

BY-GONE.

BY CLIO STANLEY.

Old days! old days! how happy they,
When youth and hope were mine!
When flowers swung bright on every bush,
And fruit on every vine!
When all the meadow-land was fair,
The mountain-tops were gold,
And every bud, with rare delight,
Would rose of hope unfold!

Old dreams! old dreams! how fancy wove
Her colors rich and rare;
Brighter than all the sunlit hues
That deck the morning air!
Their magic power I cherish yet,
The tale I love to tell,
Although life's sad reality
I know full well—full well!

Old faces, too, how bright they shine
Thro' memory's mellow haze;
And lovingly look down on me
Thro' long-departed days!
A father's smile, a mother's tear,
A sister's gentle look;
Ah! me! how many a leaf I've turned
In sorrow's open book!

Sweet words of love, they sound again!
An echo from the past!
They cannot die upon the ear—
They will forever last!
Tho' days may wane, and dreams may die,
Those faces still will be
The happy stars that shine on me
From out eternity!

THE COURIER'S RIDE.

BY DANIEL KNIGHT.

It was the night before the battle of Shiloh, and we lay a few miles below Pittsburg Landing. Buell's forces had been gathering, preparatory to joining General Grant, to aid in the battle of Shiloh, then daily expected. In the following details I shall only narrate the part which I acted personally, leaving the army and its movements to the historian.

It was the evening before the battle that a General unknown to me, belonging to Buell's army, hailed me and asked to what cavalry I belonged, my name, Captain's name, and company, all of which I answered, he noting my answers. He then asked if I would be willing to go with an officer of his staff upon a night ride to Pittsburg Landing.

He said: "I am General Nelson, and prefer a volunteer courier if I can get one, as they are always better men for the work."

I replied that I was willing to undertake the duty when properly detailed and instructed. My answer seemed to please him.

He answered: "As soon as possible go to your quarters, feed your horse, yourself, and the sooner you are ready the better."

This seemed like a strange speech, coming from a stranger whom I had never seen before, but, once having seen, not liable to forget.

He was a large, fleshy, sharp-spoken man, and his words carried authority with them. It was now getting on toward night, and I soon after left the line and went to camp. I had fed my horse, and was making my coffee, when an orderly came and directed me to report at the Captain's tent. Going to headquarters to report, I met General Nelson coming out. I saluted him. He returned the salute, and said:

"Be off as soon as possible, corporal. I left your instructions with your Captain. We were intending to send Lieutenant Millman with you, but he is on the sick list, and perhaps it is just as well. Be careful, but get there as soon as your horse can get you there. There will in all probability be fighting when you get there. But it must not stop you. Go directly to General Grant and deliver your message to him and only to him. If there are any rebel cavalry on this side of the river to intercept you, you must conceal your papers, or destroy them if in danger of being taken. If you destroy the papers and yet succeed in getting through, and the fight is in progress, as I am almost certain it will be before you can possibly get there, say to General Grant that General Nelson's division will be in line with him before the sun goes down."

He then mounted and rode away. I entered the Captain's tent. He and Major Brackett were seated at a small writing table, examining a small military map.

The Captain said: "Dan, you have got yourself into business. General Nelson has just left an order to detail you to go to the Landing with papers for General Grant. It is a dangerous service. You are to take a road some four or five miles south, as there are many sentinels on this, and it would consume too much time to stop and explain who you are to each; hence, it is deemed advisable to take the other road, by which you run the risk of meeting guards of the wrong color. Basil Duke is on this side of the river somewhere. In the event—well, there is no use of giving you directions. Do your best, as we trust you will. You are to start on a very important as well as dangerous mission, and are expected to deliver these papers to General Grant by noon to-morrow. Get there by your own devices. A dark will guide you to the south road, and Sergeant Whitehall and the picket guard will see you safe on your race."

I took the papers, thanked the Captain for the compliment, and as soon as possible was in the saddle.

I found the guard waiting, and a little before 9 p. m. we started out of camp. On arriving at the road the sergeant wanted me to take the negro, but I declined, preferring to chance it alone, and bidding them a cheery good-by, cantered away.

It was very lonely for the first hour, but gradually the desire to succeed began to take its place, and I felt that I was getting on famously when I discovered to my right a fire. It seemed not to be upon the road, but it was too dark to determine. I pressed forward, watching the fire, and soon saw men about it. That settled the question, and I knew they were a rebel picket. How was I to get by them was the question—a very important question just then. There were too many of them for me to dash by them. My horse wanted to whinny. I had to slap him several times to keep him quiet.

For five or six minutes I sat there watching that camp, when I heard a horse approaching from the same road I had come. I pulled off the road to let it pass, thinking it a Johnny; but when they got opposite me they stopped—two negroes, one on foot, one on horseback—and I heard the following dialogue:

"Now, den, Steve, w'at's ur goin' ter do? Dem's de Secesh, an' ef we lets dem catch us we's no better as dead niggers."

"Well, but we isn't gwinne to let dem catch us, sonny; of course, dey would shoot us too quick. But see here, boy; you'member dat fah wat run down to Missa Jenkins'. Wal, da to—"

"What dat, boy—"

My horse was uneasy; he snuffed, and the remark of the negro in regard to the path was so satisfactory that I rode up to

them, cautioning them to keep quiet. I told them that I did not want to interfere with their plans, but that I did want to get around the fire without being seen, and that if they knew of any way, I should be glad to have them show me it.

The old negro, the first speaker, asked, "Is you a Linkum sojer?"

I said I was.

He seemed greatly pleased at this; said the rebels at the fire were "Ole Duke's the sojers;" that he and his son were trying to get to our army at Pittsburg Landing, and that if the rebels caught them they would shoot them without asking a question. And, as I afterward learned, he was right in so saying, as they showed no mercy to negroes trying to reach our lines. He said his boy knew of a path through the woods—a cow-path, starting some distance back, and he thought they could get me through all right.

I assented to following their lead. We turned back, going slow that the boy might find the path, which he soon did—the worst one I ever saw, and I had been all through the Rockies, finding naught to compare with that cow-path in Western Tennessee.

We traveled single file—I in the rear. After three or four miles we came to a stream. We could not see what it was, but I knew by its noise that it was quite a river.

The boy said it was ordinarily a small creek, but now was swollen by recent rains. He did not like to cross first, as he could not swim. I was too anxious to proceed to stand upon ceremony, and pushed forward. The stream was not over twenty feet wide, but deep and rapid. I was carried down stream some little distance before effecting a landing. The banks were rough and rocky, and lined by high piles of driftwood. I finally worked my way out, but the darkies could not be induced to try it.

Getting from the boy directions as best I could, by talking across the stream, as to my route, I found the country a succession of hills, hollows, and a second large creek, which my horse swam readily, but I could not again find the path. Upon the prairies of Iowa the loss of such a path would mean but little, but in this God-forsaken wilderness, without knowing which was north, south, east, or west, nor which way I wanted to go, it meant much. After stopping for a few moments, until I had come to fully realize the predicament I was in, I started forward, giving my horse rein, and letting him pick his way.

In a few minutes he struck the path, and at a little distance farther on we came to a traveled road. I heard dogs barking and other signs of life. It was a considerable distance before I came in sight of a house, but finally could see one, and lights shining through the windows.

Lights shining through a window are of all things most welcome to a lost, tired, hungry night wanderer, when associated with a peaceful welcome. But when those lights have lost their peaceful welcome and assumed a hostile guise, they are of all things most unwelcome.

I was moving cautiously toward this house when I became aware that it stood at some distance to the right of the road, and began to hope to pass unseen, but hardly had that hope dawned when it was destroyed by a voice ringing out upon the night air the unwelcome command:

"Halt!"

I was just opposite the house and answered the challenge by asking who they were.

They answered "Halt and dismount," or they would fire.

I gave my horse the spur, and he bounded nimbly away. But I came near being stopped by two large buckshot hitting me in the thigh. I kept my seat, clinging closely to my horse's neck, and if ever a horse did nobly his very best it was my little black pacer upon this occasion. Shot after shot whistled by my head, and the genuine rebel yell sounding in our rear gave to horse and rider the determination to do the very best in us for dear life. The little horse worked nobly. How his iron-clad hoofs kept time in rapid measure as they struck fire on that rocky mountain road. Occasionally I fired my pistol at my pursuers; but, as I could hotsee three steps behind me, and it marked the direction for them to shoot, I desisted. I now gave my whole energy to coaxing and petting and praising my horse. I called him by every pet name I had ever given him. I implored him to save me from those yelling devils galloping after me, and the little fellow's feet kept right on like a tireless machine—one, two, three, four—one, two, three, four—one, two, three, four—and repeat, in exact rhythmic rapid time, and the yelling hounds behind followed, shooting into the darkness as they would fire.

Any old cavalry man will understand the swelling heart with which I parted after such tests from that noble horse. Let it be his eulogy that during the whole night he bore me bravely through a trackless wood, ending with a twelve-mile race under constant fire, and to him give due credit for the safe delivery to General Grant of the message which that day reached him in the nick of time. Here's honor to my noble horse. In parting, if I shed a tear it was a soldier's tear, that did honor to my manhood. I rode away with such emotions as could not be repressed. My eyes were full, my heart throbbing, and to-day, more than twenty-three years ago, I say, "God bless me for that tribute of emotion to a noble horse!"

Once more on the road, and the desire to do—faithfully accomplish my errand—possessed me.

It was Sunday. The enemy had arranged an attack upon our forces, and were now wheeling into line and concentrating their efforts for the destruction of General Grant's forces. As I rode rapidly forward and thought as to the final result, I could not for a moment feel but the Union would prevail.

Minute by minute I could note the growth of the battle as battery after battery, and regiment after regiment, and battalion after battalion, and division after division became engaged. The volume of the battle grew and grew, and with it my desire to deliver my precious message.

The road was muddy and bad, but I urged forward my horse, now reeking with sweat. I began to meet refugees—negroes so frightened they could not speak—women, children, dogs—all intent upon getting away from the fray.

It was two o'clock p. m. when I arrived upon the river's bank, opposite Pittsburg Landing. I looked over the scene with varying, strange emotions. That was no Iowa harvest field.

The ferryboat carried me over, and I hurried forward to find General Grant.

Shot and shell were flying over my head—no dinner horn music they.

In a short time I found the General. He stood watching the working of some new batteries engaged in shelling the woods beyond. His face wore a troubled look. When I handed him the papers he tore off the envelope with haste, read a few lines, turned to me and said:

"Did General Nelson send any verbal message?"

I replied, "Yes. He said he would be in line with you to-morrow."

He sent an orderly at once to repeat that to other commanders.

He then said to me, "You can now go and get rest. I think you must need it."

I rode back to the river just in time to take the boat for Savannah, which we reached just as Nelson's advance came up.

Thus have I tried to detail a day's work for my country—an eventful one.—*Chicago Ledger*.

Now, den, Steve, w'at's ur goin' ter do? Dem's de Secesh, an' ef we lets dem catch us we's no better as dead niggers."

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"Hello, here they come."

This remark indicated the return of the pursuers of the Johnnies who had been giving me my recent twelve-mile chase. They brought sixteen prisoners, some of them quite badly wounded.

The sun was now rising—a foggy morning.

I told my errand to Lieutenant Eddie, and asked him for the horse of some one of the prisoners. He told me to look among them and take my choice. I chose that of the Captain of the squad. He used some bad language when ordered to dismount and deliver up his horse. And now occurs a curious circumstance. The Captain's tongue unloosed, and he began to give us his history. How he was born in Washington County, Pa.; that he had joined the Confederates because he believed them right, and that they would whip us yet.

This roiled Lieutenant Eddie, who also declared himself a native of Washington County, Pa., and I declared myself a Washington County, Pa., man—a trio, meeting under strange circumstances.

First—Myself, Dan Knight, Company C, Fifth Iowa, came running for life from the—

Second—Captain Bob Owens, of Duke's Confederate Cavalry.

Third—Lieutenant Frank Eddie, Company H, Seventh Pennsylvania, my deliverer and Owens' captor.

All natives of the same State. I am glad to say that Owens was the only Washington County man I ever heard of who fought with the Confederacy.

Owens asked if we were going to make him walk. Lieutenant Eddie responded:

"No; we are going to hang you, and save you the trouble of walking."

I took his horse, exchanging his for my own saddle. While doing this, Owens came to me and said:

"They do not intend hanging us. That would be contrary to the rules of war."

I answered, "You do not stand for the rules of war when you get any of our boys. But what made you take such risk to capture me. I am no great catch."

"We wanted the papers you carry," said he.

"Where did you get your information?"

"A negro came into our camp and informed us. He is a spy in the pay of our Colonel."

"Had he a boy with him?"

"No; it was the boy himself. He told us of the old man being with him, and the old coon is down on us. So he had to slip away from him and hurry to us with the news."

I had heard enough. The darkies could not all be trusted. How unwise my telling them of the purpose of my journey. It had come nigh defeating it.

"How far did I ride under your fire?"

After considering a moment he replied, "About twelve miles."

In the pursuit the rebels had lost seven killed, and seventeen prisoners. None of our side had received a scratch but myself.

We could now begin to hear the heavy guns of Pittsburg Landing—the expected battle had begun. It served to remind me of the importance of my mission. Bidding the boys all good-morning I mounted my new horse and rode away in the direction of the battle. First, let me add that I had secured from negro residents in the vicinity of the camp the promise to care well for my wounded horse. I left him standing where he stood when I took the saddle from him, and he looked almost humanly or more at me as I rode away.

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Bill Nye on Cyclones.

We were riding along on the bounding train, and some one spoke of the free and democratic way that people in this country got acquainted with each other while traveling.