PERSONAL NARRATIVES

OF EVENTS IN THE

WAR OF THE REBELLION,

BEING PAPERS READ BEFORE THE

RHODE ISLAND SOLDIERS AND SAILORS HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

FIFTH SERIES—No. 3.

PROVIDENCE:
PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.
1894.

The Providence Press:
SNOW & FARNHAM, PRINTERS,
15 Custom House Street.
1894.

FROM

ANDERSONVILLE

TO

FREEDOM.

BY

CHARLES M. SMITH.

[Late of Company E, First Massachusetts Cavalry.]

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[Edition limited to two hundred and fifty copies.]

FROM ANDERSONVILLE TO FREEDOM.

We have a great many war lectures, magazine articles and histories of the war, but this evening I wish to tell you the simple story of my personal experience—of no great historical value, perhaps, and yet I may bring to your attention one feature of the war a little out of the ordinary, and which may not be altogether uninteresting.

It is but natural that the vastness of operations on land and sea, during the war of 1861 to 1865 should overshadow all minor events; and when we think of the war, our thought is likely to be of the two million two hundred thousand enlistments in the Northern Army alone; of the four hundred thousand deaths in the same army on battle-field and by disease; of the three millions of dollars used daily for war expenses, of Shiloh, of Vicksburg, of Gettysburg, the Wilderness, or Cold Harbor. But, during

the last years of the war, while thousands were fighting and falling on the field of battle, other thousands were spending lingering weeks and months under circumstances more trying and fatal than those of the battlefield. And those men who waited and starved, and wasted away in foul and loathsome prison pens while the war was brought to a close, did valiant service for the country, and displayed fortitude, courage and heroism which should never be forgotten.

On the 17th of September, 1861, at the age of nineteen, I enlisted in Company E, First Massachusetts Cavalry, and served three years and three months. Leaving the State in 1861, we spent the time until August, 1862, on the "Sunny Isles of the Sea" in the vicinity of Port Royal harbor, South Carolina. The regiment then joined the Army of the Potomac, in the battles of which we engaged, and whose fortunes and fate we shared, being identified with its history from the first Maryland campaign until the close of the war.

Late in November, 1863, General Meade, with the Army of the Potomac, crossed the Rapidan River and

advanced as far as Mine Run. Finding the enemy strongly fortified, our army withdrew, and no great battle was fought. At this time, Nov. 29, 1863, a part of our regiment was doing picket duty along the Orange plank road, near Parker's store. (This is south of the Rapidan River, near the scene of the battle of the Wilderness fought by Grant and Lee early in May, 1864, in Spottsylvania County, Va.) We were surprised by Wade Hampton's division of Gen. J. E. B. Stuart's cavalry, and without the least warning, they were at once upon us.

I was off duty, dozing by a small camp fire, when I was suddenly aroused by a comrade vigorously shaking me and exclaiming, "Wake up, Charley! Wake up, Charley! They are right here! They are right here!" and the next sound that greeted my ears was: Ping! ping! zip! zip! It seemed as if the thicket all around was full of whistling bullets. As we were under cover of wood, we held the enemy at bay some moments, but soon they bore down upon us at a charge, and we were swept along as by a storm. I was run down on the plank road by a Confederate officer, who eagerly demanded my surrender; and, as

he held his revolver within a foot of my face and had a large force at his back, there was no alternative. He called me a "Yankee" with a–prefix. I was obliged to dismount, and was marched away to a place where I found ten members of my company, and others, also prisoners. Next day we were marched to Orange Court House, placed on cars and sent to Richmond. We went on to Belle Isle at ten o'clock at night, Dec. 1st, 1863. The island is on the James River, nearly opposite Richmond, a little farther up the stream. At that time the prison enclosure on the lower extremity of the island comprised three or four acres, surrounded by a ditch six feet wide and two and one-half feet deep, the earth from the ditch having been thrown outside and formed into an embankment, just beyond which sentinels were stationed.

Our condition during the winter was deplorable beyond description. We suffered from cold. There were about four thousand prisoners on the island. The ground was nearly covered with condemned Confederate tents; these were crowded with occupants. New comers lived in the ditch, and there

some of them slept their last sleep, and were found frozen to death in the morning. Wood was issued at long intervals, but in very limited quantity. This we cut into pieces the size of a match, and digging a hole in the earth we would build a fire in it to economize the heat. Over this fire we could place a little cup of water, toast a piece of corn bread, put it in the water and call it "James River coffee." But we had no fire by which to warm ourselves, even when anchor ice floated in the river and snow was on the ground.

At first our party, eleven, all from Company E, lived in the ditch; then we got a tent large enough to cover all. But, when lying in the tent, five on one side, six on the other, with heads along the outside and feet toward the centre, we lapped by each other the entire length of our lower limbs, and were packed so closely that when one turned over all on that side of the tent must turn. The signal would be given, "Let's turn over;" five turn, or six turn. But we were fortunate to get a tent and remain together. We suffered from hunger. Our rations were chiefly corn bread, made of coarse meal; the

boys always declared the cob was ground with the corn, and some said they found pieces of stalk in their bread. Occasionally meat was given us, also boiled rice, and sometimes from a gill to a half-pint of pea soup. For nineteen consecutive days we received each day only two pieces of this coarse bread, each piece the size of a two and one-half inch cube. And this when we were in a starving condition. As our stay continued, hunger increased.

The first day I was on the island I had a small piece of bacon which had rolled around in my haversack, and was covered with dust and crumbs. I commenced paring it, and throwing the outside on the ground. I noticed a crowd collecting, the pieces were eagerly gathered from the ground, and with bony arms and skinny hands upstretched the starving fellows cried, "Don't throw that on the ground, give it to me, give it to me!" Tossing the piece among the crowd, I exclaimed, "Take it all, if you want it!" Later *I* would have been glad to have picked it from the ground and eaten it. I saw one new comer, when dry boiled rice was issued to him, look upon it with contempt, and say, as he threw it

indignantly on the ground, "Do you suppose I am going to eat that stuff without sugar on it." Later, he would have been glad to have picked that rice, kernel by kernel, from the dirt and eaten it.

That there might be some system in the camp in regard to counting us and issuing rations, we were divided into squads of one hundred men each; the squads into five messes of twenty men each. The bread was issued to the squad sergeants, twenty-five loaves to each, at ten o'clock in the morning and four o'clock in the afternoon. Each squad sergeant laid his loaves in five piles of five loaves each. Then, as he touched each pile, and asked "Who shall have this?" some one, with back toward the bread, would designate "Mess No. 1," — Mess No. 3;" and so particular were the prisoners, and so jealous lest they might not get their exact share of this very indifferent food, that the phraseology of the question must not be changed, else there would be suspicion of collusion and fraud, and a row started at once. It would not do to say, "Who shall have this?" "Who shall have this?" "And this." There must not be the variation of a word, or any change in

tone or emphasis. Then the mess sergeant divided each loaf into four equal parts, and these were "touched off" in the same manner to the individuals of the mess. And if, in cutting this coarse bread, a piece of the crust broke across the line, that piece of crust must be divided and each part placed where it belonged, else there might have been a fight. It was my duty to cut the bread for our mess, and this is the knife I used; an ordinary table knife, worth five or ten cents; but I would not sell it for fifteen cents. It was not sharp at the point then; later on I will tell why it is so now.

Our ranks were constantly being thinned by death, and hence it was claimed from time to time that we were drawing too many rations—drawing one hundred rations when there were but seventy or eighty men in a squad — therefore we were occasionally counted. This was called "squading off." We were all turned out of the enclosure; often in the cold, piercing wind that swept along the James River during the winter, and as we passed back in single file were counted. Each squad was filled up to the full number of one hundred men. This would

occupy nearly the whole day. On such days no rations were issued. Though we were starving, no food was given us from four o'clock in the afternoon until ten o'clock in the forenoon of the second day following, in all forty-two hours.

We also suffered from lack of sanitary regulations and from filth. Though allowed to go down a narrow lane to the river in the day time, at night the camp was closed, and in the morning was in appearance worse than a cattle-yard. Filth breeds vermin—of one syllable. There were millions of them. They were fond of a warm lodging place at night. So in the morning we would find wrinkles in our clothing level full. They would also get into our hair. I have here a comb which I used on the island. Taking this in the morning, drawing it through my hair, holding my soldier cap on my hand, I have counted thirty or forty, caught on the top of it at one pull. You need not feel uneasy; I think there are none there now, nor in the comb. This experience may seem amusing as it is told now, but it was a fight for life against the vermin then.

It was our task once or twice each day to look over

every article of clothing and skirmish up and destroy the enemy, else the life blood would have been sapped out of us. Worst of all that we endured was mental suffering. Thoughts of home and anxious ones there were ever in our minds. Thoughts of "something to eat." This was the topic of talk night and day. What we would like to eat. What we *once* had to eat. Dreams of tables spread with luxuries would haunt our sleep, and waking we would feel the gnawing pain of hunger like a coal of fire in the stomach, which would keep us awake until morning. The thought was ever in mind,—I am actually starving to death.

Every day of the winter we could see the Stars and Bars waving over the Confederate capitol in Richmond, and the residence of Jefferson Davis was in full view.

Ten cents in money, or a dollar Confed., was the price asked for certain articles on the island. Ten cents in United States money was worth one dollar Confederate money. When I heard this, I felt that the Confederacy was doomed. Its money was next to worthless. You cannot carry on war without the

sinews of war. This depreciation of the Confederate currency went on until a soldier paid a darkey two hundred dollars to hold his horse while the soldier ate his dinner.

We left Belle Island March 15, 1864, and went out of Richmond March 16th. The time of my stay on the island was three and one-half months, from Dec. 1, 1863, to March 15, 1864. In our transportation from Richmond we were placed in box freight cars, from seventy to eighty men in a car. After such a winter, in a half-starved condition, covered with filth and vermin, we were jammed into freight cars without seats and jolted over the worst roads three days and two nights. We then spent one night on the ground in the woods at Charlotte, N. C., and I think I never experienced sweeter rest than I did that night, with the privilege of stretching my limbs and lying flat upon the ground. For in the cars we could not lie down, and when sitting had to draw our knees nearly to our chins, else some would rest upon the limbs of others. We then rode four days and three nights in the same cramped condition; seven days and six nights in the cars with a rest of only one night at Charlotte.

At about four o'clock in the afternoon of the 22d of March, 1864, the train stopped at a small station in southwestern Georgia, and we were removed from the cars and marched away under guard. I asked one of the guards the name of the place. "Camp Winder, where we wind up the Yankees at the rate of forty or fifty a day." There was truth in his grim pun; they did wind up the Yankees, sometimes at the rate of one hundred and fifty a day at that place, which was ANDERSONVILLE.

We soon reached the stockade and were turned inside. What a picture is presented to my mind and soul as I pronounce this word *stockade!* Had I the mighty intellect and genius of Dante, or the wierd and fertile imagination of Doré, I could not reproduce the picture. It never can be done. Andersonville will never be known nor understood except by those who were there.

Thirty-one thousand men in a pen, on the bare earth, exposed to the fierce rays of the southern sun, the drenching showers, the cold night dews, covered with vermin and sores; hundreds unable to rise, and many dying every hour of the day and night, writh-

ing in death until half buried like struggling animals in the sand. These are tame words, and give but a faint impression of the situation. The horrors of Andersonville can never be described. The stockade was built of yellow pine timber, cut on the ground and hewn into sticks ten to twelve inches square, twenty-six feet long; these were placed on end side by side around the enclosure, eight feet in the earth, eighteen feet above the surface. This was Andersonville stockade, sometimes called by the Confederates "Camp Winder," because Captain Winder, son of General Winder, laid out the camp.

At the top of the stockade were sentry boxes, reached by stairs from the outside, from which the sentinels could look down upon the camp. Extending around the prison, inside the stockade and twenty feet from it, was the dead line, designated by a light rail on stakes, about three feet high. To pass this line was to be shot by the sentinel from his box. Neither shade nor shelter was afforded us, nor clothing issued, though some were nearly naked. Some had been in prison many months, and were reduced by starvation and wasted by disease.

As the weeks went by, and the hot summer days came and our numbers rapidly increased, our suffering was most intense and pitiable. For some time rations of dry meal were given us. Though a limited quantity of wood was issued, all were not supplied, and many had neither dish nor cup. At that time a half canteen or an old tin can such as one sees kicked about the street would sell for a ten dollar greenback. Prisoners were constantly coming in, and some were fortunate enough to bring money. So, for lack of cooking facilities many wet the meal and ate it as a paste, and some ate it dry.

Crowding and filth were nearly as fatal to the prisoners as starvation. The original enclosure was ten hundred and ten feet long north and south, seven hundred and seventy-nine feet wide east and west, with ground sloping from north and south towards the centre. Through the centre from west to east ran a filthy sluggish stream, four or five feet wide and six nches deep. Along this stream was a swampy quagmire three hundred feet wide containing more than five acres. This stream, which was the receptacle of the offal and filth of our camp, a Confederate camp,

and the prison cook-house, was our water supply. Such a stench arose from this place during the summer that the planters in the vicinity thought they would be obliged to move away.

The original inclosure contained — deducting swamp, and land cut off by dead line — about twelve acres; and this, when the number of prisoners was greatest (thirty-one thousand) gave to each man about seventeen square feet. Not seventeen feet square, but seventeen square feet. The number of square feet required for an ordinary adult's grave is about the same. The stockade was afterward extended to inclose twenty-seven acres. Medical attendance and supplies were very meagre. Hundreds of men were lying about unable to walk, and many of them unable to sit up. The first twenty-two days of June it rained some every day, part of the time very hard, and these helpless ones were exposed to all this, night and day.

The most shocking scenes of prison life it would not be proper for me to relate. And I forbear, for I could break your hearts. After an investigation by the Confederate physicians, Dr. G. S. Hopkins and

Surgeon H. E. Watkins they reported the general causes of disease and mortality to be:

First. The large number of prisoners crowded together.

Second. The entire absence of all vegetables as diet, so necessary as a preventive of scurvy.

Third. The want of barracks to shelter the prisoners from sun and rain.

Fourth. The inadequate supply of wood and good water.

Fifth. Badly cooked food.

Sixth. The filthy condition of the prisoners and prison generally.

Seventh. The morbific emanations from the branch or ravine passing through the prison,— the condition of which cannot be better explained than by naming it a morass of human excrement and mud.

This is Confederate testimony. I said at the time, and I believe it now, if a person had been taken from a home of culture and refinement, and placed in the midst of the thirty-one thousand occupants of Andersonville, his reason would have departed, he would have gone *mad*. One man of my own com-

pany upon entering the stockade, was shocked at the sight of his surroundings; a look of despair settled upon his features; in three weeks he died.

I must here testify that the purest loyalty and patriotism I ever witnessed was in the prison at Andersonville. Often overtures were made to us to enlist in the Confederate service. These were received with derisive jeers, and though the prisoners were surrounded by the horrors I have described, and the lingering tortures of starvation and even *death* stared them in the face, they would strike up the "Star Spangled Banner," "Yankee Doodle," "John Brown," and other Union army airs. If the temptation was too great for some weak fellow, and he yielded, to get rations, he had to be run out under guard, to save his head from being broken by his comrades in the prison. I know one doctor who would not go out in the country to live in order to let a southern physician go into the Confederate service.

In November, 1864, Colonel O'Neil of the Tenth Tennessee Confederate Infantry came to the general hospital at Andersonville, and asked the privilege of

addressing the Irish hospital attendants. They were marched outside the hospital inclosure, surrounded by a circle of guards, and Colonel O'Neil addressed them. He told them it was evident there was no hope of exchange, they could see the fate that awaited them. If they would enlist in the Confederate service they would receive food, clothing and comfortable quarters. They would not be required to go to the front and be exposed to death and capture by the northern army, but would be used to do camp, guard and garrison duty, to relieve Confederate troops which would be sent to the front. The Irish Union soldiers listened — turned and went back to the misery and wretchedness of prison life. Every man went back.

I will relate one amusing incident connected with prison life. I know a Connecticut man, John Chapmany, Company B, Sixteenth Connecticut Volunteers. His home was in Suffield, Conn., and since the war, while on a visit to my uncle in that town, Chapman told me the story, so I did not get it second-hand. Chapman took into Andersonville a little dog, which had been with him since his enlistment,

two years before, with him at the battles of South Mountain and Antietam, and which was with him when he was captured at Plymouth, N. C. From Andersonville, Chapman with his dog, went to Charleston, then to Florence, S. C., all the time guarding jealously his dog, but one morning, at Florence, the dog *was not*. Chapman barely lived to reach home. One day, after the war, at a dining-room in Hartford, he overheard a man say, "The sweetest morsel I ever tasted was a little yellow dog I stole, and cooked and ate in Florence prison." Chapman at once said to the man, "Friend, that was my dog."

I can tell you more about Chapman. When he arived from prison at Camp Parole, Annapolis, Md., where his wife met him, and he was pointed out to her, she exclaimed, "No, that is not my husband! There is nothing about him I can recognize." He was a mere skeleton and wreck. His comrades, who had been with him every day, had to tell her they had been with him all the time, and knew he was the man. And with their earnestness, which amounted almost to indignation, she was persuaded to accept the man on faith, but she had to nurse him

and care for him days before she could discover the man who left her and went forth to serve his country.

I was getting very much reduced when, April 28th, it was discovered that I had the small-pox, and I was sent to the small-pox hospital. This was in a pleasant wood some distance east of south from the prison, where we had room and air, and an opportunity to wash if we survived the disease. The wash for both clothing and person I prized, for I had worn every article of clothing eight months without change or washing. And when I had bathed in the nice clear waters of the creek which ran near the small-pox hospital, and had washed my clothing with soap and water, and boiled it, when I put it on clean, and sweet, and fresh, I was in no mood to dispute the old saying, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

The small-pox is a much dreaded disease, but it, no doubt, saved my life. I was so much reduced at the time that the disease was very light in my case. It seems to be most violent with fleshy or corpulent people, and I cannot recommend it to such. We were not guarded at the small-pox hospital, nor did the citizens come near. They did not wish to spread the

disease among their own people. But the swine ran at large, and the young porkers came into the camp. I have called attention to the sharp point of the knife. A tall Tennessean, looking down one day, saw a glistening stone, and he said to me, "Charley, I believe I could rub your knife down to a point on that stone so we could stick some of these pigs with it." So the knife was made into this form that we might stick pigs at the small-pox hospital at Andersonville. Finally pigs were missed. The Confederate steward told our Yankee steward, "The boys must stop killing pigs." The Yankee steward said to us, "Steward says, '*you must not kill any more pigs*,' and *I* say so; but if you find any dead ones, cook and eat them." We found some dead ones after that. The small-pox is a cold weather disease. It died out in the summer. In July the small-pox hospital was abandoned, and on the 19th of that month I was sent to the general hospital as attendant. The most shocking scenes of prison life were witnessed at the general hospital. It was a short distance from the southeast corner of the stockade and consisted of three or four acres surrounded by a high board fence

with one main entrance about fifteen feet wide, with sentinels on either side. Tents were furnished, but many of them were only flys, or simply cloth drawn over a ridge pole and down to the ground on either side, without ends. There were no beds. The patients lay upon the bare earth, or a blanket if fortunate enough to own one.

Only the worst cases were sent from the stockade to the hospital, for it could accommodate only two thousand. It was little more than a halting place between the stockade and the burying-ground. All who died at Andersonville were registered at the hospital, then a number was placed on the book opposite each man's name, and a corresponding number branded on a board was placed at his grave. This, and all the prison labor, was performed by our own men. The number of deaths in August was 2,993, nearly one hundred per day during the month. In September 2,700; during the summer 12,000 — a whole city. Two six-mule teams were kept busy drawing the dead to the burying-ground, and in August, when the death rate was so great, three hundred bodies were lying unburied at the dead-

house. It was necessary to employ the whole team-force of the prison, including bread and wood teams, to draw them away.

At one time an inspecting officer came from Richmond, and, shocked by what he saw in the stockade, he ordered a thousand of the poor fellows sent to the hospital. Five hundred were sent out in one day. But there was no room for them, and many were laid on the ground outside the hospital. All day and until after dark the teams were busy drawing them out. After dark, with a comrade, I was taking the men from the wagons. The last two taken from one wagon were dead. We stepped to the next wagon, and as we took hold of a man my comrade said, "Are you dead, too?" He was, also six others on that wagon.

We laid them on the earth in line, nine men. As I looked upon their upturned faces, cold and still in death, under the dim light of the stars, I thought, "these men have waited weeks, months, longing, hoping for exchange, but they will never see it." And I thought, "they all had friends at home who would gladly have cared for them, but will never

greet them again, perhaps never learn their fate." These men were probably alive when they left the stockade; and this was the condition of many, hovering between life and death.

At the hospital I made the acquaintance of Dr. A. W. Barrows, of Amherst, Mass., a member of the Twenty-seventh Massachusetts Infantry, and A. A. Crandall, of Ulysses, Penn., member of the Fifty-third Pennsylvania Infantry. We planned an escape. It required great caution, study and preparation. We were six weeks in perfecting the plan, during which time we were liable to be detected by spies, or perhaps, betrayed by some one who might gain a knowledge of our plan. The greatest secrecy had to be observed, for had the fact become known to any, it would have occasioned great excitement in camp, and we would at once have become objects of such interest as would have led to our discovery.

The great hope and desire of life with the prisoners was to get out of prison. To get back to America, to "God's country," as we used to express it. I wish we might all be as earnest in our desire to reach Heaven as were the prisoners to see once more the

land of home and freedom and plenty and the old flag. So had our purpose been made known, even the friendly interest which would have been manifested in watching the development of our plans might have betrayed us. Then we would probably have been put in the chain gang. Men, sometimes a dozen, chained together at the neck, wrists and ankles. The men were placed in two ranks, and three continuous iron chains, forged together, connected them. Several heavy iron balls were attached to the gang, which they had to swing along if they moved about. If one sat or lay down all must do so.

We had one of Colton's small outline pocket maps. We decided to go west to the Chattahooche River, cross into Alabama, find the headwaters of the Choctawhatchee River and follow it south through Alabama and Western Florida to its mouth, where it flows into the Choctawhatchee Bay, and where we expected to find the United States gunboats. We collected medicine, matches, salt and food, the latter consisting of biscuit and bacon. The most important article to be obtained was turpentine, for with this applied to our shoes we could baffle the bloodhounds. It counteracts the scent of the man, and prevents the

hounds from following the track. Barrows had access to the medical supplies, and from time to time abstracted small quantities both of turpentine and medicines.

The Yankee steward gave us flour and two pieces of bacon. We had made biscuit in the hospital. By using soda, which could be obtained for ten dollars per pound, (greenback) letting them rise in the sun, and then baking in a cast-iron oven, they would be quite light and nice. But those we wished to carry we pressed as hard as possible to get the most nutriment into the smallest bulk. These supplies we must carry out of the hospital on our persons. This was attended with danger, for smuggling was carried on between the guard and the prisoners, though strictly forbidden by the Confederate authorities, and always punished when detected.

We decided to go out at the main entrance in the daytime when persons were going and coming. The guard and Confederate officers, the Confederate surgeons, the wagons which brought supplies to the hospital were passing in and out during the day. Some of the Yankee hospital attendants held passes from Captain Wirz, which allowed them to go out and

come in between the hours of six in the morning and six in the evening. Dr. Barrows had a pass. Crandall was willing to take the chance of being challenged. I was to go out with the doctor, relying upon his influence and prestige, as it was known that he had a pass. It was all a bold stroke and required nerve. The few who attempted to escape tried to go in the night and at some point away from the main entrance, when they were sure to be detected. The best cloak for guilt is an air of innocence. Josh Billings used to say, "People like tu be cheated, but they want tu hav it done by an honest man."

Oct. 9, 1864 was the day decided upon. Crandall took such supplies as he could well conceal and went out first. Barrows wore a Yankee soldier's overcoat, under which were hidden many contraband goods. He also wore boots with trousers legs tucked in, the trousers legs were filled with biscuits. I had neither overcoat nor boots, only a blouse and shoes. I filled my bosom with biscuit.

Then there was a piece of bacon. I was studying what to do with it, when it occurred to me that it would fit the small of my back. It was wrapped in

a thick cloth. I passed it under my suspenders, and let the ends rest on the top of my trousers. It was a fit, but I had to study position. If I stooped to conceal the biscuit in front, the bacon would show at my back. If I stood erect, the biscuit would show in front. Buttoning my blouse at the top and putting my hands in my pockets that it might fall carelessly over the bacon, I practised in the doctor's tent until it was thought I would pass without exciting suspicion.

At two o'clock in the afternoon of the 9th of October, 1864, the doctor and I went out between the two sentinels at the main entrance of the general hospital at Andersonville. Outwardly we were cool and calm, but my heart was in my mouth. We were not challenged, and passed the guard-house where arms were stacked, where were the officers of the guard and guards; went about a mile across a plain, open country by the stockade and Captain Wirz's headquarters to the burying-ground, where we met Crandall, and bidding good-bye to Andersonville, went into the wood, and started for the north by going west and south. In fifteen minutes after we entered

the wood we heard the sound of voices. We all fell to the ground at once. A party in a wagon passed along a road which crossed our path.

At the South many roads lead through the woods and are not fenced nor indicated in any way, and are worn below the surface so that they would not be noticed by any one traveling at a right angle with the road until close upon it. Fortunately bushes concealed us from this party, and afterward we were very much on the alert not to get caught in the same way. We soon came to the railroad, which we were obliged to cross almost within sight of the Andersonville station. Safely across, we arranged our baggage and started on our perilous and untried experiment.

I wish to say that I realized on that afternoon the meaning of the words freedom, liberty. Though filled with nervous fear and apprehension, for we had not yet tested the efficacy of the turpentine, and knew not at what moment we might hear the baying of the bloodhounds, nature never appeared so beautiful to me as on that never to be forgotten day. It was a delightful Southern October afternoon. The

grass and foliage on the trees appeared so bright and fresh and green, the air so soft and filled with sweet odors and the songs of birds, I felt as if I could leave the earth and walk right up on the atmosphere. I thought of Paradise, and wondered if Adam and Eve were more happy, even while sin was a stranger; of Heaven, and wondered if it could afford more rapture. I felt that I would willingly be shot or torn by the dogs for the privilege of one hour of such enjoyment. This may seem extravagant language, but let no one criticise it who has not had a similar experience.

We traveled all night, walking very fast, sometimes running, taking the precaution to keep the soles of our shoes well wet with turpentine. During the first day out we lay hidden away under the top of a fallen tree, not rising to our feet once, living upon the food we had with us, but with nothing to drink.

Second night, after going a few rods we came to a stream of nice clear water, where we drank heartily and bathed our hands and faces. Later in the night we got into a great swamp, and out of that into

brambles and briers, and finally into a pine forest, where we came near being surrounded by a party hunting coons. Turning out of our course to avoid this party, we came to a road. We decided to walk in it, and afterward traveled in the roads which led in the direction we wished to go. We could walk faster and easier, and three of us on the alert for danger could see it, and conceal ourselves.

One night we walked twenty miles according to the mile posts on the Eufala turnpike, and at least five miles in the fields.

On this first road, going around a curve, we came suddenly to a house close beside the road. The door was open and a brilliant light shining within. We dropped into the bushes, and overheard distinctly the conversation at the house. A woman's voice said: "You think they will have to go?" A man replied: "Yes, I suppose so, I have been ordered to report at Buena Vista to-morrow, I don't want to go, don't see how I can leave the folks at home. I shall go and report, and try to get off a few days."

Sherman was then at Atlanta. Governor Brown, of Georgia, had ordered out the state militia. This

man was no doubt a member. The reward for capturing a runaway, Yankee prisoner, Confederate deserter, or negro, was thirty dollars or thirty days' furlough. Three of us caught by the man whose words we could hear, would have given him ninety days' furlough.

Soon some one came out of the house to draw water at a noisy, rickety well-curb. Under cover of the noise we skulked back into the field and away from the house.

We estimated when we left the prison that in four days we would reach the Chattahoochee, which forms the state line between Georgia and Alabama. The fourth night we came to a stream of some size and importance, but could hardly satisfy ourselves that it was the Chattahooche. We crossed on a carriage bridge and saw a house near by. O, if we could only go there and ask, not for food, though our own was exhausted, not for shelter and lodging, for we were willing to accept the earth as our bed, but simply where we were, whether in Georgia or Alabama. We dared not venture.

After this our chief article of food was sweet pota-

toes, which we dug from the fields at night, carried to some secluded place, built a fire and roasted them in the ashes. We also obtained dry corn, squashes, pumpkins, watermelons, persimmons, and in Alabama sugar-cane.

We had no difficulty in keeping the points of compass, and going directly in our course. We used the seven stars, Pleiades, as our guide. Crandall was a deer hunter and woodsman at his home in Pennsylvania, and understood woodcraft perfectly. We could readily keep our direction, but not locality. How many miles we had traveled, where we were, and whether we had crossed the Chattahoochee, were questions we could not answer.

On October 16th, eight nights from prison, these questions were still unanswered to our anxious minds. Usually the negroes at the south were, by instinct, friendly to the Union soldier, and many escaped prisoners were assisted by them, but, as we had heard of one instance of betrayal, we determined to take no chances. We would rely wholly upon ourselves, except in great emergency, when we would cautiously seek help.

The emergency was now upon us. We felt that we must get information in regard to our locality. We found a lone log hut in the wood; peering in between the logs, where the mud chinking was out, we saw that the only occupant was an old lady. We knocked at the door and the old lady made her appearance. Only a dim light from the fire on the hearth revealed her to us. I inquired, "What State do you live in?" She replied, "I don't know." It was evident she was telling the truth, and did not know much of anything. In various ways I tried to find out where we were. "Where do you live? What town is this? What's the name of this place?" were questions put in quick succession. An answer came at length. "I live in Stewart." I knew she meant Stewart County. That was of no use to us. The counties were not on our map, and we did not then know whether Stewart County was in Georgia or Alabama. I was about to turn away in despair, when suddenly a thought flashed through my mind, and turning short I exclaimed, "Don't you know whether you live in Georgia or Alabama?" "Oh," she replied, "we have to go to Florence to go to Alab-a-m."

My heart was in my mouth. I would not at that time have valued a bag of gold as I did those words. I knew we were still in Georgia, that Florence was not far away, and that we were near the borders of "Alab-a-m." We took our leave without gratifying a woman's curiosity, and that night found Florence, a small village in Georgia, on the bank of the Chattahoochee. We looked upon the river, a strong, majestic stream, and knew it must be the one we were so anxious to see. We could find no means of crossing that night. The next night, after a long search, behind an upturned stump on the river bank we found a nice skiff, borrowed it, and rowed across to "Alab-a-m."

Alabama is Indian for "Here we rest." And here we did rest with a feeling of greater security, now that we knew that the Chattahochee rolled between us and Andersonville, and that we were really in Alabama, for we expected to find that State less thickly settled than Georgia, and our path consequently less beset with danger. In this we were correct. In Georgia we used the utmost caution, walking only nights, and keeping ourselves closely secreted

during the day. We walked in Indian file, always on the alert for danger, and when it seemed to appear in any form the one who saw it first gave the signal, "Hist!" and we all fell to the ground. Many times persons came very near us as we lay quietly on the ground. We did not speak a word above a whisper during the nine days and nights we were in Georgia except with the old lady who told us we had to go to Florence to get to "Alab-a-m."

We found some dwellers in Alabama, October 19th, two nights after crossing the Chattahoochee, we were walking along a road when, in a cornfield at a little distance, we saw a party with torches hunting coons. Soon after we came to a fork in the road. We followed the left, which proved to be a plantation road leading into a yard and up to a house. Before reaching the yard we heard persons coming toward us, and not wishing to meet them we stepped into the bushes and let them pass. As we went up to the yard and looked at the house all was dark and still. We thought it likely the party we had just met had gone to join the coon hunters and left the house unoccupied. We resolved to make a search for food. I

told my comrades that if they would remain by a large log lying near the edge of the clearing in which the house stood I would advance on the house. I did not propose to attack in front but by flank, going to the right, then tacking and approaching the house at the side.

Just as I was about to turn toward the house, "Bow-wow! bow-wow!" and out jumped two large house dogs. Well, thought I, I guess *you* did not go to the coon hunt. Of course I did not pursue my researches further in that direction, but merely waited for the canines to retire, when I would rejoin my comrades, and we would leave the place, but before I could act on my resolve another appeared on the scene.

A man came out of the house and urged on the dogs. Thus encouraged they started for me, and I for the wood. But I did not run; I knew it would be useless, as the dogs could run much faster than myself. I walked rapidly but coolly. The dogs came close to me just as I reached the wood. I thought they were about to seize me. The man closely followed his dogs. I looked over my shoulder

and was about to say, "Call off your dogs, I surrender," when he fired at me with a pistol, but missed his aim. The dogs did not touch me. The wood with growth of underbrush was close at hand, and I kept on, going into and among the bushes. The man did not follow, but with his dogs went back. As I have not seen him since, I do not know why he did not follow me, but I surmise he might have been an ignorant, superstitious overseer in charge of things, and as the dogs did not touch me and the pistol shot took no effect, he thought I was not composed of flesh and blood but was some hobgoblin of the wood come up to haunt his place.

The dogs had driven me directly away from my comrades. I made a circuit and went to the log where I had left them, and they were gone. I felt lonesome; they had the turpentine and supplies, and I was alone. I did not care to shout or call, or make much noise to have the dogs called out again on my account.

I called and whistled faintly, but gained no response. I knew from our former habit and method of reasoning, in regard to our way, that when my com-

rades had given up looking for me they would go back to the main road and continue their journey along that. If I could get ahead of them, they would come up to me. I ran back to the fork and started out on the main road. Soon I came to where a little rivulet ran across the road and made a smooth sandy beach, which also extended across the road. Stooping down, I examined critically to see if I could find the doctor's track, for he wore Yankee calfskin boots, and I knew there was not another such pair in the State of Alabama. There was no track. They had not been along.

I went on a little further up an incline, and lay down beside the road where I could get a view of it for a little distance in the direction from which I had come. By and by I saw two men approaching. They came on slowly until nearly opposite me, when they stopped and looked back as if they had left some one. I spoke out to them sharply at first. They started. I rose up to their view. They ran up to me, clasped my hands and shook them as heartily as if we had been separated years instead of hours. The tears rolled down the doctor's cheeks, and he

said repeatedly, "This is the happiest hour of my life!" My comrades had heard the pistol shot, and supposed I was captured or killed.

The dogs came toward them after driving me away, and they were obliged to leave. If they had not met me, they did not intend to leave the vicinity until they had gone back and looked around the place by daylight. We decided then and there that in future our reconnoitering would be done in force and not by detail.

October 21st, four days after crossing the Chattahoochee, we came to a small stream which we thought might be the Choctawhatchee. The next day we followed it, for we now ventured in wild country to travel in the daytime. In the afternoon we went into the country back from the river to see if we could get some clue as to its name. Just at nightfall we came to a clearing where was a plantation house and yard. Keeping under cover of the wood, we commenced circling around the premises.

We soon saw an old lady with apron full of pine knots which she had gathered to make the fire for the evening meal. Intercepted her; she seemed a little

agitated, but we spoke in very gentle and polite tones (I think I called her grandmother), which seemed to soothe and allay her fears. "What place is this?" I asked. "Mr. Len owns the plantation, my husband, Mr. White, is the overseer. He is down to the river with the 'niggers' repairing the bridge that was washed away by the 'fresh,'" pointing as she spoke toward the stream we had just left.

"What river?" I asked.

"Choctawhatchee River."

Again my heart exulted. Again an old lady had given us just the information we wanted. From that day I have looked upon old ladies with great respect. After inquiring distances to places in all directions, we bade her good-bye, and started off in a direction directly opposite the one we pursued when we were well out of her sight.

After getting fairly away, we applied the turpentine, a precaution we had often resorted to since leaving Andersonville. This we did by pouring a little in the hand and rubbing it on the soles of our shoes and on such portions of our clothing as would come in contact with the bushes, for the bloodhounds

are very keen and will catch the scent of a man from the bushes, and sometimes will follow a track twenty-four hours after it is made.

We were now very much elated, thinking we had found our river and had only to follow it by using boats, and thus reach the gunboats at the mouth of the river. October 24th, two days after we learned from the old lady the name of the Choctawhatchee, just at nightfall we came to a guide-board. The board was old and weather beaten, and in the dim twilight I was unable to read the lettering. Crandall lifted me up that I might give it closer inspection, when I was enabled to read, Newton 15½ miles. Newton, in southern Alabama, was designated on our map. That night we passed through the town. This located us, and gave us our bearings. The following day, October 25th, a bright sunny day, we were strolling along the bank of the Choctawhatchee which we had now found, and could well identify, when we discovered a boat and waited for night that we might borrow it.

We used six boats in our trip, *all* borrowed. After dark we started out in this one and for a time

were in high spirits as we glided down with the current. But our enthusiasm and our clothing were eventually dampened, for twice we were swamped in the rapids, and the last time our boat filled and sunk and we were unable to raise it. We were only consoled by the thought that it would not dry up while the owner was looking for it, and if he continued the search long enough he would find it in good condition. We left it full of water on the bottom of the river. We reached the west bank, built a fire in the woods and dried our clothing. To keep our matches dry, we carried them in a bottle. October 26th, we came to the west branch of the Choctawhatchee, which flowed to the main stream directly across our path. We crossed the branch on a bridge, as quickly as possible, at midday, and concealed ourselves in some tall weeds near by. Soon after some one crossed the bridge with a wagon.

October 28th we came to the confluence of the west branch and the main stream, and in the afternoon of this day found another boat. The stream was now larger and seemed to flow through a country not much inhabited. We ventured to take this

boat in the afternoon. It was chained and locked to a tree. We wound the chain around a stout stick, and taking a pry across the bow, drew the staple from the boat. We took what we actually needed, and I told my comrades the man would only have to make a new boat for his lock and chain. It was a delightful afternoon and we made a pleasant passage until just at nightfall, when we heard sounds below us that led us to believe that we were nearing a ferry.

We waited along shore until after dark. Then starting out under cover of night, we drifted down, and as we reached the place whence the sounds had come, we were near the right bank trying to extricate our boat from a snag, when a call came to us from the left shore, "Who's that over there?" No answer. "Who's that over there in that skiff?" We did not think it wise to give in a list of the passengers, but paddled hurriedly down the stream.

We heard a chain thrown into a boat, the boat grate on the sandy beach, and soon the dip of oars in the water. I remarked that if the man was coming to capture us and had a better boat than ours, perhaps we would exchange with him. But we soon

learned that was not his purpose, but could hear him crossing the river. We knew he was going for help. We were near the right shore towards which he was pulling and where he would probably rally help. We dare not try to cross, for as we had only paddles and could propel our boat but slowly, we feared he would go ashore and shoot us on the river. We must land on the right bank as soon as possible and take our chances with the crowd.

Our boat touched land, we ran up the steep bank into the wood near at hand, and sat down to apply the turpentine. While doing this the man ran along the bank between us and the river. I could distinctly see him in his shirt sleeves. Evidently there was quite a settlement in that vicinity, for in five minutes there was a great uproar, and the night resounded with sounds of many voices, the blowing of horns, and the baying of blood-hounds. The night was starlight, but dark in the wood. The dogs came on with a yell which made the hair rise on our heads, ran down to the place where we left the river, up to the spot where we had used the turpentine and — stopped.

We knew by the howl that went up that they were baffled and confused. But they were savage for the chase and keen for the game. They ran through the woods in various directions, trying to catch the scent of the track, and one of them came so near that, standing in the dark shadow of the wood, I could hear him sniff the air. It was a time that required nerve and caution.

We proceeded slowly and stealthily away from and up the river. After a time we came to an open field, and soon saw the light of torches. We thought they were circling to find our track — that is, going to a point on the river bank above where we left it and describing a circle out into the country, sweeping around to a place on the river below where we left it. In this way they would hope to find our track if we had crossed the circle, and to find, if we had used anything on our shoes that it had worn off.

They were inclosing us in the circle. But as they came so near, we thought it best to lie down. Nearer and nearer they came, two of them with a dog, and we overheard one say, "It was strange that the dogs did not take the track, that they could

come up to that place and go no farther." "Yes," replied the other, "I think they must have had something on their feet." We did not deem it advisable to satisfy their curiosity by any explanation.

They passed on, and we crossed their track. They went to a house, then came back into the field where they found our tracks in the soft earth. Then they endeavored to make the dog follow our track. We had passed into the wood again, where we stopped and listened. They would run along our tracks toward us, urge on the dog, and try to make him lead out, but he would only advance as they did.

The doctor was of reckless disposition, and stood and laughed and shook his sides, and said: "I would like to halloo, and ask that man, 'What's the matter with your dog?'" We now knew that turpentine was useful, and that we could defy the dogs. Leaving our pursuers to carry on the hunt as long as they chose, we kept on our way southward, through an extensive pine forest. We did not return to the river for two or three days, lest some one might be on the look out for us. We were again on the west side of the Choctawhatchee.

October 29th, came to the Pea River, which in its eastward course flows along the border line between Southern Alabama and Western Florida, and joins the Choctawhatchee at Geneva, a small town in Alabama. We followed the river until, standing in a thicket, we heard the sounds of domestic life and activity, which warned us that we were just at the border of the town of Geneva. We thought it wise to retire. It was nearly night. During the early afternoon, while coming down the river we had passed a crossing-place, and had seen boats on the opposite side. We now decided to retrace our steps to a point near this crossing-place, and there camp until early morning, when I would swim the river for one of the boats.

It must be remembered that in all this trip, extending over more than a month of time, we had neither shelter nor blanket. The doctor had an overcoat. Crandall and I were in very light clothing. It was now nearly the first of November. Though the days were usually sunny and fairly comfortable in that clime, the nights were cold and frosty. Morning came.

We were not so near the crossing as we had supposed, and when we reached it the sun was well up. The morning air was chilly, a mist was rising from the river, the water appeared dark, deep and forbidding.

I knew there were alligators and other reptiles in Southern waters. I realized I was liable to be discovered while swimming the river or taking the boat. But southward lay the course; the river intercepted our way; *we must have the boat.* I plunged in, swam across, selected a good boat with oars, rowed back to my comrades, then across with them, and taking my clothing, which they had held, ran up into the woods to dress. My comrades secured some fishing tackle from a raft.

With a great sense of relief, and hearts quite buoyant, we continued on our journey. We were in Western Florida pressing eagerly on to the coast. More than twenty-five times we came very near being discovered. I have attempted to relate only a few of the prominent adventures that beset us. October 31st we came back to the river, and late in the afternoon saw on the opposite shore what we thought to be a boat.

The stream was now broad, and objects were not readily discerned from one bank to the other. We decided to wait until night, when I would swim the river and bring the boat across. When it was quite dark, and I was about to cross we heard some one getting the boat ready to come to our side, and presently we heard the dip of the paddle, and the boat was brought to shore directly in front of us, A man stepped out, chained the boat to a stump, and walked off up a path along which we had recently come. We knew he must go some distance to reach a house, we thought he might be returning to his home from the work of the day. If so, how he went back in the morning I cannot say, for we at once slipped the chain, took the boat, and pushed out into the river.

The stream was broad, the current swift and strong, but to our great consternation we found the snags were numerous. There was a steamboat channel in the river, and doubtless we might have made good time by daylight. But the night was dark, and we were driven much at the mercy of the current.

Our boat was a log dug-out, a very good piece of handicraft, but perilous for a novice to ride in. An Indian can handle a canoe, a lumberman can ride a log, but to navigate a dug-out and stay in, one ought to be a tight-rope dancer. But in all seriousness, I think the time we spent in that little boat was the most perilous part of our trip. Hitherto it had been starlight or moonlight nearly every evening, but now the nights were very dark. This was as we wished, for we would be less likely to be discovered if there were dwellers along the shores. In places the river rolled and rushed like a mill-race between high cliffs, in others it would broaden out like a lake. But the snags and short bends gave us the most trouble. At these short bends, in the darkness of the night, it was difficult to tell which way the stream turned until we were midway of the stream at the bend. Then, many times the current was so swift and strong it required our greatest effort to avoid being dashed into the pile of driftwood which had collected in the sharp angle of the bend.

One would lie in the bow of the boat with ear intent to listen for the water rushing by a snag,

another would sit in the middle to help propel the boat, while the third sat at the stern to guide it. The one at the bow would send back in a whisper, "To the right! To the left!" and the boat would be brought to obey the command.

Sometimes the snag would be just under the water, and no rippling signal would be heard until the boat would rush upon it, and careen, and nearly pitch us out. We had at all times to keep the utmost presence of mind, and especially to take care to sit still and balance the boat.

The first night we made rapid progress, but worked very hard, and at daylight were much exhausted. We went ashore and spent the day in a cypress swamp. Excitement prevented much sleep. The second night we started out tired, and filled with dread. Our experience of the first night was repeated, though the latter part of the night we found the river deeper and broader. Second day not much sleep — too anxious to see the mouth of the river. Third night, started before dark. Before midnight it began to rain, and we were deluged by a Southern thunder shower. The rain came down in

sheets. It was so dark that I could not see my hand held close to my eyes.

Now and then a flash of lightning revealed the faces of my comrades as clearly as daylight. Towards morning we heard the roar of old ocean along the coast, and felt that we were nearing our journey's end. At daylight we came to where the river divided into three streams. Here, thought we, should be the gunboats, but they were not. We followed the left stream. I was now so exhausted that lying down in the boat I fell asleep.

When I awoke we were a mile from land, in a broad bay, where we could see the mouth of the river in the distance behind us, and in the dim distance ten miles away the blue outline of the shore of the bay. I asked why we were there. Crandall said they saw something they hoped were gunboats, and though he thought it hardly safe to go so far in the dug-out, the doctor thought it all right. I said, very decidedly, we had better go ashore. We paddled toward a clump of pines. The wind came up. Crandall said: "It's a pull for life, this time, boys!" We ran the boat among the canes. We

were just in time, for in a moment the white caps were on. We stepped out, I took the chain, dragged the boat up to a willow, tied it there, and have not seen it since.

We were at the mouth of the Choctawhatchee. Our plan was completed; our journey finished. When we left Andersonville, we expected to make the trip in twelve days, but obstacles and hinderances might extend it to sixteen days. We had been out twenty-five days, and what was now the situation? No gunboats. We could not go back up the river. It was impossible to go on the bay. The country appeared wild and uninhabited. It was raining. Our clothes were saturated with water. For forty-eight hours our only food had been two small catfish, caught with the hook and line which we had taken from the raft when we crossed Pea River. We were exhausted in body, and in spirit near the verge of despair. It appeared very much as if we had reached the mouth of the Choctawhatchee River to starve and perish, and our bones were to whiten on the beach. But we were Yankees still, and Yankee pluck and push must not fail. We examined our map and

found the town of La Grange about ten miles west of us on the coast. Perhaps we had land forces there. Could we reach the place? We started back into the country and soon came in sight of buildings. In our desperate condition we would go to them whether occupied or not. They were vacant. One was empty, one was a storehouse containing cotton, several large gourd shells, a nice iron baking kettle, two barrels of unshelled corn. The other building was a kitchen with ample fireplace, in which was soon a roaring fire. Plenty of pine knots in the surrounding wood. Soon a guinea hen came into the yard. We shelled corn, scattered it on the ground in front of the open kitchen door, and made a trail into the kitchen. The bird went into the snare and into the kitchen. Crandall crept cautiously in, closed the door, and the guinea was our game. We cleaned the kettle, (scouring it with sand at a little rivulet near by), brought water in the gourd shells, dressed the guinea, and soon it was in the kettle on the fire.

We had discovered a coffee mill attached to the side of the kitchen. We ground corn, pretty coarse, cooked it in the guinea broth, and placing all on the

table, took chairs and sat down to dine. Bill of Fare:—Guinea hen and hominy. "Help yourselves, comrades." We dried our clothing, spread cotton on the floor, and lay down to rest.

In the afternoon, goats came into the yard. But we could not capture one till night, when they all went into the empty building. We brought one into the yard and butchered it, and I soon had goat steak skewered on a stick over the fire. Then we put a roast into the kettle and when it was cooked I had another meal. I awoke at midnight, ate some goat meat. We had goat for breakfast. But, alas, for greediness! the guinea and goat were almost too much for me. Fortunately the doctor was at hand with his remedies, and I was saved from sickness. But an indescribable odor and flavor lingered about my nostrils and palate, which would revive at the sight of a goat any time during the next year, and I would not pay half price for goat meat today.

Next day we went down to the bay and westerly along the shore, came to a bayou, and learned that to travel in that country we must go in the roads. The bayous set inland sometimes for miles. We

went back to the house, ground corn in the coffee-mill, cooked johnny-cake and meat, and the next morning, having laid in a stock of provisions, we started towards La Grange. We found that place, but no troops and few people. We strolled about a day or two without much purpose, waiting for something to turn up.

One morning we met a man on horseback. As he saw us as soon as we saw him we held conversation with him. He mistook us for Confederate soldiers, — stragglers and deserters. Among other things he told us the Yankee gunboats were thirty miles away at East pass, which is a narrow channel connecting Choctawhatchee bay with the Gulf of Mexico, at the east end of Santa Rosa Island. The nearest land forces of the Union were at Pensacola, at least one hundred miles away. This we had studied out on our map. But we well knew that we had not strength to reach Pensacola. The man was going to his field to dig sweet-potatoes, and his son, a lad of fifteen, followed with cattle and cart.

The man went to his work and we held a council. We resolved to tell the man our story and appeal to

him for help. Crandall went to him in the field, and after some conversation with him, said: "If I tell you our story, will you promise not to do us harm, if you do not choose to help us?" With some reluctance he said, "yes." Crandall briefly told the story. The man considered it the most remarkable experience he had ever heard. That three men had come so far through such a country, been out so long, and all remained well and come through together, was almost beyond belief.

He then told the main points of his own experience in the war. When the war broke out he owned ninety slaves, now not one. The Yankee blockaders had destroyed his sloop, worth $1,500. Four of his sons had been killed in the Confederate army. Naturally, he would not be inclined to help the Yankees. "But," said he, "I have a heart, and seeing your helpless condition will aid you."

He had a skiff secreted in one place, and oars in another, for the Yankees had destroyed everything they could find that would float. These were produced; we were rowed across Alaqua bayou and set down by a path which we were told would lead us to

the house of a Union man named Wright. The name of the man who rendered us this valuable aid was Thomas Reddick. I will only say: "He was a man." We followed the path and found Mr. Wright at work in his yard. We told him our story, informed him who had sent us, and that we understood he was a Union man.

Wright was very cool and non-committal. Said he knew nothing about us and could not help us. With much persuasion and entreaty we thawed him out. He was true to the Union, but, like all who lived on neutral ground where Yankees and Confederates were likely to appear in turn the same day, he had to be very discreet. His good wife had come out into the yard. She looked at us and said: "I have some genuine Yankee coffee in the house which my brother-in-law sent me from Pensacola. I'll make you some of that, and if you are rebels I hope it will kill every pesky one of you!" I had lain down on a pile of chips in the yard. I was ragged and haggard. Mrs. Wright urged me to come in and lie on the bed. My comrades advised me to go, and I did. It was the first time I had lain on a bed for three years.

Mr. Wright was very nervous about our being at the house, and hurried his wife to get supper. Genuine Yankee coffee, bacon, new biscuit and sweet-potatoes were better than goat. After supper, Wright provided us with bed-clothing, took us to a corn-crib at some distance from the house, and gave us a bed in the husks. He told us to go into the swamp near by and pass the days there, as he expected a sloop from the gunboat fleet to get produce for the officers, on the arrival of which he would summon us. But the sloop did not come. Three days, November 8th, 9th and 10th, we spent in waiting, nights in the crib, days in wood and swamp. Wright brought us food.

At length, on the night of the 10th, our new-found friend told us of a neighbor up in the woods, one Brown. He was rather "secesh" in sentiment and quite a desperado, always wearing belt with bowie-knife and revolver, and when he went abroad also carrying a rifle. He had passed through Wright's yard muttering, and Wright was afraid of him. A man named Thompson had formerly lived with Brown. The two had quarrelled regarding

their housekeeper, and Thompson had shot Brown in the left arm, causing it to partially perish. This much to show the character of Brown.

Brown owned a good boat, and was perfectly at home on the water. Wright loaned us a rifle and a musket, the latter loaded, as he said, with nine balls, and advised us to go up to Brown's and invite him to take us to the Pass. On the same night, at about midnight, Crandall and I called on Brown. A log house in the forest, a fire on the hearth, after Southern fashion, a blanket hung over the doorway. This we brushed aside, stepped in, and brought our guns to "order arms." Housekeeper and children scattered over the floor, and on a single cot in the corner reposed the veritable Brown. He came to a sitting posture at once, and seemed to regard us as a surprise party.

The belt, the bowie and the revolver were all in their places around his waist, but our guns were one too many for him. I said to Mr. Brown: "We want to go down to East Pass. We notice you have a nice boat down here on the bayou, and we thought you might like to go down with us and bring the

boat back." He said: "It is a pretty rough night, and I have been sick for a day or two. Couldn't you wait until morning?" I replied: "We have sympathy for the sick, but if you understood our business as well as we do ourselves you would see how important it is for us to go at once. Under the circumstances, we are obliged to ask you to hurry up." He responded promptly, and we were soon ready to start.

It was necessary for him to gather a few things to carry on the voyage. We were greatly interested, and followed him about closely while he was collecting his goods. On the way to the boat we came upon an oppossum, so suddenly that he played "possum" and feigned death, which we made real and carried him along with us. At the boat, Wright joined us. Brown stepped into the bushes, and, bringing forth his rifle, placed it in the boat. I stepped in and sat down beside it, so that it might not fall into the water. Crandall delivered to Wright his guns and came aboard. Wright's theory was that if Brown carried us down, that would implicate him, and then he could not complain of Wright because he appeared on the scene and took his guns.

At the mouth of the bayou the doctor joined us, and soon we were out on the broad surface of the bay. It was a rough night, and we did not venture a great distance from the shore. After going three or four miles we felt that we were safely away from the place where we had spent three days and nights and were beginning to fear that we might be detected and also expose Wright. So we told Brown he might run to shore.

We drew the boat up on the beach, gathered wood and built a fire. Brown had brought an iron kettle and sweet potatoes. He was an expert at dressing and cooking game, and soon the "possum" was roasting in the kettle and the potatoes in the ashes. When the viands were thoroughly cooked we all partook heartily, and Brown especially so for an invalid. We told him as he had been disturbed he could sleep and we would watch. So he rolled himself in his blanket, and soon did not know whether he was on the beach or in his cot at home.

This was our last halting place. Thirty-three days had elapsed since we left Andersonville. In all our tramping and boating we had probably traveled

four hundred miles. Can you imagine our emotions on this last night, when we knew that before the next noon, if everything was propitious, we would be on board the United States gunboats.

Here, I wish to mention a few things of interest connected with this story. I have here a bag, which was sent, filled with tea, to Crandall in the army, from his home in Pennsylvania. Crandall was in the Army of the Potomac, was severely wounded in the Battle of the Wilderness, under Grant, early in May, 1864, and was captured at that time, and taken at once to Andersonville. This bag was filled with salt when we left Andersonville. It now contains shells which we gathered on the Island of Key West, Thanksgiving Day, 1864, on our way home from New Orleans to New York.

Here I have a little soldier's hymn book, on the margins of which I wrote in Andersonville.

And here is my Bible, which, providentially, I was prompted to take out of my haversack at the side of my saddle, the day I was captured. I carried it with me through all the prison life. It was of great comfort to me. I read it through, portions of it many

times. I am a believer in Providence, and in "Special Providence," after my experience. "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps," applies to every day of life, but sometimes in such a marked way, that he who would not see it and acknowledge it, must be both blind and ungrateful.

Dr. Barrows was captured at Plymouth, N. C., April 20, 1864, (when that town surrendered to the Confederate forces), and reached Andersonville May 6th following. He died March 6, 1872, at his home in Amherst, Mass. He now rests in the cemetery in that town, and on Memorial Days I have laid the flowers on his grave.

Crandall passed from earth April 12, 1891, at his home in Friendship, Alleghany County, Western York State. I have been at his home twice, and he has visited me in the city of Worcester. The winter of 1884–85, I went to see him, and we met for the first time since our escape; twenty years had elapsed, and our meeting was something beyond description.

Shortly after this Crandall succeeded in opening communication with our Floridian friends who so

greatly aided us on the coast of Florida. Here are two letters which he received, and which will explain themselves:

EUCHEE ANNA, Fla., Aug. 16, 1885.

MR. A. A. CRANDALL.

DEAR SIR: Your letter at hand. I am the man you seen when you were down here and I live eight miles north of where I lived when you seen me. George Brown is dead. He was trying to murder a young man and he knocked him off the boat in the Gulf of Mexico and he drowned. Mr. Thomas Reddick is in Jackson County if he is still alive. I will inquire and see if I can find his Post Office. Please write me where the other two men are and how they are getting along. I would be glad to see you and them if you can come and see me I would be very glad. I am getting very old and have nearly lost my eyesight which makes it difficult for me to work. I will close

Yours Truly,

ELI WRIGHT.

P. S. Brown has no children.

My wife says write her a long letter for she wants to know how the young man got after he left the house.

POLLY WRIGHT.

Send your letter in care of Walker Bowers."

Letter No. 2.

FREEPORT, Oct. 7, 1885.

MR. A. A. CRANDALL.

DEAR SIR: I seen a letter from you making inquiry of Reddick that seen 3 men here in 64. I can say to you that I set 3 men across alaquaw bayo the last of the war they said they had

got out of prison and wanted to get home one of them was a doctor I carried 2 of them over and came after the other for my boat was small an I could not take them all at once they gave me six dollars in Greenbacks an one of them said he wanted to give me more but would remember me as long as they lived they told me that they kep their money in a ball of thread my Father was with me we was working in some potatoes on the bayo Father stayed on the beech with one while I carried 2 over Father told them how to get to old man Eli Wrights an he would direct them how to get to east pass where the Yankes was they wrot our names down when I carried the last one over I was 15 years old then thats all I recollet about it now.

Respectfully yours,

GEORGE W. REDDICK.

My post office Freeport Walton County Florida."

At daylight, Nov. 11, 1864, we again boarded the boat and went out on the bay. A stiff breeze was blowing, the waves ran high and the boat skimmed over them like a bird. The boat was about five feet broad amidships and had one large sail which Brown set to the wind and, taking his seat at the stern, held the boat on her course. He was a splendid boatman. On we went over the bay, and just before noon we came in sight of the gunboat fleet and soon ran alongside the flag-ship, and the red, white and blue waved over us once more.

We were heartily and cordially received by the officers and crew, Captain Creasey commanding. Good and generous navy rations were given us.

As our clothing had been nearly torn off us by bushes and brambles, the men cheerfully gave us of their own ; and our toilets, though plain, were made with a sense of comfort and refreshment never experienced by the most favored son of fortune or fashion.

From East Pass we were sent to Barancas, Pensacola Harbor. We went over to Fort Pickens, on Santa Rosa Island, and each drew a complete outfit of government clothing.

From Barancas we went to New Orleans, and from this city to New York by boat. We came up New York harbor Dec. 3, 1864. At New York we parted with Crandall, he going to Harrisburg, Penn., to be mustered out of service. Barrows and I came on to Boston, where we were mustered out Dec. 7, 1864.

That night I reached my home in Conway, Franklin County, Mass. I had been absent three years. The last year in Southern prisons. I was an only child ; and when I went up to the little farm-house on the old hills of Conway, and awakened my parents

at midnight, there was such a meeting as is seldom witnessed on this earth.

I will only say, in closing, that *no one, except* an ex-prisoner of war can appreciate or understand my emotions as I looked upon the "old flag," swinging in the breeze and sunlight on that bright November day, from the flagship at East Pass. Its red never appeared so red, its white never so white, its blue, never so blue, and its stars never shone with such a lustre to my eyes as on that eleventh day of November, 1864. I looked upon it the first time for nearly a year.

I thought of the many times I had followed it as my leader on the march, of the many times I had rallied around it in battle to defend it, and I felt at that moment that I could go back and endure Andersonville and live all my experience over again rather than have that radiant banner dishonored or trailed in the dust.

And if this story has the least interest for any, or shall awaken a thought in any breast in regard to what it cost to uphold the old flag in the trying days of '61–'65, I shall feel that I have not spoken in vain.

Let us reverence the flag, let us ever be ready to defend it, and pass it on, with all its bright glories unsullied and undimmed to coming generations. More than fifty years ago the Young American in Paris, after hearing the lily, the rose, the thistle, and the shamrock extolled, responded:

"The lily shall fade and its leaves decay,
The rose from its stem shall sever,
The thistle and shamrock shall pass away,
But the stars shall shine forever."