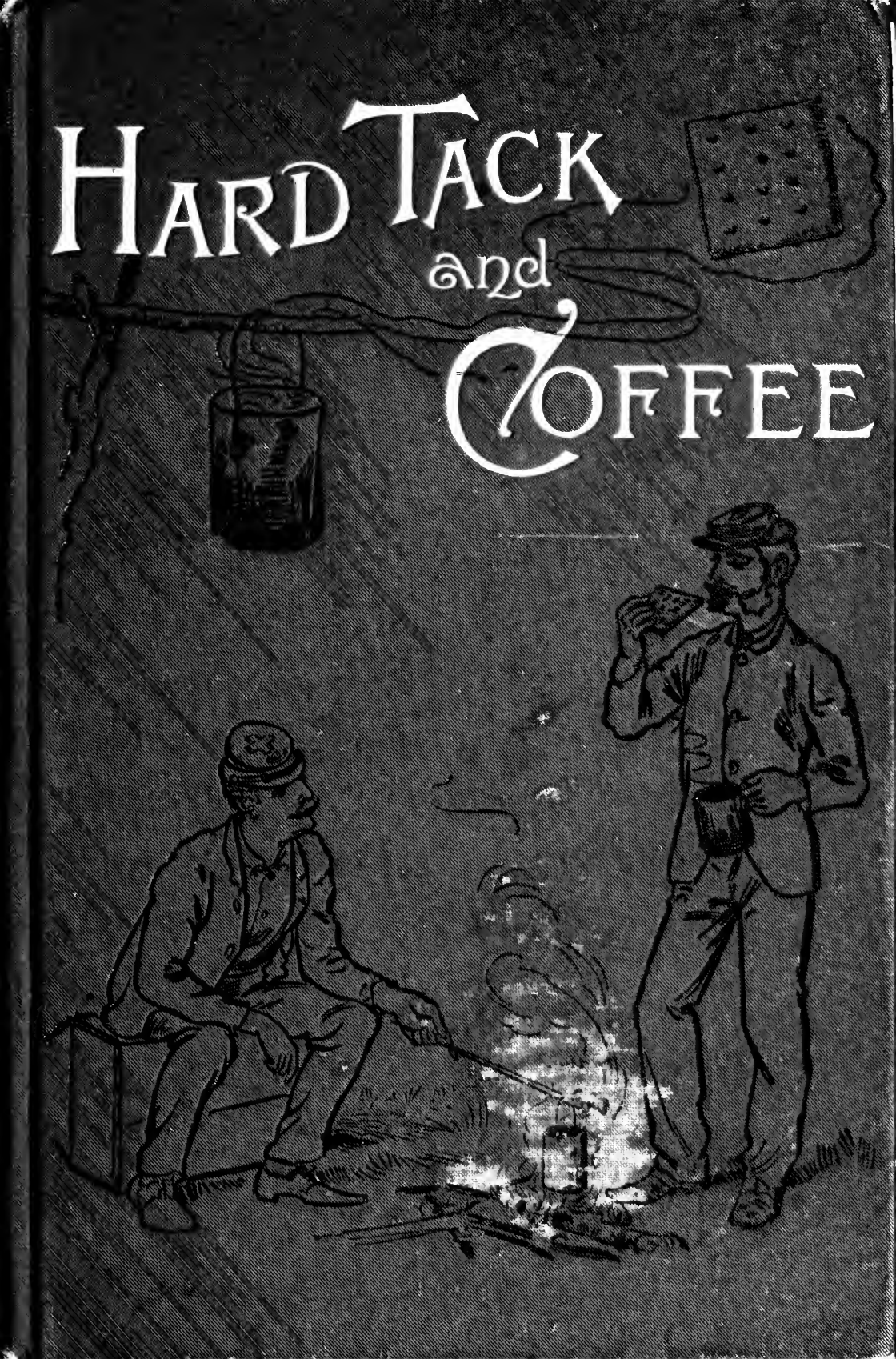
HARD TACK and COFFEE



GENERAL GRANT REPRIMANDED BY A LIEUTENANT.

HARDTACK AND COFFEE

OR

The Unwritten Story of Army Life

INCLUDING CHAPTERS ON

ENLISTING, LIFE IN TENTS AND LOG HUTS, JONAHS AND BEATS, OFFENCES AND PUNISHMENTS, RAW RECRUITS, FORAGING, CORPS AND CORPS BADGES, THE WAGON TRAINS, THE ARMY MULE, THE ENGINEER CORPS, THE SIGNAL CORPS, ETC.

By JOHN D. BILLINGS

AUTHOR OF "THE TENTH MASSACHUSETTS BATTERY"; PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDER MASSACHUSETTS G. A. R.; FORMERLY OF SICKLES' THIRD AND HANCOCK'S SECOND CORPS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

Illustrated

WITH SIX ELEGANT COLOR PLATES; AND OVER TWO HUNDRED ORIGINAL SKETCHES BY

CHARLES W. REED

MEMBER OF NINTH MASSACHUSETTS BATTERY; ALSO, TOPOGRAPHICAL ENGINEER ON GENERAL WARREN'S STAFF, FIFTH CORPS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

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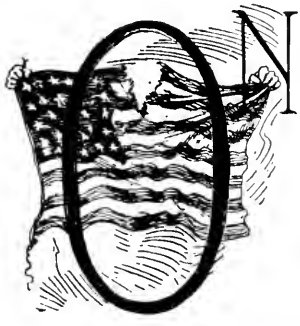
HARD TACK AND COFFEE.

CHAPTER I.

THE TOCSIN OF WAR.

A score of millions hear the cry
And herald it abroad,
To arms they fly to do or die
For liberty and God.
E. P. Dyer.

And yet they keep gathering and marching away!
Has the nation turned soldier—and all in a day?
There's the father and son!
While the miller takes gun
With the dust of the wheat still whitening his hair;
Pray where are they going with this martial air?
F. E. Brooks.



ON the 6th of November, 1860, Abraham Lincoln, the candidate of the Republican party, was elected President of the United States, over three opponents. The autumn of that year witnessed the most exciting political canvass this country had ever seen. The Democratic party, which had been in power for several years in succession, split into factions and nominated two candidates. The northern Democrats nominated Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, who was an advocate of the doctrine of *Squatter Sovereignty*, that is, the right of the people living in a Territory which wanted admission into the Union as a State to

decide for themselves whether they would or would not have slavery.

The southern Democrats nominated John C. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, at that time Vice-President of the United States. The doctrine which he and his party advocated was the right to carry their slaves into every State and Territory in the Union without any hindrance whatever. Then there was still another party, called by some the *Peace Party*, which pointed to the Constitution of the country as its guide, but had nothing to say on the great question of slavery, which was so prominent with the other parties. It took for its standard-bearer John Bell, of Tennessee; and Edward Everett, of Massachusetts, was nominated as Vice-President. This party drew its membership from both of the others, but largely from the Democrats.

A BELL AND EVERETT CAMPAIGNER.

Owing to these divisions the Republican party, which had not been in existence many years, was enabled to elect its candidate. The Republicans did not intend to meddle with slavery where it then was, but opposed its extension into any *new* States and Territories. This latter fact was very well known to the slave-holders, and so they voted almost solidly for John C. Breckenridge. But it was very evident to them, after the Democratic party divided, that the Republicans would succeed, and so, long before the election actually took place, they began to make threats of seceding from the Union if Lincoln was elected. Freedom of speech was not tolerated

in these States, and northern people who were down South for business or pleasure, if they expressed opinions in opposition to the popular political sentiments of that section, were at once warned to leave. Hundreds came North immediately to seek personal safety, often leaving possessions of great value behind them. Even native southerners who

A GROUP OF SOUTHERNERS DISCUSSING THE SITUATION.

believed thoroughly in the Union — and there were hundreds of such — were not allowed to say so. This class of people suffered great indignities during the war, on account of their loyalty to the old flag. Many of them were driven by insult and abuse to take up arms for a cause with which they did not sympathize, deserting it at the

earliest opportunity, while others held out to the bitter end, or sought a refuge from such persecution in the Union lines.

As early as the 25th of October, several southerners who were or had been prominent in politics met in South Carolina, and decided by a unanimous vote that the State should withdraw from the Union in the event of Lincoln's election, which then seemed almost certain. Some other States held similar meetings about the same date. Thus early did the traitor leaders prepare the South for disunion. These men were better known at that time as "Fire-eaters."

As soon as Lincoln's election was announced, without waiting to see what his policy towards the slave States was going to be, the impetuous leaders at the South addressed themselves at once to the carrying out of their threats; and South Carolina, followed, at intervals more or less brief, by Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida, and Texas, seceded from the Union, and organized what was known as the Southern Confederacy. Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee seceded later. The people at the North stood amazed at the rapidity with which treason against the government was spreading, and the loyal Union-loving men began to inquire where President Buchanan was at this time, whose duty it was to see that all such uprisings were crushed out; and "Oh for one hour of Andrew Jackson in the President's chair!" was the common exclamation, because that decided and unyielding soldier-President had so promptly stamped out threatened rebellion in South Carolina, when she had refused to allow the duties to be collected at Charleston. But that outbreak in its proportions was to this one as an infant to a giant, and it is quite doubtful if Old Hickory himself, with his promptness to act in an emergency, could have stayed the angry billows of rebellion which seemed just ready to break over the nation. But at any rate he would have attempted it,

even if he had gone down in the fight, — at least so thought the people.

The very opposite of such a President was James Buchanan, who seemed anxious only for his term of office to expire, making little effort to save the country, nor even willing, at first, that others should do so. With a traitor for his Secretary of War, the South had been well supplied with arms under the very nose of the old man. With a traitor for his Secretary of the Navy, our vessels — not many in number, it is true — had been sent into foreign waters, where they could not be immediately recalled. With a traitor as Secretary of the Treasury, the public treasury had been emptied. Then, too, there began the seizure of arsenals, mints, custom-houses, post-offices, and fortifications within the limits of the seceding States, and still the President did nothing, or worse than nothing, claiming that the South was wrong in its acts, but that he had no right to prevent treason and secession, or, in the phraseology of that day, "no right to coerce a sovereign State." And so at last he left the office a disgraced old man, for whom few had or have a kind word to offer.

Such, briefly, was the condition of affairs when Abraham Lincoln, fearful of his life, which had been threatened, entered Washington under cover of darkness, and quietly assumed the duties of his office. Never before were the people of this country in such a state of excitement. At the North there were a large number who boldly denounced the "Long-heeled Abolitionists" and "Black Republicans" for having stirred up this trouble. I was not a voter at the time of Lincoln's election, but I had taken an active part in the torchlight parades of the "Wide-awakes" and "Rail-splitters," as the political clubs of the Republicans were called, and so came in for a share of the abuse showered upon the followers of the new President. As fresh deeds of violence or new aggressions against the government were reported from the daily papers in the shop where I was

then employed, some one who was not a "Lincolnite" would exclaim, in an angry tone; "I hope you fellows are satisfied now. I don't blame the South an atom. They have been driven to desperation by such lunatics as Garrison and Phillips, and these men ought to be hung for it." . . . "If there is a war, I hope you and every other Black Republican will be made to go and fight for the niggers all you want to." . . . "You like the niggers so well you'll marry one of them yet." . . . And, "I want to see those hot-headed Abolitionists put into the front rank, and shot first." These are mild quotations from the daily conversations, had not only where I was employed, but in every other shop and factory in the North. Such wordy contests were by no means one-sided affairs; for the assailed, while not anxious for war, were not afraid of it, and were amply supplied with arguments with which they answered and enraged their antagonists; and if they did not always silence them, they drove them into making just such ridiculous remarks as the foregoing.

A LINCOLN WIDE AWAKE.

If I were asked who these men were, I should not call them by name. They were my neighbors and my friends, but they are changed men to-day. There is not one of them who, in the light of later experiences, is not heartily ashamed of his attitude at that time. Many of them afterwards went to the field, and, sad to say, are there yet. But this was the period of the most intemperate and abusive language. Those who sympathized with the South were, some months later, called Copperheads. Lincoln and his party were reviled by these men without any restraint except such as personal shame and self-respect

might impose; and these qualities were conspicuously absent. Nothing was too harsh to utter against Republicans. No fate was too evil for their political opponents to wish them.

Of course all of these revilers were not sincere in their ill-wishes, but the effect of their utterances on the community was just as evil; and the situation of the new President, at its best a perplexing and critical one, was thus made all the harder, by leading him to believe that a multitude of the citizens at the North would obstruct instead of supporting him. It also gave the slave-holders the impression that a very considerable number of northern men were ready to aid them in prosecuting their treasonable schemes. But now the rapid march of events wrought a change in the opinions of the people in both sections.

"NAYTHER AV US."

The leading Abolitionists had argued that the South was too cowardly to fight for slavery; and the South had been told by the "Fire-eaters" and its northern friends that the North could not be kicked into fighting; that in case war should arise she would have her hands full to keep her enemies *at home* in check. Alas! how little did either party understand the temper of the other! How much like that story of the two Irishmen. — Meeting one day in the army, one says, "How are you, Mike?" "How are you, Pat?" says the other. "But my name is not Pat," said the first speaker. "Nather is mine Mike," said the

second. "Faix, thin," said the first, "it musht be nayther of us."

Nothing could better illustrate the attitude of the North and South towards each other than this anecdote. Nothing could have been more perfect than this mutual misunderstanding each displayed of the temper of the other, as the stride of events soon showed.

The story of how Major Anderson removed his little band of United States troops from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor, for reasons of greater safety, is a familiar one; likewise how the rebels fired upon a vessel sent by the President with supplies intended for it; and, finally, after a severe bombardment of several days, how they compelled the fort to surrender. It was these events which opened the eyes of the "Northern Doughfaces," as those who sympathized with the South were often called, to the real intent of the Seceders. A change came over the spirit of their dreams. Patriotism, love of the Union, at last came uppermost. They had heard it proposed to divide the old flag, giving a part to each section. They had seen a picture of the emblem thus rent, and it was not a pleasing one. Soon the greater portion of them ceased their sneers and ill-wishes, and joined in the general demand that something be done at once to assert the majesty and power of the national government. Even President Lincoln, who, in his inaugural address, had counselled his "countrymen, one and all, to take time and think calmly and well upon this whole subject," had come to feel that further forbearance was no virtue, and that a decent respect for this great nation and for his office as President demanded that something should be done speedily. So on the 15th of April he issued a proclamation calling out 75,000 militia, for three months, to suppress the Rebellion, and to cause the laws to be executed.

Having been a Massachusetts soldier, it is but natural that I should refer occasionally to her part in the opening

of this momentous crisis in the country's history, as being more familiar to me than the record of any other State. Yet, proud as I am of her conspicuous services in the early war period, I have no desire to extol them at the expense of Pennsylvania, New York, and Rhode Island, who so promptly pressed forward and touched elbows with her in this emergency; nor of those other great Western States, whose sturdy patriots so promptly crossed Mason's and Dixon's line in such serried ranks at the summons of Father Abraham.

THE MINUTE MAN OF '61.

It has often been asked how Massachusetts, so much farther from the National Capital than any of the other States, should have been so prompt in coming to its assistance. Let me give some idea of how it happened. In December, 1860, Adjutant-General Schouler of that State, in his annual report, suggested to Governor (afterwards General) N. P. Banks, that as events were then occurring which might require that the militia of Massachusetts should be increased in number, it would be well for commanders of companies to forward to head-quarters a complete roll of each company, with their names and residence, and that companies not full should be recruited to the limit fixed by law, which was then one hundred and one for infantry. Shortly afterwards John A. Andrew, now known in history as the *Great War Governor* of Massachusetts, assumed the duties of his office. He was not only a leading Republican before the war, but an Abolitionist as well. He seemed to clearly foresee that the time for threats and arguments had gone

by, and that the time for action was at hand. So on the 16th of January he issued an order (No. 4) which had for its object to ascertain exactly how many of the officers and men in the militia would hold themselves ready to respond immediately to any call which might be made upon their services by the President. All who were not ready to do so were discharged at once, and their places filled by others. Thus it was that Massachusetts for the second time in her history prepared her "Minute Men" to take the field at a minute's notice.

This general order of the Governor's, although a very wise one as it proved, carried dismay into the ranks of the militia, for there were in Massachusetts, as in other States, very many men who had made valiant and well disciplined *peace* soldiers, who, now that one of the real needs of a well organized militia was upon us, were not at all thirsty for further military glory. But pride stood in the way of their frankness. They were ashamed in this hour of their country's peril to withdraw from the militia, for they feared to face public opinion. Yet there were men who had good and sufficient reasons for declining to pledge themselves for instant military service, at least until there was a more general demand for troops. They were loyal and worthy citizens, and could not in a moment cast aside or turn their back on their business or domestic responsibilities, and in a season of calmer reflection it would not have been expected of them. But the public pulse was then at fever-heat, and reason was having a vacation.

General Order No. 4 was, I believe, the first important step taken by the State in preparing for the crisis. The next was the passage of a bill by the Legislature, which was approved by the Governor April 3, appropriating $25,000 for "overcoats, blankets, knapsacks, 200,000 ball cartridges, etc., for two thousand troops." These supplies were soon ready. The militiamen then owned their uniforms, and, as no particular kind was prescribed, no two companies of the

same regiment were of necessity uniformed alike. It is only a few years since uniformity of dress has been required of the militia in Massachusetts.

But to return to that memorable 15th of April. War, that much talked-of, much dreaded calamity was at last upon us. Could it really be so? We would not believe it; and yet daily happenings forced the unwelcome conclusion upon us. It seemed so strange. We had nothing in our experience to compare it with. True, some of us had dim remembrances of a Mexican war in our early childhood, but as Massachusetts sent only one regiment to that war, and that saw no fighting, and, besides, did not receive the sympathy and support of the people in the State generally, we only remembered that there was a Scott, and a Taylor, and a Santa Aña, from the colored prints we had seen displayed of these worthies; so that we could only run back in memory to the stories and traditions of the wars of the Revolution and 1812, in which our ancestry had served, for anything like a vivid picture of what was about to occur, and this, of course, was utterly inadequate to do the subject justice.

I have already stated that General Order No. 4 carried dismay into many hearts, causing the more timid to withdraw from military service at once. A great many more would have withdrawn at the same time had they not been restrained by pride and the lingering hope that there would be no war after all; but this very day (the 15th) came Special Order No. 14, from Governor Andrew, ordering the Third, Fourth, Sixth, and Eighth Regiments to assemble on Boston Common forthwith. This was the final test of the militiamen's actual courage and thirst for glory, and a severe one it proved to many of them, for at this eleventh hour there was another falling-out along the line. But the moment a man's declination for further service was made known, unless his reasons were of the very best, straightway he was hooted at for his cowardice, and for a time his

existence was made quite unpleasant in his own immediate neighborhood. If he had been a commissioned officer, his face was likely to appear in an illustrated paper, accompanied by the statement that he had "shown the white feather," — another term for cowardice. A reference to any file of illustrated papers of those days will show a large number of such persons. Such gratuitous advertising by a generally loyal, though not always discreet press did some men gross injustice; for, as already intimated, many of the men thus publicly sketched and denounced were among the most worthy and loyal of citizens. A little later than the period of which I am treating, Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote the following poem, hitting off a certain limited class in the community: —

THE SWEET LITTLE MAN.

Dedicated to the Stay-at-Home Rangers.

Now while our soldiers are fighting our battles,
Each at his post to do all that he can,
Down among Rebels and contraband chattels,
What are you doing, my sweet little man?

All the brave boys under canvas are sleeping;
All of them pressing to march with the van,
Far from the home where their sweethearts are weeping;
What are you waiting for, sweet little man?

You with the terrible warlike moustaches,
Fit for a colonel or chief of a clan,
You with the waist made for sword-belts and sashes,
Where are your shoulder-straps, sweet little man?

Bring him the buttonless garment of woman!
Cover his face lest it freckle and tan;
Muster the Apron-string Guards on the Common, —
That is the corps for the sweet little man!

Give him for escort a file of young misses,
Each of them armed with a deadly rattan;
They shall defend him from laughter and hisses,
Aimed by low boys at the sweet little man.

All the fair maidens about him shall cluster,
Pluck the white feather from bonnet and fan,
Make him a plume like a turkey-wing duster,—
That is the crest for the sweet little man.

Oh, but the Apron-string Guards are the fellows!
Drilling each day since our trouble began,—
"Handle your walking-sticks!" "Shoulder umbrellas!"
That is the style for the sweet little man.

SWEET LITTLE MEN OF '61.

Have we a nation to save? In the first place
Saving ourselves is the sensible plan.
Surely, the spot where there's shooting's the worst place
Where I can stand, says the sweet little man.

Catch me confiding my person with strangers,
Think how the cowardly Bull-Runners ran!
In the brigade of the Stay-at-home Rangers
Marches my corps, says the sweet little man.

Such was the stuff of the Malakoff takers,
Such were the soldiers that scaled the Redan;
Truculent housemaids and bloodthirsty Quakers
Brave not the wrath of the sweet little man!

Yield him the sidewalk, ye nursery maidens!
Saure qui peut! Bridget, and Right about! Ann;—
Fierce as a shark in a school of menhadens,
See him advancing, the sweet little man!

When the red flails of the battlefield's threshers
Beat out the continent's wheat from its bran,
While the wind scatters the chaffy seceshers,
What will become of our sweet little man?

When the brown soldiers come back from the borders,
How will he look while his features they scan?
How will he feel when he gets marching orders,
Signed by his lady love? sweet little man.

Fear not for him though the Rebels expect him,—
Life is too precious to shorten its span;
Woman her broomstick shall raise to protect him,
Will she not fight for the sweet little man!

Now, then, nine cheers for the Stay-at-home Ranger!
Blow the great fish-horn and beat the big pan!
First in the field, that is farthest from danger,
Take your white feather plume, sweet little man!

The 16th of April was a memorable day in the history of the Old Bay State,—a day made more uncomfortable by the rain and sleet which were falling with disagreeable constancy. Well do I remember the day. Possessing an average amount of the fire and enthusiasm of youth, I had asked my father's consent to go out with Company A of the old Fourth Regiment, which belonged to my native town. But he would not give ear to any such "nonsense," and, having been brought up to obey his orders, although of military age (18), I did not enter the service in the first rally. This company did not go with full ranks. There were few that did. Several of my shopmates were in its membership. As

those of us who remained gathered at the windows that stormy forenoon to see the company go by, the sight filled us with the most gloomy forebodings.

So the troops went forth from the towns in the shore counties of Massachusetts. Most of the companies in the regiments that were called reported for duty at Boston this

ADJUTANT HINKS NOTIFYING CAPTAIN KNOTT V. MARTIN.

very 16th — two companies from Marblehead being the first to arrive. One of these companies was commanded by Captain Knott V. Martin, who was engaged in slaughtering hogs when Adjutant (now Major-General) E. W. Hinks rode up and instructed him to report on Boston Common in the morning. Drawing the knife from the throat of a hog, the Captain uttered an exclamation which has passed into history, threw the knife with a light toss to the floor, went im-

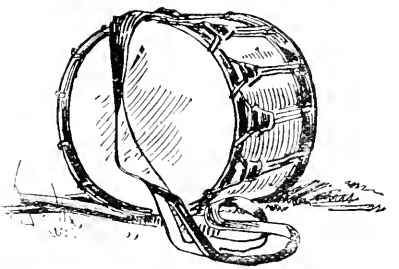
mediately and notified his Orderly Sergeant, and then returned to his butchering. In the morning he and his company were ready for business.

But their relatives who remained at home could not look calmly on the departure of these dear ones, who were going no one knew just where, and would return — perhaps never; so there were many touching scenes witnessed at the various railway stations, as the men boarded the trains for Boston. When these Marblehead companies arrived at that city the enthusiasm was something unprecedented, and as a new detachment appeared in the streets it was cheered to the echo all along its line of march. The early months of the war were stirring ones for Boston; for not only did the most of the Massachusetts regiments march through her streets *en route* for the seat of war, but also the troops from Maine and New Hampshire as well, so that a regiment halted for rest on the Common, or marching to the strain of martial music to some railway station, was at times a daily occurrence.

It has always seemed to me that the "Three months men" have never received half the credit which the worth of their services to the country deserved. The fact of their having been called out for so short a time as compared with the troops that came after them, and of their having seen little or no fighting, places them at a disadvantage. But to have so suddenly left all, and gone to the defence of the Capital City, with no knowledge of what was in store for them, and impelled by no other than the most patriotic of motives, seems to me fully as praiseworthy as to have gone later under the pressure of urgent need, when the full stress of war was upon us, and when its realities were better known, and the inducements to enlist greater in some other respects. There is no doubt whatever but what the prompt appearance of these short-term men not only saved the Capital, but that it served also to show the Rebels that the North at short call could send a large and comparatively

CAPTAIN KNOTT V. MARTIN'S COMPANY ON ITS WAY TO FANEUIL HALL.

well equipped force into the field, and was ready to back its words by deeds. Furthermore, these soldiers gave the government time to catch its breath, as it were, and, looking the issue squarely in the face, to decide upon some settled plan of action.



CHAPTER II.

ENLISTING.

O, did you see him in the street dressed up in army blue,
When drums and trumpets into town their storm of music threw —
A louder tune than all the winds could muster in the air,
The Rebel winds that tried so hard our flag in strips to tear?

LUCY LARCOM.

HARDLY had the "Three months men" reached the field before it was discovered that a mistake had been made in not calling out a larger number of troops, and for longer service; — it took a long time to realize what a gigantic rebellion we had on our hands. So on the 3d of May President Lincoln issued a call for United States volunteers to serve three years, unless sooner discharged. At once thousands of loyal men sprang to arms — so large a number, in fact, that many regiments raised were refused until later.

The methods by which these regiments were raised were various. In 1861 a common way was for some one who had been in the regular army, or perhaps who had been prominent in the militia, to take the initiative and circulate an enlistment paper for signatures. His chances were pretty good for obtaining a commission as its captain, for his active interest, and men who had been prominent in assisting him, if they were popular, would secure the lieutenancies. On the return of the "Three months" troops many of the companies immediately re-enlisted in a body for three years, sometimes under their old officers. A large

number of these short-term veterans, through influence at the various State capitals, secured commissions in new regiments that were organizing. In country towns too small to furnish a company, the men would post off to a neighboring town or city, and there enlist.

In 1862, men who had seen a year's active service were selected to receive a part of the commissions issued to new organizations, and should in justice have received *all* within the bestowal of governors. But the recruiting of troops soon resolved itself into individual enlistments or this programme; — twenty, thirty, fifty or more men would go in a body to some recruiting station, and signify their readiness to enlist in a certain regiment *provided* a certain specified member of their number should be commissioned captain. Sometimes they would compromise, if the outlook was not promising, and take a lieutenancy, but equally often it was necessary to accept their terms, or count them out. In the rivalry for men to fill up regiments, the result often was officers who were diamonds in the rough, but liberally intermingled with *veritable clod-hoppers* whom a brief experience in active service soon sent to the rear.

This year the War Department was working on a more systematic basis, and when a call was made for additional troops each State was immediately assigned its quota, and with marked promptness each city and town was informed by the State authorities how many men it was to furnish under that call. The war fever was not at such a fervid heat in '62 as in the year before, and so recruiting offices were multiplied in cities and large towns. These offices were of two kinds, *viz.:* those which were opened to secure recruits for regiments and batteries already in the field, and those which solicited enlistments in *new* organizations. Unquestionably, at this time the latter were more popular.

The former office was presided over by a line officer directly from the front, attended by one or two subordinates, all of whom had smelled powder. The latter office might

be in charge of an experienced soldier recently commissioned, or of a man ambitious for such preferment.

The flaming advertisements with which the newspapers of the day teemed, and the posters pasted on the bill-boards or the country fence, were the decoys which brought patronage to these fishers of men. Here is a sample: —

More Massachusetts Volunteers Accepted ! ! !

Three Regiments to be Immediately Recruited !

GEN. WILSON'S REGIMENT,

To which CAPT. FOLLETT'S BATTERY is attached;

COL. JONES' GALLANT SIXTH REGIMENT,

WHICH WENT "THROUGH BALTIMORE";

THE N. E. GUARDS REGIMENT, commanded by that excellent officer, MAJOR J. T. STEVENSON.

The undersigned has this day been authorized and directed to fill up the ranks of these regiments forthwith. A grand opportunity is afforded for patriotic persons to enlist in the service of their country under the command of as able officers as the country has yet furnished. Pay and rations will begin immediately on enlistment.

UNIFORMS ALSO PROVIDED!

Citizens of Massachusetts should feel pride in attaching themselves to regiments from their own State, in order to maintain the proud supremacy which the Old Bay State now enjoys in the contest for the Union and the Constitution. The people of many of the towns and cities of the Commonwealth have made ample provision for those joining the ranks of the army. If any person enlists in a Company or Regiment out of the Commonwealth, he cannot share in the bounty which has been thus liberally voted. Wherever any town or city has assumed the privilege of supporting the families of Volunteers, the Commonwealth reimburses such place to the amount of $12 per month for families of three persons.

Patriots desiring to serve the country will bear in mind that

THE GENERAL RECRUITING STATION

IS AT

No. 14 PITTS STREET, BOSTON !

WILLIAM W. BULLOCK,
General Recruiting Officer, Massachusetts Volunteers.

[*Boston Journal* of Sept. 12, 1861.]

Here is a call to a war meeting held out-of-doors: —

TO ARMS! TO ARMS!!

GREAT WAR MEETING
IN ROXBURY.

Another meeting of the citizens of Roxbury, to re-enforce their brothers in the field, will be held in

ELIOT SQUARE, ROXBURY;

THIS EVENING AT EIGHT O'CLOCK.

SPEECHES FROM

Paul Willard, Rev. J. O. Means, Judge Russell,

And other eloquent advocates.

The Brigade Band will be on hand early. **Come one, come all!**

God and your Country Call!!

Per Order.

[*Boston Journal* of July 30, 1862.]

Here are two which look quite business-like: —

GENERAL POPE'S ARMY.

"Lynch Law for Guerillas and No Rebel Property Guarded!"

IS THE MOTTO OF THE

SECOND MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT.

$578.50 for 21 months' service.
$252.00 State aid for families of four.
$830.50 and short service.
$125.00 cash in hand.

This Regiment, although second in number, is second to none in regard to discipline and efficiency, and is in the healthiest and most delightful country.

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$100 BOUNTY!

CADET REGIMENT,

Company D,

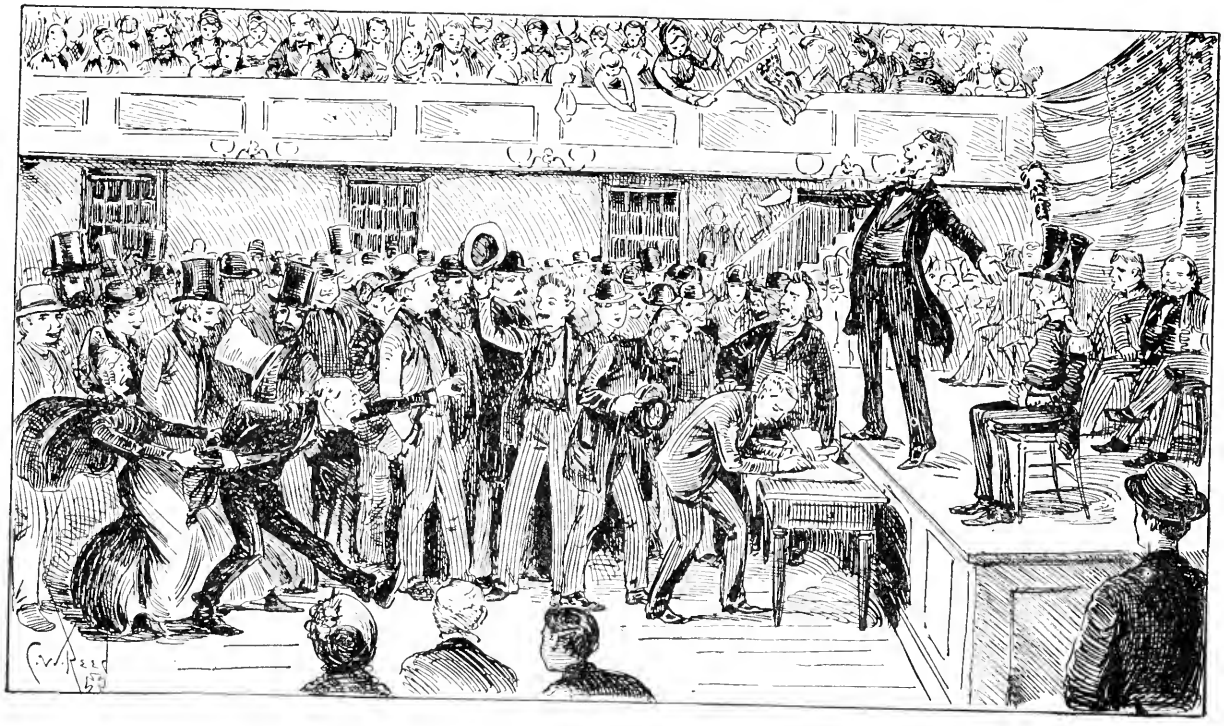
NINE MONTHS' SERVICE.

O. W. PEABODY . . . . Recruiting Officer.

Headquarters, 113 Washington Street, Boston.

[*Boston Journal*, Sept. 17, 1862.]

War meetings similar to the one called in Roxbury were designed to stir lagging enthusiasm. Musicians and orators blew themselves red in the face with their windy efforts. Choirs improvised for the occasion, sang "Red, White, and Blue" and "Rallied 'Round the Flag" till too hoarse for further endeavor. The old veteran soldier of 1812 was trotted out, and worked for all he was worth, and an occasional Mexican War veteran would air his nonchalance at grim-visaged war. At proper intervals the enlistment roll would be presented for signatures. There was generally one old fellow present who upon slight provocation would yell like a hyena, and declare his readiness to shoulder his musket and go, if he wasn't so old, while his staid and half-fearful consort would pull violently at his coat-tails to repress his unseasonable effervescence ere it assumed more dangerous proportions. Then there was a patriotic maiden lady who kept a flag or a handkerchief waving with only the rarest and briefest of intervals, who "would go in a minute if she was a man." Besides these there was usually a man who would make one of fifty (or some other safe number) to enlist, when he well understood that such a number could not be obtained. And there was one more often found present who when challenged to sign would agree to, *provided* that A or B (men of wealth) would put down *their* names. I saw a man at a war meeting promise, with a bombastic flourishment, to enlist if a certain number (which



A WAR MEETING.

I do not now remember) of the citizens would do the same. The number was obtained; but the small-sized patriot, who was willing to sacrifice his *wife's* relations on the altar of his country, crawled away amid the sneers of his townsmen.

Sometimes the patriotism of such a gathering would be wrought up so intensely by waving banners, martial and vocal music, and burning eloquence, that a town's quota would be filled in less than an hour. It needed only the first man to step forward, put down his name, be patted on the back, placed upon the platform, and cheered to the echo as the hero of the hour, when a second, a third, a fourth would follow, and at last a perfect stampede set in to sign the enlistment roll, and a frenzy of enthusiasm would take possession of the meeting. The complete intoxication of such excitement, like intoxication from liquor, left some of its victims on the following day, especially if the fathers of families, with the sober second thought to wrestle with; but Pride, that tyrannical master, rarely let them turn back.

The next step was a medical examination to determine physical fitness for service. Each town had its physician for this work. The candidate for admission into the army must first divest himself of all clothing, and his soundness or unsoundness was then decided by causing him to jump, bend over, kick, receive sundry thumps in the chest and back, and such other laying-on of hands as was thought necessary. The teeth had also to be examined, and the eyesight tested, after which, if the candidate passed, he received a certificate to that effect.

His next move was toward a recruiting station. There he would enter, signify his errand, sign the roll of the company or regiment into which he was going, leave his description, including height, complexion, and occupation, and then accompany a guard to the examining surgeon, where he was again subjected to a critical examination as to soundness.

Those men who, on deciding to "go to war," went directly to a recruiting office and enlisted, had but this simple examination to pass, the other being then unnecessary. It is interesting to note that in 1861 and '62 men were mainly examined to establish their *fitness* for service; in 1863 and '64 the tide had changed, and they were then only anxious to prove their *un*fitness.

After the citizen in question had become a soldier, he was usually sent at once to camp or the seat of war, but if he wanted a short furlough it was generally granted. If he had enlisted in a new regiment, he might remain weeks before being ordered to the front; if in an old regiment, he might find himself in a fight at short notice. Hundreds of the men who enlisted under the call issued by President Lincoln July 2, 1862, were killed or wounded before they had been in the field a week.

Any man or woman who lived in those thrilling early war days will never forget them. The spirit of patriotism was at fever-heat, and animated both sexes of all ages. Such a display of the national colors had never been seen before. Flag-raisings were the order of the day in public and private grounds. The trinity of red, white, and blue colors was to be seen in all directions. Shopkeepers decked their windows and counters with them. Men wore them in neckties, or in a rosette pinned on the breast, or tied in the button-hole. The women wore them conspicuously also. The bands played only patriotic airs, and "Yankee Doodle," "Red, White, and Blue," and the "Star-Spangled Banner" would have been worn threadbare if possible. Then other patriotic songs and marches were composed, many of which had only a short-lived existence; and the poetry of this period, some of it excellent, would fill a large volume.