Melvin Grigsby's book, part 6:

On the following pages is the continuation of Melvin Grigsby's *The Smoked Yank*. The proper citation for this book, and chapters 23 through 26 being reprinted for this issue, is:

Melvin Grigsby, *The Smoked Yank* (No place: privately printed, 1888), pp. 199 - 238.

There are 26 chapters and an appendix in this book consisting of 251 pages. Please note, that for historical accuracy, all of the original language and spelling has been kept intact and no derogatory or negative intention is meant against any individual or group. This includes race, gender, or political parties.

The Smoked Yank

Chapter XXIII.

Blood Hounds In Sight – Wake Up The Wrong Family Gentlemen (Very Little) Of Color – I Play That I Am A Slave Owner And Talk With Rebel Solders.

"*Jan. 10, 1865.* I am a free man to-day, but don't know how long I shall have the good fortune to remain so. Last night was a dark night and I had no trouble in climbing over the stockade. It is noon now and has commenced to rain."

Such is the entry made in my pocket diary on the day that I went to the woods for my last load of shakes. So written for the purpose of misleading my captors, should I have been recaptured. When I left the sergeant, as before narrated, I walked leisurely toward the woods, meeting any of the paroled men and some of the rebel soldiers. No one said anything indicating suspicion. Some of the rebel soldiers knew me as the captain of the chopping squad, and probably supposed I was still out in that capacity. Once in the woods I avoided meeting anyone and walked rapidly toward the north. When I had gone what I thought to be about a mile, I went into the swamp, got into the creek that flowed through it, and waded up the stream what I judged to be another mile. By this means I hoped to avoid leaving any scent for the pack of blood hounds that were taken every evening around the prison about two miles out. These hounds were so trained that they would take and follow the track of any prisoner who during the day had crossed the limits of the parole. As I waded along in the water thinking I was far enough out to be safe, and feeling pretty tired, for wading up stream in water, and cold water at that, is hard work, it began to rain. Knowing that a hard rain would as effectually remove all scent from my tracks as a running stream, I left the water. I sat down with my back against a large tree to rest. To keep off the rain, I had secured a large piece of bark and leaned it against the tree and sat under it. Sitting there, protected from the fast falling rain, I wrote the notes last quoted. Had just finished when I heard behind me voices of men, barking of dogs and the sound of horses' feet. Looking carefully, I saw through the thick woods the squad of rebel cavalry and the pack of blood hounds passing along a road that crossed the creek in sight of where I sat. Had I kept on wading up the creek I would surely have been so closed to them at the crossing as to have made my discovery by the dogs almost certain. They crossed the creek and stopped at a farm house that stood on a hill, a quarter of a mile or so beyond, and I crossed the dangerous line behind the dreaded hounds, and went rejoicing on my way, the greatest danger to the escaping prisoner from a rebel prison, safely passed. The rain came down in torrents relieving me from all anxiety in regard to the dreaded hounds. I traveled as nearly as I could tell North and West, intending to strike the railroad that runs West from Florence, so as to have some guide to go by in the night. Soon after dark I came to a plantation where there were negro quarters, and after some reconnoitering, I entered one, made myself known, and was received with generous hospitality. A guard was immediately placed so that no man, woman or child of my race might come upon me unawares, and I was warmed and fed in truly chivalrous style by the grateful negroes. Grateful then for blessings on hoped for, and fearful lest their deeds of gratitude might be discovered and bring them present woe.

Having rested and had my clothing well dried, and my shoes dried and softened with grease, I resumed my way along the railroad track. I came into Lynchburg about daylight, and there saw an old "uncle" getting ready to kill hogs. He was building up a great log-heap of dry logs, with "fat" pine for kindling, and putting stones among the logs with which to heat the water to scald the jogs, just as I had helped to do often at home. He no longer learned that I was an escaped Yankee than he urged me to "get away from hyer, young massa. Too many folks gwine to be around hyer soon." But he told me how to find another black man whom I could trust, and to him I went. He took me to a safe place in the woods, built for me a nice fire beside a big log; then brought me food and quilts to wrap up in; cared for me as tenderly as a mother does for her sick boy and them left me there to sleep. My diary reads:

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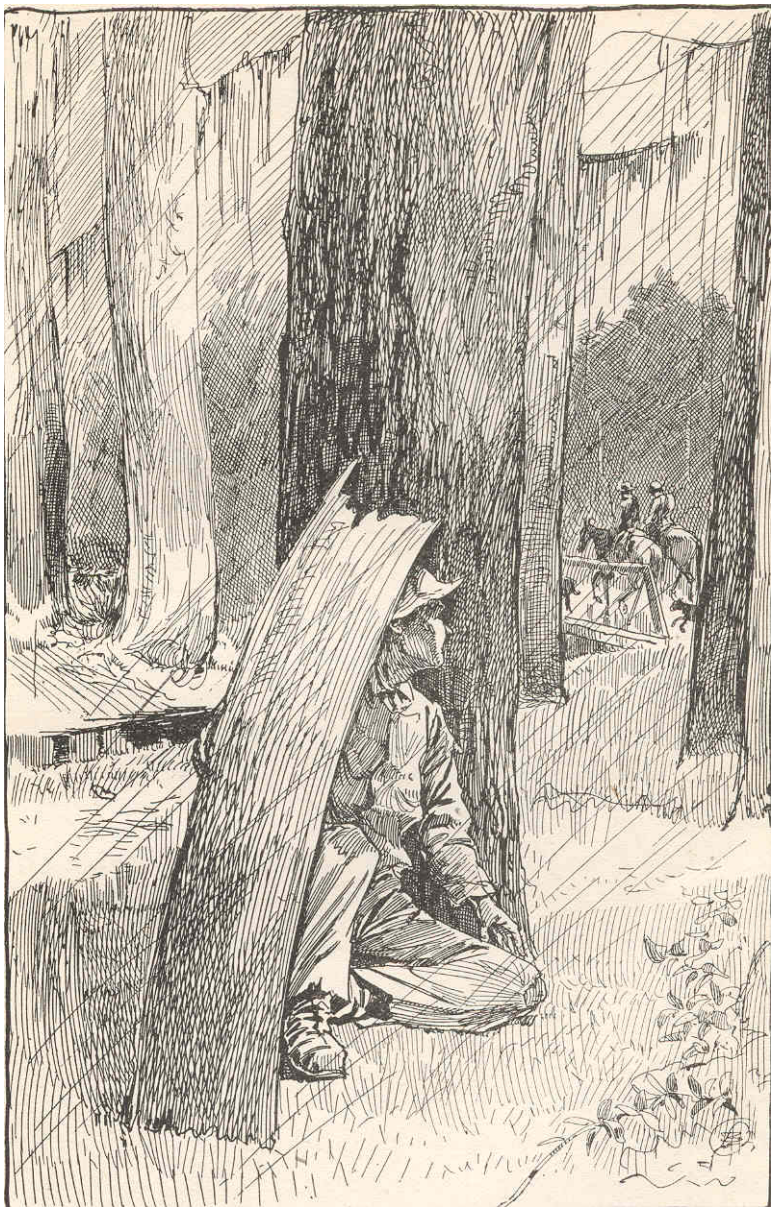
"*Jan. 11, 1865.* It rained until sundown. I was completely soaked. Stopped about 10 o'clock and got my clothes partially dried, then came four miles this side of Lynchburg. It was daylight when I stopped, completely fagged out; was so tired that I could not have walked another mile. My feet are blistered, and I am stiff and sore all over. Made a fire in the woods, and have stayed by it all day. Shall try to reach Sumpterville, twenty-two miles, to-night."

I dared not mention, in my notes, the stranger friend who built the fire, and bathed my feet, and rubbed my swollen joints, and brought me food and bed, lest some mishap might cause his left hand to know what his right hand had been doing.

That night I followed the wagon-road to Sumpterville. Nearing the town, and daylight coming on, I began to look for some negro quarter where I could make myself known and secure the usual assistance. At length, I saw near the road two rows of negro quarters. I went among them searching for one, the inmates of which were up. There was a stillness about them that made me feel suspicious. Negroes are early risers and you seldom find them all asleep on any large plantation. At length, finding no signs of anyone being awake, I rapped on the door of one of the houses. After repeated rapping some one called out: "Who's there?" It was no negro's voice. "Who's there?" came again, and evidently the voice of a white woman. I thought best to answer, so I said: "I am a soldier, and have lost my way." Then I heard: "John, John, wake up, there is some one at the door." When John awoke that woman must have had a hard time making him believe that there had been anybody at the door. I was wretchedly tired and my feet were painfully sore, but the first few minutes after leaving that door, I in some way got over a good deal of ground. I afterward learned that those negro quarters were occupied by the families of poor white soldiers who were being cared for by the town, and that some of the soldiers were at home on furlough.



Blood-Hounds In Sight

Fearing pursuit I left the highway and ran off across the fields. As daylight was coming on it was necessary for me to find a hiding place for the day, so I made for the first plantation in sight – a large one. There I found the usual negro quarters on each side of the street leading from the planter's house to the fields. Partly to get as far from white people as possible, and partly because there was smoke coming from the chimney, I knocked on the door of a house at the far end of the row. The door was opened by a gentleman of color, but not very much color; probably

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an octoroon, but as white as myself. Entering, there sat another gentleman of very pale color, dressed in broadcloth, a ring on his finger, a gold watch and chain – a regular dandy – smoking a finely flavored cigar by the fireplace. Well, I thought to myself, as I accepted a proffered cigar and took a seat, this is a pretty kettle of fish; I am in a scrape now, sure. In order to find out how the land lay I kept the two men talking. They were brothers. One was the overseer of the plantation, the other a clerk in a store at Charleston, out on a visit. They were slaves. Gathering from their conversation that their sympathies were on the right side I made myself and my wants known, and was at once carried off to a safe hiding place in the woods. To build a fire they thought might lead to discovery, so they furnished me with blankets to wrap myself up in while I slept. These men thought the best way for me to get beyond Sumpterville was to go straight through. They said: "Let one of our black boys walk behind you, just as though he was following his master, and no one will suspect you of being a Yankee." There were two battalions of rebel soldiers camped near the town, and they were roaming around everywhere. As I was as likely to meet them one place as another, I took the overseer's advice, and that night I started out, followed by my guide. No negro driver ever appeared less afraid of being noticed than I did, as I stalked through Sumpterville that evening, closely followed by my black slave. I had so little fear of detection that I walked up to the camp-fire of some of the soldiers, smoked a pipe of tobacco, and talked with them some time, taking care, however, to keep some of them talking all the time, and leave as soon as I had got all the information I wanted. These soldiers were on their way to the front to stop Sherman, their train being delayed by the washing away of a bridge. My guide took me a few miles beyond the town and left me with another negro, with whom I stayed the rest of the night and the next day, in order to get my blistered feet in better condition.

Chapter XXIV.

A Pressing Invitation – I Paddle A Canoe – Am Caught In A "Niggah House" – A Chivalrous Lady Pleads My Cause – A Night In A Swamp.

"*Jan. 14, 1865.* Did not reach the Santee river last night; it was farther than I thought. I had several narrow escapes, met ten or twelve soldiers at one time; believe they were deserters from Charleston. Met an officer in the road about one o'clock; came upon him unexpectedly and was somewhat confused, but managed to answer his questions, though he did not seem to be very well satisfied with my answers. His name was Captain Beetsom."

Was walking along a well-traveled road, plantation fields each side, and a full moon shining very brightly, when I met the officer mentioned. I heard what I supposed to be two negroes talking in a fence corner, and not being afraid of negroes, did not seek to avoid them. Coming to where they stood talking in the corner of a rail fence, one proved to be a rebel officer.

I said, "How d'y do;" and would have passed along but the officer indicated an almost commanding desire for further conversation, and I had either to stop or to run.

He wanted to know where I was going, why I traveled so late, where I belonged, etc. I told him I belonged to Major -----'s battalion, giving the name of one of the majors whose command was at Sumpterville, that we were on the way to Branchville when our train was delayed by the bridge being washed away; that my father lived across the Santee; that I had obtained leave to visit my home and meet the regiment at Branchville.

"What is your father's name?" I gave it. "Where does he live?" "Ten miles beyond the ferry." "In what parish?" That was a stunner. I didn't know what he meant by parish nor the name of any. Unconsciously I began to stammer. He instantly, and probably as unconsciously, sought to assist my impediment of speech by speaking the names of two. Thus assisted, I easily gave one of the names.

His suspicions seemed to be allayed and we fell into pleasant conversation. Talked of the war and its pros-

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pects, of Sherman and his probable movements. He told me of his experience in the Atlanta campaign. How he had been wounded and was now at home on sick leave. Even removed his clothes and showed me where the ball went in, just above his pants' pocket, and where it came out.

When I proposed to go he very cordially asked me to spend the rest of the night at his house. Couldn't possibly do so; must get to my father's early in the morning and to Branchville the next night. "But you can't cross the river before the ferry goes," he said, "and I will take you there on horseback as soon as we have breakfast and in plenty of time for the ferry. It only makes one trip a day." Thus he pressed me to stay in the kindest and most hospitable manner. I dared not risk it, and still I had no good excuse to offer. I was in a dilemma, but I cut it short by thanking him for his courtesy and walking off.

Out of sight, my walk became a run which I kept up for several miles, then stopped to listen. With my ear to the ground I heard the patter of a horse's feet; got behind a tree, and soon after along came the genial officer on his horse, a large revolver in one hand. He passed by and I followed him. Although he rode at a brisk canter I kept close enough to hear his horse, believing it safer to do so than to run the risk of being ambushed.

A few miles further on he came to a plantation, rode up to the house and aroused the planter. I slipped up close enough to hear all that was said. He had come to the conclusion that I was a deserter. The two men woke up the negroes at the one negro house and searched the house. My pursuer then concluded that he had passed me on the road and went back. The planter went into his house and I was soon in the hands of my friends in the negro quarters. One of these took me to where the ferry crossed the Santee.

The streams at that time were all swollen by the heavy winter rains. The swamp that bordered the Santee on that side was full of water so that the ferry had to make a trip of three miles. I was concealed near the ferry landing, and some negroes who were going across understood my situation and were to make it all right with the ferryman, who was a negro. The ferry came over about ten in the morning bringing a rebel officer on horseback who had pistols in the holsters of his saddle. I kept out of his sight until he rode away, then came from my hiding place. When the ferry was about to start, another white man arrived on horseback who wanted to cross also. This man was a surgeon in the rebel army.

The ferry started, the old ferryman poling the board along in water three or four feet deep, following the opening among the trees made by the submerged wagon-road. We had not gone far before the rebel began to ask me questions. I told him about the same story that I had told the officer in the road the night before. The ferryman, and the other negroes who were crossing and who were helping to push the boat, heard what the rebel was saying, and were evidently alarmed.

There was a canoe or dug-out tied to the side of the board. The old ferryman spoke to me, saying: "Say da', young massa, can you paddle a canoe?" "I reckon I can," said I. "The I'se mighty glad if you'd get into dat ar' canoe an' keep it from gittin' smashed up 'twixt de boat an' de trees."

I got into the canoe well knowing that the darky had planned to get me away from the rebel. I paddled ahead, gradually drawing away from the ferry until a turn in the road put me out of sight, then I paddled with all my might. Reaching the swollen and swift-flowing river, I did not feel safe in the easily tipped canoe. Money wouldn't have hired me to attempt a crossing in such a craft. It was getting dark too. There seemed no other way to do, so I ventured into the rushing water and safely landed on the other side.

Fearing the rebel had regarded me with suspicion, and desiring to mislead him, I pulled the canoe out of the water some distance below the road, and hid it in the brush, then concealed myself near enough to the landing to hear what might be said when the boat arrived. The way that old negro lashed me with his tongue when he got over and saw no boat, was amusing. The rebel, too, had thought all the time that I was a deserter. When he rode off I came out as the smart old darky had expected me to do, and he explained with great gusto how he had done "all dat cussin' jus' to t'row dat white ossifer off from de scent; knowed all de time dat you would turn up roun' hyer sumwheres soon as dat odder white man done gone out e'n de way."

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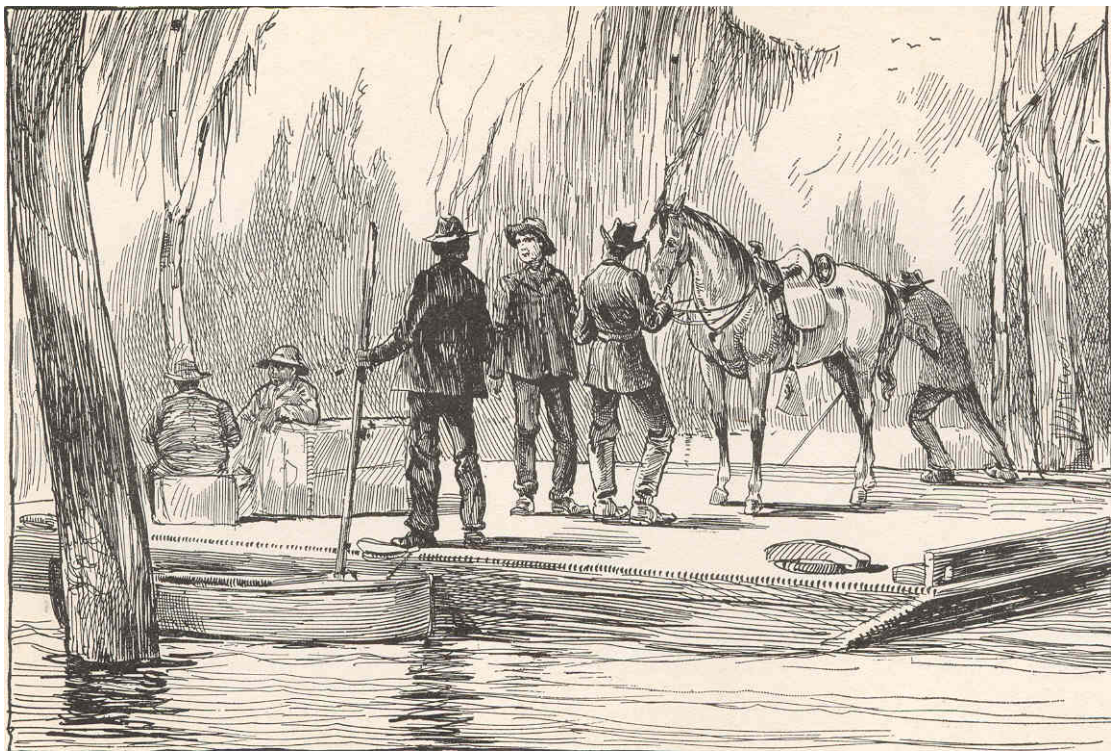

"Say Young Massa, Can You Paddle A Canoe?"

It will be noticed that in my notes taken as I traveled, little reference is made to the assistance received from colored friends. They furnished me with food, concealed me in some place where I could sleep during the day, either in secluded woods by a fire, or covered up in a fodder or gin house. To have mentioned these things would have exposed them to possible discovery and punishment. My notes of that crossing are as follows:

"*Jan. 15, 1865*. Did not travel last night. Heard that the swamp was up so that I could not get to the river on foot. Came to the river to-day and had to wade through water up to my shoulders to get there. Some negroes are here who have been waiting two days to get across. They say the ferry is three miles long, and that the boat will not be over until tomorrow."

"*Jan. 16, 1865*. The boat came over to-day. A rebel officer came over with it; managed to escape his notice. Just as we were about to start, a white man, a surgeon in the rebel army, rode up. Did not see him in time to get out of the way and had to cross over with him. He asked me some troublesome questions, but did not make much."

Having obtained directions from the negroes, I started on toward Branchville.

I walked rapidly until about one o'clock, when, being tired and hungry, and seeing a light in a negro quarter that I was passing, I concluded to rest and get something to eat.

In answer to my rap on the door, "Who's da?" came in a woman's voice. "Is that you aunty?" I said. "Where is uncle? I want to see him." "Who's you prowlin' around dis time o' night?" I told her that I was a white man and had lost my way. She said her man had gone to a "white folks'" house, and that I could go over there to see him. I gave her to understand that I did not want to be seen by an white man, and, if I had told her to open the door so that I might sit by the fire until uncle got back. I sat down by the fire when she remarked, "Dat fire's gittin' mighty low," and went out. I heard her chopping with an axe and supposed she would be in presently to replenish the fire.

The next thing I heard was, "Come out of that niggah quarter! You damn white ------ of a -------." I opened the door and there in the moonlight, twenty yards away, stood a young man in rebel uniform, with a double-barreled shotgun in his hands.

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As I stood in the door-way he gave vent to a perfect volume of oaths and vile epithets, such as, "Come out of that ar' niggah house, or I will blow your d—d head off!" Putting on more assurance than I felt, I said, "You had better find out who you are talking to, sir, before you use such language. If you are so keen to shoot, you better go to the front and try it on the Yanks."

Somewhat cooled down, he then asked me to give an account of myself. I gave him the Sumpterville delayed-train story.

"What regiment does your battalion belong to?" he said. This was another stunner. I did not remember to have heard the number of the regiment. Answering at random, "The 37th South Carolina," I said. "The h—l you do! There ain't no 37th South Carolina. Can't play that game on me. I arrest you, sir."

I stuck to my story and intimated that a South Carolina soldier must be lamentably ignorant of what was going on in the state if he didn't know that there was a 37th South Carolina. I told him that if he even had this year's almanac in the house, I could prove it to him. He took me into the house, saying that he was going to Orangeburg after breakfast, and that he would take me along and let me convince the provost marshal that there was a 37th South Carolina.

We sat down by the fire. I looked the young man over and concluded that if he undertook to take me to Branchville, as he proposed, in a one-horse buggy and guard me with a shot-gun, there would be trouble on the way. Still the best plan for me was to get out of the scrape by strategy if possible.

The young man belonged to the rebel cavalry. He was at home on a furlough and was going to Orangeville that day to get married. His brother had left about one o'clock, so as to reach a station in time for an early train that would take him back to his regiment at Richmond. The negro man had gone with this brother. The negro woman took me for one of the rebel deserters that infested the neighborhood, often robbing chicken-roosts and pig-pens, and making themselves a terror to the negroes generally. She had chopped with the axe to make believe, then ran to the white folks' house, where the people were up to "speed the parting guest," and told them that there was one of the deserters in her house.

The soldier was right about there being no South Carolina regiment numbered thirty-seven. There were more than thirty-seven regiments in the army from South Carolina, but as each city was ambitious to put the first regiment in the field, there was a 1st South Carolina regiment from Charleston, a 1st from Columbia, and so on. A 2d, from several places, and so with each number. So, at least, this soldier said. Still, I persistently stuck to my story; claimed that my regiment was organized in the northeast corner of the state, was made up lately of home-guards, old men and boys, and I believe he finally concluded that it was possible for him to be wrong.

We sat there talking until nearly breakfast time. Then the young soldier, taking his shot-gun, went out on the porch, and as he stood there giving some directions about the horse he was to drive to Orangeburg, his sister-in-law came into the room.

She was the wife of the soldier who had left at one o'clock and mother of a bright little girl of five or six years, whom I held on my knee and had been telling stories to about the Yankees.

The lady expressed the hope that I would have no trouble in making everything right when I got to Orangeburg. Said she was sorry to have her brother-in-law take a prisoner with him when he was going to meet his bride.

Taking my cue from her sympathetic mood, I begged her to intercede for me with her brother-in-law. I told her I only had verbal permission from my officers to leave the command. That the provost marshal would not believe my story; that he would hold me under arrest. That my officers would be sent on from Branchville to the front, and there would be no telling how long I would be held as a prisoner in a guardhouse. That my people, my mother and sisters, would be sure to hear of it, and they would be sorely distressed. That I would much rather the news went home that I was shot than that I had been arrested as a deserter. I assured her, with tears in my eyes, on the word

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and honor of a gentleman, that there was nothing I so much desired as to get to the front where I could fight for my country.

This last was truth; but oh, the lies I told that lady. Was I excusable under the circumstances? Ask some moral philosopher. Let him reason it out. To me, life was sweet, liberty dear. If conscience is any guide, mine at that moment held me guiltless of all wrong. A man may talk about conscience while he steals your spoons, but I doubt if such honest tears as mine were can be made to trickle down his cheeks while he is doing that which conscience holds to be wrong.

Tears came to the lady's eyes, too. She went out on the porch. I heard, but cannot recall exactly her words. As I stood there listening, it occurred to me that here was a sample of that Southern chivalry which I had always believed in, but seldom had a glimpse of. He tried to refuse. She would not let him.

"Why, John," she said, "you must let him go. Think of his mother and sisters. What would your mother and your sisters say? Think of your Maggie, John, and this is your wedding day. Would you have this boy curse you on your wedding day? Oh, you must let him go." Then her arms went around his neck, there was one long, resounding kiss, and she brought in the gun.

The soldier followed her, laughing. He said he supposed he would have to let me off, as there was no use trying to refuse a woman. We all sat down to breakfast. That over, the soldier invited me to ride with him to where the Branchville road turned off from that to Orangeville, which I did. There was no hypocrisy in the thanks I tried to express to the lady of that Southern home as I took her hand at parting.

At the forks of the road I parted with the young solder, wishing him joy at his wedding, and thanking him warmly for his kindness. "Don't think you have much cause for thanking me," he said meaning that to his sister-in-law I owed my release. "Well, you have both given me more cause for thanks than you are aware of," I said, turning from him to conceal the smile I could not suppress.

No boy just out of school, no bird just freed from a cage, ever whistled or sang with a gayer heart than mine, as I went merrily on my way that bright frosty morning.

For a while the road led me to a timbered country, but at length I came to where the road was a lane, with cultivated fields on each side. Some distance ahead I saw plantation houses and concluded to get by them by walking through the corn field on the opposite side.

Nearing these houses I saw a white man on the porch, and perceived at the same time that he was watching me. Presently he shouted and motioned to me to come to him. I kept on as though I had neither seen or heard. Then he called to some one to loose the dogs, and gun in hand, started on my the run in my direction.

Naturally fleet of foot and long-winded, I was soon in the woods beyond that corn field, and glad to find a swamp there. Wet ground at first, then a little water, then ankle deep. Straight on I ran, knowing that no ordinary white man could keep me in sight, and that dogs could not track me through water. When I had gone far enough to feel perfectly safe, I climbed into some wild vines, where I could rest and be out of the water, and there I stayed until dark.

That was a hard night. It rained and was pitch dark. I could not see the trees; had to feel for them with a stick. I fell over logs, got tangled in vines, pricked by thorns and scratched by briars.

Toward morning, guided by the sound of crowing cocks, I got out of the swamp and found a negro quarter. Woefully tired, famished for food, wet to the skin, with torn and muddy clothes, and bleeding wounds, I was surely a pitiable object as I stood by the pitch pine fire those trusty darkies built for me.

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Chapter XXV.

I Steal Mules And Take A Ride – A Well-Laid Scheme "Gang Aft Aglee" – Some Dangerous Places – Crossing The Salkahatchie.

That day, January 17, I was furnished with some dry clothes, was well warmed and fed, and laid away in a fodder house while my shoes and pants were repaired. Was considerably disgusted to learn that I was only three miles from the place where the man took after me in the corn field. I had spent the night traveling, in more or less of a circle, in a swamp that bordered Cattle Creek. I was now twelve miles southeast of Branchville and desired to cross the Edisto River. Heavy rains had swollen all the streams and filled the swamps with water. Al the stream in that part of South Carolina run from northwest to southeast. As I was making for Savannah, my route lay across all the streams and swamps. Nearly all of the roads run parallel with the streams. The inhabitants of the country were in a state of excitement and alarm, apprehending an invasion of the state by Sherman's army. Rebel soldiers were being collected at Branchville and other points and preparations made to meet the invader. The masters feared that their negroes would rise en masse, and go to meet their deliverers. Desertion from the rebel troops was frequent. The ferries and bridges on all important streams were guarded, and mounted patrols were upon all the highways. Under these circumstances it was exceedingly difficult for me to pass through the country. Even the negroes, always so willing to furnish food, or to travel at night as guides, were afraid to stir out at night lest they be caught by the patrols and killed for example. I spent two days and nights trying to find some unguarded place where I could cross the Edisto.

Finally I met a young negro who told me there was no guard on the bridges that crossed the two Edisto Rivers above where they came together. He said the water was so deep between the two bridges that no guard was necessary. This boy had daring enough for anything. He wanted to take me across these bridges, which he said he could reach by wading and swimming, but as it was ten miles from his home to the nearest bridge he was afraid he could not make the trip and get back in one night.

I suggested that we borrow a couple of his master's mules and ride. He was willing to run the risk of being caught putting the mules into the stable when he should return, but was not willing to risk being caught trying to take them out. So about 11 o'clock that night, while the negro boy was conveniently posted so as to give a signal in case of danger, I slipped into the barn and brought out a span of mules.

We had to ride bareback, because the saddles were at the house where they could not be easily obtained. I had wondered how this boy expected to pass the patrol on the road, traveling this way. Usually when I traveled with a negro for guide he walked ahead, and there was little danger of our meeting any white man whom his quick eye or attentive ear did not first discover. I asked this boy how we were to get the patrol on mules. "Don' you gib yourself no trouble 'bout dat, young massa; ain't gwine to meet no patrol on dat road what I'se gwine to trabble. You stick to dat ar mule, and I'se gwine to land you safe on todder side o' bofe dem ar Edisto Ribbers." I did stick to the mule, and there was little danger of meeting patrols on the road he "trabbled."

It was through fields, over fences, and through by-paths in the woods. How he could tell where he was going in the dark puzzled me. We were several times in water that caused the mules to swim before we reached the first bridge, and had to swim in several places between the bridges, but he landed me safe across both Edistos, anddid not leave me until he had turned me over to another negro two miles beyond.

Riding bare-back on a mule was to me a new kind of exercise. The parts that rested on the mule were so badly excoriated that for several days I could not walk in a natural manner.

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The next night I passed through Midway, and stopped with a negro who was a coachman for his master, and was going to cross the Salkahatchie to bring his master home. This rives was also guarded. Troops under the rebel Hardee, and the cavalry general, Wheeler, were making preparations to meet and oppose Sherman, should he attempt to come that way. The greatest uncertainty prevailed as to what route Sherman would take. The course that seemed to be best for me was to go toward Savannah as rapidly as possible, provided I could get through the lines of the enemy.

I anticipated difficulty in getting over the Salkahatchie, for along that stream the rebels were preparing to make a stand. Not only bridges and causeways were guarded, but there was also a line of pickets close enough to be in sight of each other, walking their beats all along the stream. When the negro proposed to take me in a close carriage through this army of rebels and across a guarded bridge and causeway, I thought it a good scheme. He had a pass which read: "Pass my black boy, Sam, and carriage," and was signed by a colonel. We had arranged that in case the carriage should be stopped and questions asked, I was to claim to be a relative of the colonel on a visit to the family. If the guard at the bridge refused to let me over, I was to get out and pretend to be waiting for the return of the carriage until I could secede. But "the best laid plans o' mice and men gang aft aglee." After waiting all one day and night for this chance to ride in a colonel's coach, it turned out in the morning when we were ready to start that one of the ladies of the family had concluded to ride over after the colonel. Had I been better clad and sufficiently posed as to what regiments were camped beyond the river, it would have been fine work, and feasible, to have introduced myself to this family and secured a ride under the protection of the pass. As it was, I had no time for preparation, and thought best to try some other plan.

I remained all that day in the negro quarters where two women where at work carding and spinning wool. About noon two of Wheeler's cavalry rode up, hitched their horses and came into the house and ordered the women to get dinner for them. I had crawled under a bed when these men approached the house. One of the said he had been up all night and would take a nap while the dinner was cooking, so he came into the room where I was and lay down on the bed that I was under. I did not sleep while I was there.

As soon as it was dark I resumed my journey, keeping the traveled road that led to the river; met a good many people, and some on horseback overtook and passed me. None of them saw me, however.

My sense of hearing had become so acute that I could hear even the footsteps of a man long before I could distinguish his form by starlight, while the gallop of a horse, I verily believe I could hear, when listening with my ear to the ground, for half a mile. Once, while sleeping in the woods in the daytime, I was awakened by the sound of approaching footsteps, and on looking around, saw a negro at least a hundred yards away, coming with my dinner.

I had resolved that night, having become well rested, to cover a long distance. I had not gone far when I came to where some soldiers had camped by the side of the road. I made a long detour in the road to get by them, and when I came to a road, supposed it was the same I had been on, and walked until nearly morning before finding out that the solders were camped where two roads crossed, and that the one I had take ran at right angles to the way I wanted to go. Toward morning I found a large number of negroes, men, women, and children, sleeping in an old unused store building at somebody's corners. They had been brought from a plantation near Savannah to keep them from running away to Sherman. They told me to cross the Salkahatchie and travel down the west side, and I would come to Sherman's men, sure.

The next night I traveled to within a mile of where the rebels, under Hardee, were building fortifications and guarding the bridge and causeway that crossed the river and the swamp. This was the place the negro had proposed to take me over in the carriage. I think he called it Brunson's bridge. After hiding during the day as usual, I concluded to find some negro who would go with me as a guide, before attempting to pass the guards and cross the river.

About 11 o'clock that night I entered the cabin of an old negro, to whom I had been directed, and sat talking with him by the fire, when four or five "Johnnies" opened the door without knocking, and came in. They were from a camp near by. All very young. I began at once to ask them what regiment they belonged to, what they were doing out so late, and to the immense delight of the old negro, who was at first badly scared, I kept them talking, first one

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and then another, about soldier life and Sherman, until they were ready to go, and not one of them thought of asking me where I belonged.

These men wanted to buy chickens and eggs, and the old man hastened their departure by telling them to come right along with him and he would show them a black man who would take them to a plantation where there were plenty.

On his return the old man said the safest way to cross the river was to go south to where it spread out, and formed what was called Whippey Swamp, and that I had better not try it without having some black man, who knew the swamp well, for a guide. He then went with me several miles, and left me with another negro. This man knew of two negroes, who had been brought from their master's home near Savannah, and who had run away, and were not trying to get back. They were now hiding in the woods, waiting for a night dark enough to enable them to crawl between the guards that were posed all along the edge of the swamp. He proposed to put me under their care.

The next day this man and his wife (they had no children) left me locked up in their cabin, and went to work in some field, so far away that they did not return for dinner. At night the woman came back alone, saying her husband had gone to find out about the runaways.

I had eaten supper and was enjoying a pipe by the fire, when we were startled by a rapping on the door. The woman had locked it by pulling the latch string to the inside. In other words, the latch string wasn't out. To her question, "Who's da?" the answer came: "Soldiers, aunty. What you got yor do' fastened fah? Hurry up and let us in." She mentioned to me to get into the bedroom, and she made all the noise she could, so that mine might not be heard. When she opened the door the two men came in. Said they must have some washing done, and despite her protests, saying she had worked hard all day, and couldn't possibly do it, they proceeded to take off the shirts and drawers that she must wash while they sat by the fire in pants and coat. They paid no attention whatever to her protests; just told her to go right along and do it, and that she wouldn't get anything for it either, if she made any more fuss about it.

In the black part of the bedroom there was a kind of a window – a square opening in the wall, with a board door hung on leather hinges, and fastened on the inside. I tried to open this and get out, but the door fitted into the frame so that it would not open without noise. The woman probably heard the noise, and understood what I was trying to do, for she came into the bedroom and got a padlock and chain, and proceeded to lock the bedroom door from the outside, putting the chain through a crack in the partition and hole in the door. Under cover of the noise she made I pushed the back window open and crawled out. She soon came out to put her kettle on for the washing, such work usually being done out of doors, and gave a low whistle. This I answered, and she came and told me where to hide until her husband returned.

The two soldiers belonged to some general's bodyguard. The general had put up for the night at the white folks' house of the plantation and the guards had camped in the yard. This the negro learned when he came back, and also where they were from and all about them. When he was ready to start away with me we passed along by their camp, and I lit my pipe at their fire and talked awhile with them. Stated to them that I belonged to one of the regiments that were camped up at the bridge and was out after provision. Partly because it was my mother tongue and partly by practice, I had learned the we'uns and you'ns, the broad a's and the no r's until, as this negro and many others told me, there was no danger of anyone suspecting me of being from the North.

Accompanied by my negro guide, I walked several miles to the cabin of another man who knew where the runaways were concealed. There I had to wait while the runaways were sent for.

As I sat by the big log fire which was burning in the old-fashioned fireplace, talking to a lot of negroes who had gathered there about the war, the Northern army and the proclamation of Lincoln, that freed every slave, suddenly and without warning, in walked the master.

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He was a tall slender man with gray hair and long gray beard, a typical Southern gentleman. It was so late at night that we had not expected such an interruption, or a guard would have been placed to give warning. I had noticed the black eyes and shining white teeth of several little pickaninnies peeping in at the cracks of the cabin a little while before, but did not apprehend any danger from them. One had gone to the big house and told the massa that there was a white man in the negro house.

Here he was, anger flashing from his eyes and ready to resent, if not to punish, a violation of a rigidly enforced Southern rule. No white man was allowed to enter another's negro quarter without the consent of the master.

Knowing this, I rose instantly, and before the old man had begun to vent his ire, I was making an apology. "You must excuse me, sir," I said, "for being in your negro quarters without your permission. I belong to General -----'s body-guard. We are camped at Mr. -----'s plantation. The large army under Hardee near there, have about used up everything on the place, and I came down here to see if I could find some chickens and eggs for my mess. I thought it was too late to disturb you and was waiting here while one of your men went to hunt up some provisions for me. I trust, sir (the old man had on a blue Yankee overcoat) that the color of your coat does not indicate your sentiments. If it does, you will have to excuse me from making any apology whatever."

This shot struck home. The old man straightened up and eloquently repelled the insinuation. He related with pride the sacrifices he had made to defend his country against the hired robbers of the black abolition ruler. He had sent his children and his grandchildren. All of his kith and kin able to bear arms were in the confederate armies, where they would spill the last drop of their blood rather than let the feet of the ruthless invader trample the sacred soil of South Carolina. "This coat, sir, was captured in honorable combat, and sent to me as a trophy of the war. As such, I am proud to wear it." It was easy to keep the old gentleman talking. In the meantime, one of the young negroes slipped out to warn those who had gone after the runaways, and might be returning, of the situation. When the old man had talked his talk out, he invited me to go with him into the house and spend the night. Said he had a relative there one a visit who was a young man and a soldier like myself. An officer of Wheeler's cavalry. Thought two soldiers would enjoy visiting together. He pressed the invitation in truly chivalrous fashion. I regretted very much that I was obliged to return as soon as possible to camp, and could not therefore accept. Then he pressed me to just come in and have a glass of peach brandy and a cigar. To get around that I pleaded great haste and promised to come down the next day and call on his relative and swap war stories with him. The planter returned to his house not seemingly well pleased, and I did not linger there to learn the effect his report might have on the visiting officer from Wheeler's cavalry.

I was then taken about two miles and put in charge of the two runaway negroes. They had arranged to cross the swamp that night. Their preparations were all made. They had an axe, some pitch pine torches, and had selected a place where there were weeds and brush, to cross the beat of the rebel guard.

We passed the guard and gained the edge of the swamp. Here our first difficulty was the thin ice that had formed on all of the still water. This was the coldest night I had experienced in that state, and the only one that I remember being cold enough to freeze ice on a stream.

To break this ice without making sufficient noise to alarm the guard, rendered our progress for the first two or three hundred yards exceedingly slow.

When fairly into the swamp we lit the pine torches. Here we found the undergrowth of brush and vines almost impenetrable. The water was from two to four feet over that part of the swamp that would have been dry ground during the summer season. The streams where the current was, we either had to swim, or bridge by cutting small trees and falling them across the stream. There was ice to break wherever there was no current. We were soon wet from head to feet, often falling in the matted vines and sometimes stepping into deep holes. One of the negroes was of middle age, the other a mere boy. A hardy man used to exposure can stand an hour or so of that kind of work and call it rather tough, but a whole night's struggle through thorns and briars, on turning logs and slippery poles, sometimes breaking ice, sometimes swimming in ice-cold water, will try the endurance of the toughest man. The boy's courage soon gave out. When we came to a small island where there was dry ground he lay down,

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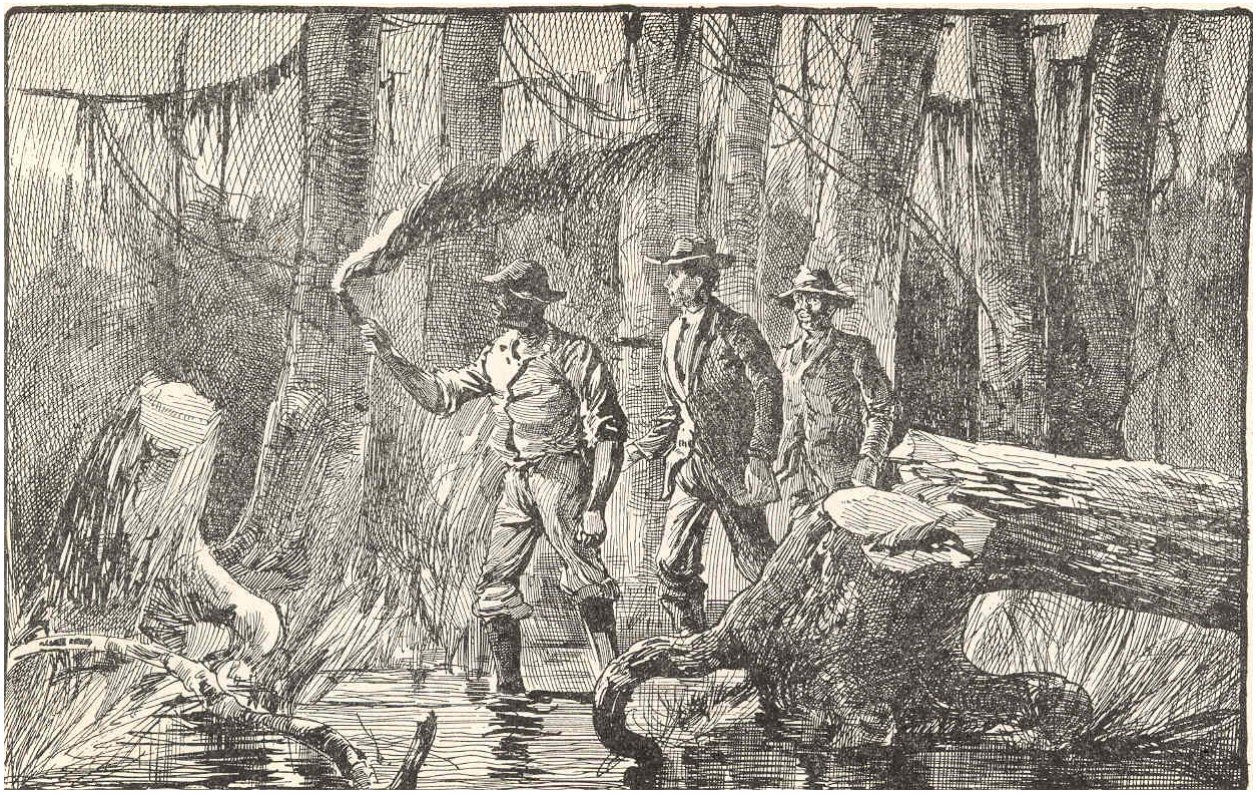
and declared, his limbs shaking and his teeth chattering all the while, that "he would radda' die right den and da' dan to go eny fudda'." He would not be persuaded and we could not carry him. The man cut a good withy switch and warmed his jacket.



Guided Through A Swamp By Runaway Slaves.

It was broad daylight when we got over, so numbed and stiffened with cold that we could scarcely move. We had kept a torch burning, otherwise we could not have built a fire. I thought I never would get warm and my teeth would never cease to chatter, nor my body to ache. I stayed by that fire all day, striving in vain to get warm. At night a negro, sent by the runaways, took me to his cabin, and doctored me up with pepper tea and hot victuals, then wrapped in quilts and hid me in a fodder house. I remained that night and the next day. I did not deem it prudent to keep in company with the runaways, because if captured with them I would surely be killed, and I could not be seen with them by any white man without his suspicions being aroused.

Chapter XXVI.

"The Girl I Left Behind Me" – The Grand Old Flag And The Boys In Blue – I Am Dubbed "Smoked Yank".

I was now on the west side of the Salkahatchie, between thirty and forty miles from Pocotalago, where a portion of Sherman's army was in camp. There were no more rivers or swamps in my way and there was a well traveled

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road to follow, but there were swarms of rebel cavalry and rebel citizens all around me, watching for the approach of Sherman's army, picking up deserters and moving their slaves and other property to more secure places. There were white men on guard at every plantation and the negroes were in such a state of anxiety and terror, and so suspicious of a white man, that I found it almost impossible to communicate with them. They seemed afraid to talk with me or help me in any way, lest I should turn out to be a spy seeking to betray them.

I was obliged to use the utmost caution and to travel only by day because I could get no guide, and if I traveled at night I could not tell where or when I might run on to the patrols or ambushed guards. Wearily and stealthily I crept along the edge of the swamp a mile or so from the road, making only ten or twelve miles in a day. Often when I could not find cotton or fodder in which to hide, I had to shiver with cold all night. The last three or four days were the most difficult and trying of my journey. I did not get food but two or three times and I hardly slept at all, but the thought of freedom, now so near, nerved me up and in a measure compensated for lack of food and sleep.

Along nine o'clock in the forenoon of February 1st, I began to hear a rumbling sound which I knew must be made by loaded wagons moving on the road. Whether they belonged to retreating rebel or an advancing Union army, I could not tell, and I dared not take the risk of finding out.

About noon, as I was moving cautiously along, peering in all directions from behind one tree before slipping to another, suddenly there burst upon my listening ears the joyous notes of "The Girl I Left Behind Me," played by a full brass band. I knew that there was no rebel army with brass band in that vicinity, and I started on a full run toward the welcome sound.

And There With Colors Flying And Band Playing Go The Boys In Blue

Reader, I can but faintly describe to you the kaleidoscopic pictures which flashed across my mental vision during those supreme moments, as I ran, with hope before and fear behind. Home, father, mother, brother, sisters,

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the grand old flag, the boys in blue, these for an instant before me, and my feet seemed to spurn the passing ground – then, as the deeds of a lifetime rush together into the memory of a drowning man – there rose up every scene that I had witnessed, or heard described, of the tortures inflicted on escaped prisoners brought back; the tearing of blood-hounds, the hanging by the thumbs, the agonies of the stocks; these behind, and I would turn in mortal terror, almost hearing the halt! halt! of dreaded pursuers. Thus, with mingled feelings of joy and fear, I ran on for nearly a mile through thick woods. Coming to an opening in the woods I climbed on to a fallen tree, and there across a field, marching in the road, with band playing and colors flying to go the boys in blue. I take off my hat and try to shout. I cannot. My heart is in my throat. My strength is gone. I recline against the limbs of the tree, and sob and cry like a child, and wonder whether my strength will come back, or whether I must sit there helplessly and let that army go by.

There was a slough in front of me, across that a house, and a road leading from the house down the side of the field to the road where the army was marching. Two men ride up to the house, and as they see me, and draw their revolvers, my strength returns. I throw up my hands and call to them not to shoot, that I am an escaped prisoner.

These men belonged at the headquarters of Hazen's division of the Fifteenth Army Corps. One of them was an orderly, and the other, Pete McDowell, was quartermaster. McDowell was from La Crosse, Wisconsin, where one of the companies of my regiment was enlisted, and I had no trouble in satisfying him that I was what I represented myself to be. They secured for me a place to ride and I camped that night with General Hazen's orderlies. They were all young men, about my own age, and they treated me with great kindness. They sat up that night until a late hour listening to my account of prison life and of my escape. One of them, a bright young man, who was General Hazen's private orderly, and who was nick-named Stammy, because he stammered, declared that I had earned the garter, and insisted on performing the ceremony of knighthood before I went to bed. He had noticed my unavailing efforts to remove with soap and water the effects of pitch-pine smoke from my hands and face, and so, drawing his sword, he delivered an impromptu, humorous harangue, slapped me on the back with the flat of the blade, and dubbed me "*The Smoked Yank*."

I kept no diary from the 18th of January to the 1st of February, because I lost my pencil and could not get another. The morning after reaching the army I wrote, "February 2."

"The army was in motion early this morning. I had breakfast – never knew before how much I liked coffee – then rode with Stammy, General Hazen's orderly, up to General Sherman's headquarters. I reported to the adjutant-general. The general was standing near, heard me, and took me into his room. He seemed very much concerned about the condition of the prisoners at Florence. He made notes on a map of all that I could tell him about the rebel armies and the places where I had crossed the large streams and swamps. He said that some ambulances would go back to Pocotaligo to-day and that I could go with them and go home, or could go with the army to the sea again, and then go home. I told him that I preferred to remain with the army. He called the adjutant and told him to see that I was provided for. The adjutant said he would get me a horse and arms, and that I could join the escort. I prefer to remain with the boys at Hazen's headquarters with whom I am already acquainted."

I rode that day with Stammy in a two-horse carriage which he had captured, and was taking along, as he said, to give the old man (meaning Hazen) a ride once in a while. Stammy was the pet of the division. I still wore my rebel jacket, the same that Barrett took from me, but which I had recovered before leaving Florence. As we rode along every now and then some soldier would call out and say, "Hello there, Stammy! Where did you get that Johnnie?" Stammy would say, "Th-th-is a-a-int n-n-no J-J-Johnnie, th-th-is is a Smo-o-ked Yank." In this way he introduced me all along the line, and *Smoked Yank* was the only name I was known by in that army.

Within a few days I secured a horse, a revolver and carbine, and began to take part in the great march. My regiment was not with Sherman's army, and I was therefore a detachment of myself, commanded only by myself. I got acquainted with Howard's scouts and rode with them whenever they had work to do that I cared to take part in, but whether with them, or with the common "bummers," I was always at the head of one or the other of the columns. The following is a sample from my note book:

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"*Feb. 9*. Second Division, 15th Corps, reached the south branch of the Edisto to-day. The bridge had been partly destroyed. Some logs were piled up on the other side forming a kind of breastwork. Myself and three others were on the advance. It looked as though there might be rebs behind the logs. I left my horse and crawled along on the inside of a corn-field fence to find out. About eighty yards from the logs I stopped behind a clump of china trees. As I lay there on the ground watching, I saw a man's head over the logs. I was just drawing a bead on him, when about twenty rebels arose with a yell and fired at me. The balls struck all around me and sent the bark flying from the trees. They called out, "Come in you Yank! Come in you Yank!" There was enough of the bridge left for a man to cross on. I had no notion of coming in. As soon as our boys farther back began to fire, the rebs dodged down, and I got up and ran through the cornfield. They fired on me again, but I was not hit, though it was a close call – shall be more careful hereafter."

The night before the city of Columbia was captured, Hazen's division camped near the river opposite the city. The rebels shelled us during the night. I slept that night near Hazen's tent with my head against the body of a large tree. In the morning, before I had made my toilet, General Logan rode up to see Hazen. As he sat on his horse near my tree, waiting for Hazen to dress and come out, a cannon-ball passed through the top of the tree cutting off some limbs. Hazen came out of his tent, and Logan, who was in a jovial mood, with a gesture toward the city, said: "Hail, Columbia, happy land, if this town ain't burned, then I'll be damned!"

A little while after I saw Logan again. He had a rifled cannon in a road that led to one of the burned bridges. When the gunners had the cannon loaded, Logan would sight it, then climb on to the high bank beside the road, adjust his field-glass, give the order to fire, and watch to see where the ball would strike. If I remember rightly he was aiming at the State House, and aiming well, for he would wave his hat and call for three cheers for South Carolina after each discharge. He was having a high old time.

When the pontoon bridge was ready, I crossed it with Howard's scouts and rode into the city. We were the first into the city, and saw many rebel soldiers, officers and men, taking leave of their friends.

That night the great fire broke out which destroyed a large portion of that beautiful capital and left thousands of people houseless and homeless. Many of these applied for permission to accompany our army when we continued out march. They were called refugees, and were divided up among the divisions of the 15th Corps. General Hazen asked me to take charge of the refugee train that was assigned to his division. I did so. Ten infantrymen were detailed as guards and foragers and placed under my orders, and I was instructed to subsist my command from the commissary department of the enemy. I soon had the infantrymen well mounted on captured mules and horses, and while I had charge of them, Hazen's refugees did not suffer for anything that the state of South Carolina could furnish. There were some old men, but the greater portion of these refugees were women and children. Among those in my train were the wife and two charming daughters of Lieutenant Thompson, who was one of the officers at Florence prison at the time I escaped.

At Fayetteville, N.C., General Sherman issued an order requiring all of the refugees and escaped prisoners to go with an infantry regiment down the Cape Fear River to Wilmington. I started with the rest, supposing that I would have charge of my train as before. We traveled until noon and then stopped for dinner. I rode up to the officer who had been placed in command and made some inquiries. He informed me that the refugees from that time on must forage for themselves. I suggested that it would be better to have a party of infantry mounted, and undertook to tell him how the refugee trains had previously been managed. He cut me short, and in a pompous manner ordered me to go back where I belonged, saying he would send for me when he needed advice. My recollection is that Sherman had sent this officer away from the army because his services were not considered indispensable. Not caring to serve under such a commander, I rode back that night and reported to General Hazen the next morning.

From Fayetteville to Goldsboro the rebel General Johnson was in our front and on our left flank, and there was considerable fighting every day. During the battle of Bentonsville my desire to see the fighting led me too far to the front, and I came near being gobbled up by a squad of rebel cavalry that I ran on to in some thick woods. Reaching a safe position, I concluded to find General Sherman, so as to see how a great commander would act while a battle was in progress. I found him and his staff in the yard in front of a farm house. The general was walking back

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and forth in the shade of some large trees. When not receiving messages and sending orders he acted like a very nervous and greatly excited man. He had a cigar in his mouth, and stepping up to an officer who was smoking, asked him for a light. The officer handed him his cigar. As the general lit his own cigar he seemed to be listening to the noise of the battle. Suddenly he turned, dropping the officer's cigar to the ground, and walked off puffing his own. The officer looked at him a moment, then laughed, picked up the cigar and continued his smoke.

When we reached Goldsboro, I learned from General Hazen that Sherman was going to City Point to meet General Grant, and that the army would probably remain some time in camp. I concluded to go home. I had a fine English fox-hunter mare that I had captured on the march. She was the best riding horse I had ever ridden, and very handsome. General Sherman's adjutant-general had noticed and admired my horse, and when I learned that Sherman was about to go to City Point, I told the adjutant-general that if he would arrange so that I could go home from Goldsboro on the first train, that I would make him a present of the fox-hunter. He so arranged, and I left Goldsboro on the train which took Sherman and some of his staff to New Berne. From there I proceeded to Washington, where through the influence of the letters provided for me by the adjutant-general, I secured at the war department without delay, back pay, commutation of rations and clothing for the time I was in prison, and transportation home. A few days after my strange dream came true, except that I met my father first on the hill.

Appendix

Near North Gate — Awaiting Entrance Of More Prisoners

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The picture of Andersonville, shown above, is from a photograph and is found in the published report of the Andersonville Monument Commission of the State of Wisconsin. The log building with shed roof shown near the center is the Sutlers' store, mentioned in Chapters XVII and XVIII. The team and wagon shown near the front, was known as the "bread wagon," and shows the large loaves of corn bread that were brought in for rations and which, after being issued, were cut into small square pieces when distributed.

NOTE IN REFERENCE TO CHAPTER I OF THIS BOOK.

(Twenty-six years later.) Sioux Grigsby, mentioned above, is now one of the firm of Grigsby & Grigsby, Lawyers, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. George B. Grigsby is a lawyer at Nome, Alaska, and the father of two sturdy boys and one little girl, all of whom will soon be reading the Smoked Yank. My father, William E. Grigsby, past ninety-one years of age, makes his home with his daughter, Mrs. T.F. Marshall, at Oakes, North Dakota. Notwithstanding his advanced age he enjoys hunting, fishing, billiards, cards and books.

NOTE IN REFERENCE TO CHAPTER II OF THIS BOOK.

"The girl I left behind me," was Helen Angell. She went to California in 1863 to visit and uncle and was there married to a man named Francis, who by the way was the man from whom I took my first lessons in sword exercise, mentioned in said chapter. I met her in San Francisco in 1903, forty-two years after I bade her good-bye and went to war. She was indeed a comely grandmother, having a granddaughter older than she was when I enlisted. Time had touched her lightly. Few women preserve their form and features and attractive manner as well as she had. Within the year after we met she was happily remarried.

NOTE IN REFERENCE TO CHAPTER VI AND VII OF THIS BOOK.

The account of the capture of myself and others contained in Chapters VI and VII was written from memory twenty-one years after the event. The following letter lately received, probably written from memory, by the confederate who was in command of our captors, is also correct, except in a few minor particulars.

Edwards, Mississippi, June 24, 1911

Col, Melvin Grigsby, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

My Dear Sir: -- Your letter of 22nd inst. reached me this evening and gave me great pleasure. I too was a Colonel in the Spanish-American war; commanding the 2nd Miss. Vol. Inft., which gives emphasis to your words: "The war has long been over and we are ready to fight now under one flag when occasion requires." It is but natural you should have thought that you were captured by Capt. Whittaker, for to his men, I turned over the seven men captured at Hall's Ferry, you being one of the number I learned from Showalter of Co. C., 2nd Wis. Cav., on the day of the dedication of the Wisconsin monument in Vicksburg National Park. You know that we scouts did not like to be bothered with prisoners, is the explanation for my running off and leaving you in Capt. Ike Whittaker's hands.

It was, as I remember, the day after Gen. Sherman returned from his raid to Meridian, perhaps the 9th of March, 1864; I had captured the night before, two members of the 1st Kansas Regiment, near Baldwin's Ferry (who both escaped by the way, that night); we were all tired and worn out, and my men, then only eight in number, and being on scout duty for Gen. Wirt Adams, begged that they be allowed to rest. I had promised them that if they would follow me one more day, and not complain, I would let them rest a week. We went to Cayuga and heard of you eight Yanks having been out in the neighborhood of Utica, and I moved on to what was known as the cross roads, expecting to intercept you there; when we arrived at this point, we learned that you had passed, and that Capt. Whittaker was following you; and my men naturally supposed that Whittaker had followed to the river and captured you, and they begged to turn back. There was a great rivalry between Whittaker's men and my own, as to whom

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(Continued from page 20, The Smoked Yank)

were best and done most, and I, thinking something might happen to give me the advantage on this occasion, pushed on, and when within about a mile of the river, I came upon Capt. Whittaker, dismounted, and off of the road about fifty yards. Without stopping to exchange salutations, except to ask "where are the Yankees?" and to obtain reply, "I having sent forward a man to see how many there are at the river," I dashed forward with my eight men and made it to the river in short order. There I found the Sergeant and three men, the other four having ridden up a by path to the right through the wood, supposedly in search of a better crossing. The Sergeant plunged into the river, and under fire made it across on his horse; giving us the wave of his hat and the highball, as he dashed toward Vicksburg; the three who were dismounted from their horses, surrendered. As by this time Capt. Whittaker was in sight, coming at full speed, I left two men with the prisoners, and hurried up the river for the other four. They had hitched their horses back in the woods, and had secreted themselves in a blown down tree top, within twenty feet of the bridle path I was traveling. I was perhaps thirty steps ahead of my men, with my revolver in hand, when suddenly the four Yanks (you I suppose being one) raised themselves from the ground and leveled their rifles. I threw my pistol across my left arm and bridle hand and shouted, "Don't shoot here! or we will show you no quarter"; but I saw the smoke of the four guns and pulled trigger. When the smoke cleared away, I saw one man on the ground, and the three running in different directions. My men who were perhaps out of sight on account of the brush, dashed up, and as I was following one fellow, they followed the other two. My man was a good runner, and I must have been a poor shot; or perhaps I hadn't quite recovered from the scare I had; for I shot at him every few seconds, calling to him to stop, halt, and surrender. After running about two hundred yards, and as I was about to run over him, he jumped behind a tree and said, "I will surrender if you will treat me as a prisoner of war should be treated." "Certainly I will, was my reply," for although my pistol was pointed toward him, I had emptied every barrel and his was a very welcome word to me. Holding my revolver on him, I said, "put your pistols on your carbine, turn the butt to me and the muzzle toward yourself and come to me."

After I had his arms, I told him that every chamber of my revolver was empty, and he might have killed me. His reply was, "What would have been the use, I am on your side of the river, and I could never have gotten away from your fellows." I had sort of a notion, after Showalter told me you were a Senator, and of your escape from prison, that you were the man. I wanted to inquire as to the fate of the wounded man? I would like to meet the Sergeant again, he was a gallant fellow.

Would be glad to hear from you at any time, and more pleased to see you.

Very cordially your friend,

W. A. Montomery.

Mr. Montgomery, no doubt, saw James Trelore, who was on his horse and fired his carbine from the other side of the river and supposed that he was Sergeant Wiseman and that he had crossed the river on his horse. I am quite certain that my account is correct and that Sergeant Wiseman's horse was among those that were captured. I am of the opinion that Montgomery had gone after the other four of our party before James Trelore appeared on the opposite bank of the river, and that he has written that part of his account from what he heard his men say, who were left behind in charge of us. I was not one of the four captured by the river, as supposed by Mr. Montgomery.

It is one of the curious coincidences growing out of that war, that the man who took me prisoner in 1864, and who was then fighting to dissolve the Union, should in 1898, be in command of a regiment under the Union flag at Camp Thomas, in Georgia, where, at the same time and place, I was Colonel of the 3rd U.S. Vol. Cav., and was ranking officer in command of a brigade of cavalry.

NOTE TO CHAPTER XXII.

The following should be read in connection with Chapter XXII, which gives an account of my escape from the stockade at Florence prison.

(Continued on page 22)

(Continued from page 21, The Smoked Yank)

I had told my friend, Carr, that I expected to escape, and had asked him to keep watch of my little shack, in which I had a blanket and a few cooking utensils, and to take charge of these things if he should find that I had gone, and keep them for me, so that, if brought back, I would not be entirely destitute.

How much I told Carr of my plans for escape I cannot now remember, but presume that he knew that I was intending to forge a pass, and am quite sure he knew of my search for the red pencil, with which to imitate the stamp on the back of the pass. I do not think, however, that I told him of the change of program and the arrangement to be passed out by the sergeant, who had charge of the parole squad that was building the hospital. I do not think I told him about that, because to have done so would have violated my pledge to the sergeant, and it would have done Carr no good to have known of it.

The only member of our regiment, who was in prison, that I ever met since the war, is William Cook. He was not one of the party captured when I was on the Black river, but was a member of our regiment who had previously been captured. Cook visited with me in Sioux Falls in the early eighties, and told me that soon after my escape my absence was noticed, and that Carr was found in my shack, and that the rebel officers had severely punished him because he would not tell them how I had got out.

The account of what occurred, published by David G. James in the Milwaukee Free Press of July 23, 1911, is substantially the same as the account given to me by William Cook.

That portion of Mr. James' account, in which he states that I had been on detail working for the officers' mess is not correct. I never was on detail of that kind, and, as previously stated, I was out on parole first as a chopper, then as a kind of commissary clerk to call the roll of choppers and draw and issue to them the extra rations, and finally as captain of the chopping squad. Mr. James also says I made my getaway by forging a pass and bribing a sergeant of the guards. He was probably written from memory, after having read the original edition of the Smoked Yank and has got these matters mixed. I insert, however, his account as published:

"A man by the name of Melvin Grigsby, a member of Company C, Second Wisconsin Cavalry, was out on detail for some time, working for the officers' mess. He fared quite well, getting some warm clothes and provisions. He made his plans to escape, revealing the scheme to a comrade named Carr, and then by forging a pass and bribing a sergeant of the guards he got away. Every morning, when the roll was called, Carr would answer to Grigsby's name. He did this for several days, until they had a general roll call and count. This gave Grigsby a good start before his absence was discovered. A search was made, but no Grigsby was found. The matter was reported to the colonel, who sent a guard inside the stockade to bring out Carr, who was escorted to headquarters and asked where Grigsby was. He replied that he did not know. The colonel called him a d—d liar.

"When Carr was asked how Grigsby escaped, he did not choose to tell. The colonel then commenced to cuff him severely on the head, saying that he would compel him to tell. Carr told him to cuff away – that every dog has his day. Whereupon the colonel commenced kicking as well as striking him, saying that he would compel him to tell by putting him in the dungeon; if he did not tell then he would torture him for three hours in the stretchers; and that, as a last resort, he would kill him. Carr was hung up by the thumbs. After he had suffered as long as he though he could possibly stand it, he called the guard and told him to send for the colonel, who came and let him down, asking him if he was ready to tell how Grigsby escaped. Carr still replied in the negative, and requested that if the colonel had any humanity left to kill him, as he could not stand that another hour. He was too weak to stand. The colonel had him thrown into the dungeon, leaving him there for two days and two nights without food. Then he was brought back inside the stockade in a delirious state and turned over to his friends. He remained in that condition for some days, having a run of fever. After several weeks of suffering, without any medical treatment, or any food except the prison fare, he began to recover and he lived to be paroled and to reach home and friends."

(While on his way home, after being paroled, Carr, according to his daughter's account, wrote the poem shown in this clipping from an old newspaper.)

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from page 22, The Smoked Yank)

CIVIL WAR POEM

The following poem was written by H.C. Carr, in 1865, after his discharge. He wrote it while on the train on his way home.

Mr. Carr enlisted in Company C, 2nd Regiment, Wisconsin Cavalry, in 1861, and was discharged in 1865.

The following is the poem:

"Dear friends and fellow soldiers brave, come listen to our song
About the rebel prisons and our sojourn there so long,
Yet our wretched state and hardships great no one can understand
But those who have endured this fate in Dixie's sunny land.

"When captured by the chivalry they stripped us to the skin,
And failed to give us back again the value of a pin,
Except these lousy rags of gray discard by their band –
And thus commenced our prison life in Dixie's sunny land.

"With a host of guards surrounding us, each with a loaded gun.
We were stationed in an open plain exposed to rain and sun.
No tent or tree to shelter us, we lay upon the sand,
Thus side by side great numbers died in Dixie's sunny land.

"This was the daily bill of fare in the secessh saloon,
No sugar, tea or coffee there at morning, night or noon;
But a pint of meal ground, cob and all, was served to every man,
And for want of fire we ate it raw in Dixie's sunny land.

"We were by those poor rations soon reduced to skin and bone;
A lingering starvation worse than death, you can but own.
There hundreds lay both night and day, by far too weak to stand,
Till death relieved their suffering, in Dixie's sunny land.

"We poor survivors were tried by many a threat and bribe
To desert the glorious Union cause and join the rebel tribe;
Though fain were we to leave the place, we let them understand
That we would rather die than thus disgrace our flag in Dixie's sunny land.

"Thus, dreary days and nights rolled by; yes, weeks and months untold,
Until the happy time arrived when we were all paroled;
We landed at Annapolis a wretched looking band,
But glad to be alive and free from Dixie's sunny land.

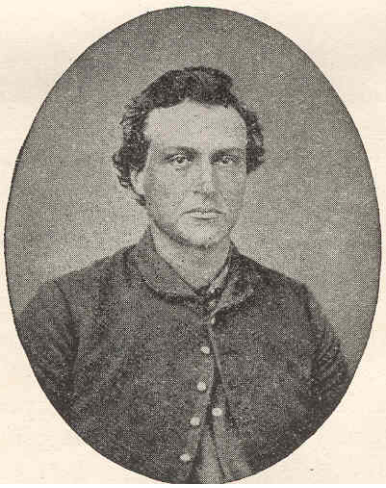
"How like a dream those days now seem in retrospective view.
As we regain our wasted strength all dressed in Union blue;
The debt we owe our bitter foe will not have long to stand,
We will pay it with a vengeance soon in Dixie's sunny land."

(Continued on page 24)

(Continued from page 23, The Smoked Yank)

After remaining at home for several weeks on sick leave and having regained his strength, Carr joined his regiment in Texas and was there mustered out in the fall of 1865. After being mustered out, in company with some others, he started North with some horses and mules, which were probably purchased at U.S. Quartermaster's sale, and on the way, as reported by his companion, was accidentally drowned while fording a swift stream of water.

I have lately been in correspondence with his daughter, who lives at Canton, Pennsylvania. She sent me one letter that I wrote to Carr from my home in Wisconsin, in 1865, while he was at his home in Pennsylvania recruiting his health. She also sent me his photograph taken while we were together at Benton Barracks, St. Louis, and which I insert in memory of a warm friend and a brave solder.



Horace C. Carr

Names of the prisoners, who belonged to the chopping squad, of which I had charge, as mentioned in Chapter 21:

A. D. Ellis
B. E. Jordan
G. Mould
Wm. Turner
O. Hale
J. H. Smith
W. M. Perkins
A. Funk
D. Gotschins
A. C. A. Stannard
Wm. Mills
Mansfield
S. Francisco
Borden
Coon
F. M. Shaw
W. H. Ryan
J. Helmick
Eddy
J. H. Crawford

M. Grigsby
F. M. McCoy
Jas. Kearney
G. McNealy
J. Pence
D. Ashton
H. Buntz
James Skinner
James Daily
C. Williams
C. King
Boyd
R. J. Wardell
Wilcox
E. Haywood
D. Rolf
J. R. Roberts
A. Wily
G. Mann
C. Shute

A. C. Denmann
Osaac Daniel
N. Calhoun
A. H. G. Wilhelm
E. B. Durban
F. Farley
S. Wirick
John Willmer
J. Scizbar
L. Hart
J. Jacobs
Kurtz
Nickham
Chestnut
A. Reese
J. Cummins
J. W. Shaw
Gillett
Miller
J. B. Weatherspoon

Analysis of the Smoked Yank

By Matthew Beard

List of genealogical related facts found in these chapters:

Chapter 23:
- Starts his journey as an escapee
- Escapes detection by the dogs by using water and rain
- Reached Lynchburg
- Helped by slaves throughout the journey
- Dodging soldiers and plantation owners

Chapter 24:
- Met a Captain Beetsom on the road and escaped from him
- Reached the swamp bordering the Santee River
- Rode over the Santee by ferry and canoe with a rebel doctor
- Heading toward Branchville
- Caught by a rebel soldier while resting
- Convinced the soldier's sister-in-law to have him let go
- Rode with the soldier to where the Branchville Road turned off from going to Orangeville
- Chased by another man with dog and guns

Chapter 25:
- Twelve miles southeast of Branchville near the swamp bordering Cattle Creek
- Needed to cross the Edisto River
- Making toward Savannah
- Told water is deep in the Edisto River, so no guards are needed
- Taken by a slave by mules across the Edisto River between two bridges
- Passed through Midway
- Needed to cross the Salkahatchie River
- River guarded by troops under Hardee
- Wheeler had cavalry preparing to meet Sherman
- Was going to ride in carriage across the river, but plans changed
- Hid under a bed while cavalry troops took nap
- Made it to a bridge believed called Brunson's Bridge, but could not cross
- Bluffed his way through an encounter with rebel troops looking to buy eggs and chickens
- Caught in slave cabin by plantation owner
- Bluffed his way out of the trouble with the plantation owner
- Crossed the Whippy Swamp and Salkahatchie River with two runaway slaves

Chapter 26:
- West side of the Salkahatchie River
- Thirty to forty miles from Pocotalago
- Location of camp of some of Sherman's army
- Heard music from a brass band playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me"
- Found by men from the headquarters of Hazen's division of the 15th Army Corps
- They include Pete McDowell of La Crosse, WI and Stammy the orderly for General Hazen
- Stammy named him "*The Smoked Yank*"
- Met with General Sherman about rebel forces and the prisoners at Florence
- Offered to be sent him, but told Sherman that he would rather remain with Hazen's force
- Continued to be with scouts through the advancement of the army

(Continued on page 26)

(Continued from page 25)

- Some of the first into Columbia when it was captured
- Took charge of the refugees when requested by General Hazen
- Turned over refugees to an officer taking them to Wilmington
- Moved with the division from Fayetteville to Goldsboro
- Observed Sherman during some of the battle
- After learning that the army was going to be in camp for a while, made arrangements to return home
- Went on train with Sherman from Goldsboro to New Berne
- Proceeded to Washington, D.C.
- Drew back pay and money for rations and clothing that was owed to him
- Transported home from Washington, D.C.

Appendix:
- Updates to the previous chapters from the original printing
- Picture of Andersonville
- Listed family members and updates on them
    - Sioux Grigsby—lawyer in the firm of Grigsby & Grigsby, Lawyers in Sioux Falls, South Dakota
    - George B. Grigsby—lawyer at Nome Alaska
        - Two boys
        - One girl
    - William E. Grigsby—father
        - Age 91
        - Lived with daughter, Mrs. T.F. Marshall of Oakes, North Dakota
        - Enjoys hunting, fishing, billiards, cards, and books
- Girl left behind was Helen Angell who married a man named Francis in California in 1863
    - Met her again in 1903
- Letter from a Colonel W.A. Montgomery who was the officer in charge of the scouts when Melvin was captured
    - He served as a regiment commander in the Spanish-American War
- Discussion about Horace C. Carr's and William Cook's experiences in the Florence prison and afterward
- Civil War Poem by Horace C. Carr
- Death of Carr by accidental drowning on his way home after being mustered out.
- List of prisoners who served in the chopping squad

Chapters 23 through 25 did not have a lot of information that would be useful for genealogical purposes except the route that Melvin took through his escape to the Union side. I will attempt to put together a map showing his route and will include this on the website when I have completed it.

Chapter 26 includes a detailed explanation of what emotions Melvin was feeling as he came near and then reached his objective. After so many months as a prisoner, and the horrors he had seen and endured, Melvin's relief is understandable. His decision to stay with the unit that he first encountered can be viewed amazing in that I believe quite a few people would want to leave and return home if given the opportunity. I also can understand how he may be feeling guilty of having escaped and wanted to make sure that he did what he could to end the war as soon as possible and free the other prisoners.

The Appendix reaffirms some of the genealogical data that was provided earlier in the book and provides some additional information about his sons and his father. It also helped to identify the young lady that he was infatuated with in the early part of the book and the reader finds out that he never did return to her except to visit her 42 years later. Melvin then closed out the book with information about his friends and fellow prisoners along with a poem written by Horace Carr.

This has been an interesting book and I can understand why it was used for a time as required reading in some public schools. I hope that you have enjoyed it and that it demonstrates what every researcher would like to find for the ancestors. Maybe we all should write a book on our lives for our descendants.