have gone. Don't mind me. I'll bring you comforting news, or I won't come back at all. Good night."

And before they could persuade her—that was what she fled from now, as from unbearable torture—she rode off exultantly into the darkness of the mountain shadows like another Valkyrie bearing her stricken warrior's soul to the glorious and blissful Val halla.

(Continued next week.)

Tall wicker vases and baskets of all shapes and sizes are favorite flower-holders this season. They are to be found at all prices and may be stained or painted any color, although the natural colors are appropriate for some porches, says *Harper's Bazar*. Grays, greens, and browns are always good. Hanging baskets are very effective and come in numberless shapes this year.

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