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PERSONAL REMINISCENCES, by Richard M. Hubbell

Written in Fort Collins, Colo., 1910

Age and infirmity having closed the physical activity of the writer, for the information of our children and those that follow after, should any of them desire to know from whence their paternal ancestor came and the main points of his life, I undertake to write these personal experiences.

Born in 1840, perhaps no period in <sup>the</sup> history of the World has covered so many remarkable events as the past three scores and ten years.

My Father was born in Connecticut, his ancestors all seafaring men. My Mother sprang from the hardy pioneer stock that peopled Kentucky, so the amalgamation gave our generation inheritance of strong physical nature. <sup>v</sup> Of the eight children, four are still living, I being the youngest.

My birth-place was near Old Franklin in Howard County, Missouri, and from childhood I was reared in Clay County, opposite Kansas City. From a farm eight miles East, when I was about ten years of age, my parents moved to Liberty, the County seat, my older brothers having engaged in mercantile business in that place. From these early associations with them, perhaps my career in after life was influenced.

My schooling was somewhat meager, but before the age of sixteen I entered the printing office of "The Liberty Tribune" for a three years' apprenticeship. Printer boys (or ~~2~~ "devils" as they were generally termed) in those days learned about all there was going on in the World and consequently when I grew to manhood I had imbibed a pretty thorough knowledge of matters of all kinds appertaining to the practical side of life.

At the age of nineteen I acquired a half interest in "The Richmond Conservator", a weekly newspaper published in the county seat of Ray County, adjoining Clay on the East. The other half of the paper was owned by a company of six business and professional men who had somehow got "hooked up" financially with the former manager in order to maintain him in the conduct of whig politics. I, being a ~~Democrat~~ democrat, the paper politically was neutral, but great events soon to follow changed all ~~the~~ previous conditions and the whig party went down forever in the struggle between the North and South.

Situated on the borders of Kansas the troubles known as the "Kansas War" created a wonderful excitement in our community. The opening of the territory by the general government for settlement precipitated a clash between the pro and anti slavery parties which finally culminated in the great Civil War <sup>of</sup> 1861-65.

The struggle between the <sup>S</sup>outherners and Northerners to make Kansas a slave or free state engendered animosity which spread over the whole Union, and whilst we never dreamed of the dreadful results that followed, we, in Missouri, were terribly excited and wrought up. I remember on hearing that a boat loaded with arms for the abolitionists <sup>were</sup> ~~were~~ to pass Liberty Landing one night; a strong party was hurriedly organized to march ~~down~~ down the river and intercept it. I was one of the "gang" and the tramp and all-night vigil covered my personal participation in the "Kansas War." Many of my friends were in it from start to finish and <sup>I</sup> guess if I had been a little older I should have gone with them. An Uncle, for whom I was named (my Mother's youngest brother) and one of the most prominent citizens of the County lost his life there.

MORE

Political excitement in a measure died down until the presidential campaign of 1860 when Lincoln, Douglass, ~~and~~ Breckenridge and Bell led their respective parties. After Lincoln's election the feeling of unrest and uneasiness became intense in the South. The older and more thoughtful were filled with apprehension and gloom, but the younger and thoughtless were filled with zeal and enthusiasm encouraged by the belligerent tone of the Southern press and speakers. Companies of volunteer troops were being formed all over the country and I enlisted early in '61 in Captain Reeves' company of cavalry to be drilled and ready for service to the State when called for. We met and practiced the ~~the~~ cavalry maneuvers, first at one place and then another, for the convenience of members who were residents of different parts of the county. Time has not dimmed the remembrance of those meets. We practiced quite often and became proficient in forming lines, marching and all the practical evolutions, and had hilarious good times generally.

In the meantime the break between the North and South was rapidly widening. The Southern states were seceding and being confederated. Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers and the rapid response by the Northern states started the ~~war~~ ball. What fools we all were not to have foreseen the stupendous dimensions of the fracas we were stirring up, but we never stopped to consider. It caught me about the right time. I had sold out my half of the printing business and entered a law office intending to study law, but the stirring events crowding upon us and the excitement made old Blackstone mighty dull reading, so I jumped into the saddle at first call to arms.

#### THE WAR

The rapidly gathering war clouds burst when couriers brought orders for the company to assemble in Richmond without delay, mounted and armed for business.

Reports were rife that Federal troops in Kansas City were preparing to ~~be~~ march on Lexington, where a small body of Confederates (I call them that, though it anticipates the term later affixed to the Southern Army) were gathered.

We left Richmond one morning in June, bidding farewell to our homes, <sup>s</sup>weethearts and friends and marched to Lexington on the South bank of the Missouri ~~river~~ river. It took us ~~us~~ quite a while to get ferried across the river so we had to follow up the main body who were camped on the Kansas City road some distance above Lexington. Stopping to camp on our first night out we associated ourselves into messes, drew our tents, tin plates, cups, spoons, knives, forks, etc., from the quartermaster and began preparations for housekeeping. But it was not to be that night. We had issued to us ~~us~~ coffee, bread, meat, etc., and by awkward ~~our~~ hands got our coffee browned and ground <sup>and</sup> in the pot, when a drizzling rain commenced falling and by the time we finished supper rain was pouring down in good shape. A large country school-house or church was near, where we all gathered thinking how luck was on our side giving us such comfortable shelter. But our "thinks" were wrong, for about bed-time a courier arrived requesting us to hasten to the front as the Federals were advancing on Independence. We quickly saddled up and rode until near daylight, when we halted on a large plantation and the owner had breakfast prepared for us. While our horses were being fed and breakfast prepared I got a short nap while lying on a broad beam in a barn. My! How sleepy I was, and I began to think perhaps soldiering wasn't all fun after all, and the next two nights made me pretty certain of it. The morning dawned bright and clear and after a good hearty breakfast we moved ahead to where the troops were gathering, pitched our tents, dried our blankets and sent our horses to pasture. It was a beautiful Sunday morning. Squads of Volunteers were arriving from adjacent counties, the air was filled with all kinds of

rumors and excitement intense. At 3 P.M., President Thompson of William Jewell College at Liberty, whom I always regarded as the finest orator I ever listened to, was announced to speak in the camp. We were just beginning to assemble when we noticed some unusual excitement in the neighborhood of headquarters. Men were running and scattering in all directions. We hurried to our company quarters and learned we were to prepare for a fight at once. Our horses had been sent for, men hurriedly packing their belongings, cleaning and loading their guns, and confusion everywhere. A companion had a pair of flintlock horse pistols, one of which he offered to me. It was already loaded but I wanted to be dead sure she would go off, so I took the pistol, aimed at a tree ten feet away and pulled the trigger. A noise like a cannon followed and old flintlock nearly kicked my arm off. I cleaned her up, reloaded and primed the pan. That pistol had seen service in the Mexican War, and I felt I had something to rely upon. It had belonged to Captain Hendly, who was killed in battle and his weapons were restored to his family who lived in Richmond. My gun was a fine silver mounted Mississippi rifle that had been presented to an Uncle, Major Ezra Price of Natchez, Mississippi, for bravery in Mexico. I put powder in one vest pocket, bullets in another, patching in one watch pocket and caps in another and with the big pistol stuck inside the waistband on my pants (had no belt), is the way I rode into line on that first forming for battle. It so happened that my place was toward the front of our company and ours was the first company to start out to meet the foe. We reached Independence without adventure, filed into pasture and rested awhile. Nothing doing, we marched back to camp but instead of our company taking the lead the order was reversed and we were in the rear.

MORE

When near camp they ordered me out with three men to picket a bridge for the night, so I didn't get sleep my second night out. Next day about nine o'clock the pickets were relieved and we returned to camp. I was almost dead for sleep but thought I'd just as well see everything that was going on and wait till night before lying down. Gen'l Rains turned up about noon and held a council of war with the officers, at which a disagreement arose. One or two companies threw down their arms and ~~we~~ disbanded, the ~~rest~~ rest of us were ordered to march back to Lexington, and horror of horrors for me, Dr. Reeves' company was detailed as a body-guard for Gen'l Rains.

We left after supper and made a night's march, and when we arrived in Lexington I was nearer dead than alive. Had an awful cold and neuralgia in the head, with high fever. My brother took me to the house of a friend about two miles out in the country. When I recovered enough to travel, the army had gone South and the Federals were in Lexington. I mounted, with my accoutrements, made a detour, crossed the river at a ferry above Lexington and returned home. That was the first chapter of my army experience, but rough though it was it didn't check my fool ardor.

Events were crowding thick and fast all over the country. Skirmishes and battle rumors filled the air. Our troops had met and defeated the enemy at Carthage, Missouri, and the exaggerated reports set me afire, so with a party of four friends I again bid goodbye to the loved folks at home and traveled South to Price's army, then assembling at Cowskin Prairie in the Southwest corner of the state. On our way we passed the battlefield of Carthage and could easily distinguish the formation of the lines of the opposing forces. The country was open and the tall grass being washed down had not time to recover from the tramp of martial feet. We visited the wounded, who were left in the town and it made my heart sick to see their ghastly wounds. Young Dave Atchison lay on a bed in one of the houses bathing an awful looking wound in the shoulder, caused by a large ~~mine~~ mine ball.

The sight made me feel mighty weak legged, but he seemed to ~~be~~ be bright and cheerful.

The boys were glad to see us on arrival and plied us with all kinds of questions of home. The army was being organized and drilled and began to assume the character that made the old Missouri Brigade famous later on in Southern ranks.

#### MY FIRST FIGHT

After a few weeks of hard drilling, we broke camp~~s~~ and marched towards Springfield, reinforced by several well disciplined Confederate regiments from Arkansas and Louisiana under General Ben McCullough. We halted at Wilson's creek or Oak Hill, on the ground of the famous battle soon to take place. Our company was organized into Company A, Reeves Regiment of Cavalry. We had parted with our horses, expecting to encounter the enemy at once, and had only received them a few days before the fight. We were ordered to prepare ourselves for business, and on the eve of the 9th of August ~~we~~ marched out of camp on the Springfield road. Clouds had gathered overhead and we were halted just as the army got fairly under way. We passed the night waiting beside our horses until nearly dawn, when we returned to camp. We understood the threatening storm influenced Gen. McCullough to abandon the advance.

I've often wondered what would have happened if our advance had not been countermanded. Our lines of approach were on different roads from those of the Federal army used in approaching our camp, so, ~~xxxxx~~ if we had continued the morning of the 10th would have seen both armies surprising empty camps. The two belligerents would have actually swapped positions; Lyons in our camp at Wilson Creek and McCullough and Price in Springfield. This would surely have been a desperate mix-up, and certainly would have happened had our army not been halted, for the roads Lyons came in on and surprised our camp so completely had been divested of pickets and videts and so far removed from our proposed route, that the cautious advance of both armies would not have

been detected till too late. On returning to camp I was sent out about daylight with a squad to procure feed for the horses, whilst a part of the company applied themselves to re-adjusting our torn up quarters. Having loaded up our horses with all the fodder and corn we could carry and nearly got back to the place where my mess was located, we observed the most excited bunch of soldiers I had ever seen. Men were running here and there gathering their arms, camp equipage, saddling horses and hurrying into line as fast as possible. I knew something real was going to happen at last. I had a ~~couple~~ couple of bushels of corn tied up in a blanket in front of me on my horse, which I quickly dumped, unlimbered my carbine and rushed into line. Every fifth man led four horses, and they scampered away to the rear, the regiment forming a line as infantry. Colonel Reeves' regiment camped on the outskirts of General Price's division; directly in line of Lyons assault on the Confederates at "Bloody Point" where both sides lost their heaviest. We started to advance with alacrity. Artillery had opened upon us at short range. The trees were so ~~thick~~ thick that we could not see their support but we knew a heavy force was coming, so we were ordered to fall back. As far as I was concerned the order did not ~~have~~ have to be repeated. To say I was scared ~~is~~ is using mild expression. The first fall or shell sped over our heads cutting off branches of trees, the next hit the ground just to my left and the next killed Lieutenant Colonel Austin nearby. I was in a panic but managed to keep my legs from running away with me until the order for retreat came. I made record time in overtaking my horse and in company with two or three hundred of the regiment joined Major Comer with whom we remained to the end. The most amazing thing to me in the whole affair was the total unconsciousness of the flight of time. The rumpus began as stated early in the morning and when the last gun was fired and the Federals made their final get-away it was between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. I could not believe it possible that more than an hour or two had elapsed. My first anxiety was in

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