Scoville Samuel

Brave Deeds of Union Soldiers

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Foreword

In these days when even our skies are shadowed by wars and rumors of wars, it is fitting to remember what men and women and children of our blood have done in the past. In this chronicle have been included not alone the great deeds of great men, but also the brave deeds of commonplace people. May the tale of their every-day heroism be an inspiration to each one of us to do our best endeavor when we find ourselves in the crisis-times of life.

CHAPTER I
THE BARE BRIGADE

Kipling wrote one of his best stories on how Mulvaney and his captain with an undressed company swam the Irriwaddy River in India and captured Lungtungpen. It was a brave deed. The average man can't be brave without his clothes.

In the Civil War there was one unchronicled fight where a few naked, shoeless men swam a roaring river, marched through a thorny forest and captured a superior and entrenched force of the enemy together with their guns. This American Lungtungpen happened on the great march of General Sherman to the sea. He had fought the deadly and lost battle of Kenesaw Mountain, and failing to drive out the crafty Confederate General Johnson by direct assault outflanked him and forced him to fall back. Then the Union Army celebrated the Fourth of July, 1864, by the battle of Ruffs Station and drove Johnson back and across the Chattahoochee River. The heavy rains had so swollen this river that all the fords were impassable, while the Confederates had destroyed all boats for miles up and down the river to prevent them from being used by the Union Army and had settled down for a rest from their relentless pursuers. General McCook was commanding the part of the Union line fronting directly on the river. Orders came from General Sherman to cross at Cochran's Ford and Colonel Brownlow of the First Tennessee Regiment was ordered to carry out this command. He was the son of Fighting Parson Brownlow and had the reputation of not knowing what fear was. The attempt was made at three o'clock in the morning. It was raining in torrents and the men at the word of command dashed into the river. The water kept getting deeper and deeper and the bottom proved to be covered with great boulders over which the horses stumbled and round which the cross torrents foamed and rushed. When the men had finally reached the middle of the river and were swimming for dear life, suddenly a company of Confederates on the other side opened up on them at close range. As the bullets zipped and pattered through the water, the floundering, swimming men turned around and made the best of their way back, feeling that this was an impossible crossing to make. Once safely back they deployed on the bank and kept up a scattering fire all that morning against the enemy.

As the day wore on, Colonel Dorr, who commanded the brigade, made his appearance and inquired angrily why the First Tennessee was not on the other side and in possession of the opposite bank. Colonel Brownlow explained that he had made the attempt, that there was no ford and that to attempt to make a swimming charge through the rough water and in the face of an entrenched enemy would be to sacrifice his whole regiment uselessly. Colonel Dorr would listen to no explanations.

"If you and your men are afraid to do what you're told, say so and I'll report to General Sherman and see if he can't find some one else," he shouted and rode off, leaving Colonel Brownlow and his command in a fighting frame of mind. The former called nine of his best men to the rear and it was some time before he was calm enough to speak.

"Boys," he said at last, "we've *got* to cross that river. It's plain it can't be forded. We've no pontoons and I am not going to have my men slaughtered while they swim, but you fellows come with me and we'll drive those Rebs out of there before dark."

He then gave directions for the rest of his men to keep up a tremendous fire to divert the attention of the enemy. In the meanwhile he and his little squad marched through the brush to a point about a mile up the river behind a bend. There they stripped to the skin and made a little raft of two logs. On this they placed their carbines, cartridge boxes and belts and swam out into the rough water, pushing the little raft in front of them. It was hard going. The water was high, and every once in a while the fierce current would dash and bruise some of the men against the boulders which were scattered everywhere along the bed of the river. The best swimmers, however, helped the weaker ones and they all worked together to keep the precious raft right side up and their ammunition and

rifles dry. After a tremendous struggle they finally reached the opposite bank without having seen any Confederates. There they lined up, strapped on their cartridge belts, shouldered their carbines and started to march through the brush. Every step they took over the sharp stones and twigs and thorns was agony and the men relieved themselves by using extremely strong language.

"No swearing, men!" said Colonel Brownlow, sternly.

At that moment he stepped on a long thorn and instantly disobeyed his own order. He halted the column, extracted the thorn and amended his order.

"No swearing, men, – unless it's absolutely necessary," he commanded.

They limped along through the brush until they reached a road that led to the ford some four hundred yards in the rear of the enemy whom they could see firing away for dear life at the Union soldiers on the other side. The Confederate forces consisted of about fifty men. Colonel Brownlow and his nine crept through the brush as silently as possible until they were within a few yards of the unconscious enemy. Then they straightened up, cocked their carbines, poured in a volley and with a tremendous yell charged down upon them. The Confederates upon receiving this unexpected attack from the rear sprang to their feet, but when they saw the ten white ghostly figures charge down upon them, yelling like madmen, it was too much for their nerves and they scattered on every side. Twelve of them were captured. The last one was a freckle-faced rebel who tried to hide behind a tree. When seen, however, he came forward and threw down his gun.

"Well, Yanks, I surrender," he said, "but it ain't fair. You ought to be ashamed to go charging around the country this way. If you'd been captured, we'd have hung you for spies because you ain't got any uniforms on."

Colonel Brownlow hustled his prisoners up the river to the raft and made them swim across in front of them and then reported to General McCook that he had driven the enemy out of the rifle-pits, captured twelve men, one officer and two boats. Shortly afterward the Confederates withdrew from their position for, as some of the prisoners explained, they felt that if the Yanks could fight like that undressed, there was no telling what they'd do if they came over with their clothes on.

CHAPTER II
THE ESCAPE FROM LIBBY PRISON

It takes a brave man to face danger alone. It takes a braver man to face danger in the dark. This is the story of a man who was brave enough to do both. It is the story of one who by his dogged courage broke out of a foul grave when it seemed as if all hopes for life were gone and who rescued himself and one hundred and eight other Union soldiers from the prison where they lay fretting away their lives.

Libby Prison, the Castle Despair of captured Union officers, stood upon a hilltop in Richmond, the capital and center of the Confederacy. It was divided into three sections by solid walls, also ringed around by a circle of guards and there seemed to be no hopes for any of the hundreds of prisoners to break out and escape.

In September, 1863, Colonel Thomas Rose, of the 77th Pennsylvania Volunteers, was taken prisoner at the terrible battle of Chickamauga. From the minute he was captured he thought of nothing else but of escape, although he had a broken foot which would have been enough to keep most men quiet. On the way to Richmond, he managed to crawl through the guards and escape into the pine-forests through which they were passing. There he wandered for twenty-four hours without food or water and suffering terribly from his wound. At the end of that time he was recaptured by a troop of Confederate cavalry and this time was carefully guarded and brought to Libby Prison. This prison was a three-story brick building which had formerly been occupied by Libby & Company as a ship-chandlery establishment. There were several hundred Union officers imprisoned there when Colonel Rose arrived. First he was taken into the office of the commandant. Back of his desk was a United States flag fastened "Union down," an insult for every loyal Union man that had to pass through this office.

"We'll teach you to take better care of the old flag," remarked Colonel Rose as he stood before the commandant's desk for examination.

The commandant scowled at this prisoner, but Rose looked him in the eye without flinching.

"You won't have a chance to do much teaching for some years," said the commandant at last, grimly, "and you'll learn a lot of things that you don't know now."

As Colonel Rose went up the ladder which led to the upper rooms and his head showed above the floor, a great cry went up from the rest of the prisoners of "Fresh fish! fresh fish! fresh fish!" This was the way that each newcomer was received and sometimes he was hazed a little like any other freshman.

Although not as bad as some of the prisons, Libby Prison was no health resort. At times there were nearly a thousand prisoners crowded in there with hardly standing room. At night they all lined up in rows and laid down at the word of command, so closely packed that the floor was literally covered with them. Each one had to go to bed and get up at the same time. These crowded conditions made for disease and dirt, and the place was alive with vermin.

"Skirmish for gray-backs," was the morning call in Libby Prison before the men got up. Each prisoner then would sit up in his place, strip off his outer garments and cleanse himself as much as possible from the crawling gray-backs, as they had nicknamed the vermin which attacked all alike. The food was as bad as the quarters. Soon after Rose arrived one man found a whole rat baked in a loaf of corn-cake which had been furnished as a part of his rations. The rat had probably jumped into the dough-trough while the corn-cake was being made and had been knocked in the head by the cook and worked into the cake. Another officer made himself one night a bowl of soup by boiling a lot of beans together with a fresh ham-bone. He set it aside to wait until morning so as to enjoy his treat by daylight. Afterward he was glad he did, for he found his soup full of boiled maggots. At times the

men were compelled to eat mule-meat and sometimes were not even given that but had to sell their clothing to keep from starving. In each room was a single water faucet without basin or tub. This was all that perhaps a couple of hundred men had to use both for washing and drinking purposes. The death-rate from disease in these crowded quarters was, of course, terribly high.

From the day Rose entered the prison he made up his mind that he would not die there like a sick dog if there was any way of escape and there was not a moment of his waking hours in which he was not planning some way to get out. Although the prisoners were not supposed to have communication with each other or from outside, there was a complete system under which each one had news from all over the prison as well as from the outside world. This was done by a series of raps constituting the prison telegraph. As the guards usually visited the prison only at intervals in the daytime, the prisoners managed to pass back and forth down through the chimney throughout the whole prison in spite of locked doors and supposedly solid walls. Messages and money were frequently sent in from outside. A favorite trick was to wind greenbacks around a spool and then have the thread wound by machinery over this money. Gold pieces were sealed up in cans of condensed milk. Maps, compasses and other helps for escaping prisoners were sent in a box. In order to prevent suspicion of the fact that the box had a double bottom, two double bottoms were placed on the box side by side with a space between them. When the contents were turned out, the prison inspectors could see the light shining through the bottom of the box and were thus convinced that there could be no double bottom there. Letters were sent in containing apparently harmless home-news. Between the lines, information as to routes and guards was written in lemon juice. This was invisible until exposed to heat, when the writing would show.

Colonel Rose was placed in the topmost room of the eastern wing. This was named Upper Gettysburg. From there he saw workmen entering a sewer in the middle of a street which led to the canal lying at the foot of the hill on which the prison stood. He at once decided to tunnel into this sewer and crawl through that into the canal which was beyond the line of the guards. With this plan in view, he began to explore the prison. One dark afternoon he managed to make his way down through the rooms to one of the dungeons underneath, which was known as Rat Hell. This had been used as a dead-house and was fairly swarming with rats. As he was fumbling around there he suddenly heard a noise and in a minute another man came in. Each thought the other was a guard, but finally it turned out that the intruder was a fellow-prisoner, a Kentucky major named Hamilton. This Major and Rose at once became fast friends and immediately planned a tunnel from a corner of Rat Hell after securing a broken shovel and two kitchen knives. They had no more than begun this, however, before alterations were made in the prison which cut them off from this dungeon. By this time the other prisoners had noticed the midnight visits of Rose and Hamilton as well as their constant conferences together and it was buzzed around everywhere that there was a plot on hand to break out of Libby. For fear of spies or traitors, Rose decided to organize a company of the most reliable men and plan a dash out through one of the walls and the overpowering of the guards. Seventy-two men were sworn in and everything was arranged for the dash for freedom one cloudy night. The little band had all gathered in Rat Hell and sentries had been placed at the floor opening into the kitchen above. Suddenly footsteps were heard and the signal was given that the guards were making a tour of inspection of the prison. In perfect silence and with the utmost swiftness, each man went up the rope-ladder to the floor above and stole into his bed. Rose was the last man up. He managed to reach the kitchen and hide his rope-ladder about ten seconds before the officer of the guard thrust his lantern into the door of the lowest sleeping chamber. Rose had no time to lie down, but with great presence of mind sat at a table and stuck an old pipe into his mouth and nodded his head as if he had gone to sleep while sitting up and smoking. The guard stared at him for a moment and passed on.

The next day the leaders decided that some news of the attempt must have reached the authorities outside to account for this sudden and unusual visit. It was decided to raise the numbers and make an immediate attempt. The band was increased from seventy-two to four hundred and

twenty. With the increase in numbers, however, there seemed to be a decrease of courage. Many of the officers feared that it was a hopeless plan for a crowd of unarmed men to break through a ring of armed guards and that such an attempt would merely arouse the town and they would be hemmed in, driven back and shot down in crowds inside the prison walls. Finally a vote was taken and it was decided to abandon this plan.

Once more Rose and Hamilton found themselves the only two left who were absolutely resolved on an escape. After talking the matter over, they decided to begin another tunnel. This time they had only an old jack-knife and a chisel to work with and they could only work between ten at night and four in the morning. They started back of the kitchen fireplace and there removed twelve bricks and dug a tunnel down to Rat Hell so that they could reach this base without disturbing any other prisoners and without being exposed to detection by the guard. One would work and the other would watch. At dawn each day the bricks were replaced and the cracks filled in with soot. They had no idea of direction and this tunnel was nearly the death of Rose. The digging was done by him while Major Hamilton would fan air to him with his hat, but so foul was the air below ground that bits of candle which they had stolen from the hospital would go out at a distance of only four feet from the cellar wall. In spite of this terrible atmosphere, Rose dug his tunnel clear down to the canal, but unfortunately went under the canal and the water rushed in and he had a narrow escape from being drowned. By this time both men were so nearly exhausted that they decided to take in helpers again. Thirteen men were chosen to work with them and were all sworn to secrecy. The flooded passage was plugged and a fresh one started in the direction of a small sewer which ran from a corner of the prison down to the main sewer beyond. Night after night in the mud and stench and reek underground they dug their tunnel. At last they reached the small sewer only to find that it was lined with wood. The only cutting tools they had were a few small pen-knives. With these they slowly whittled a hole through the wooden lining and the fourteen men were all in high hopes of an escape. The night came when only a few hours of work would be necessary to make a hole large enough to enter the small sewer. It was then hoped they could all crawl from this into the larger one and down into the canal safe past the guards. Once again they were all grouped shivering at the entrance to the tunnel, waiting for the man who was working inside to pass the word back that the opening was made. Suddenly the news came back that the entrance into the large sewer was barred by planks of solid, seasoned oak six inches thick. The chisel and the penknives were worn down to the handles. For thirty-nine nights these men had worked at the highest possible pitch under indescribable conditions. There was not an inch of steel left to cut with or an ounce of reserved strength to go on farther. Despairingly, the party broke up, put away the kits which they had prepared for the march and once again Rose and Hamilton were left alone by their discouraged comrades.

After a day's rest, these two decided to start another tunnel in the north corner of the cellar away from the canal. This tunnel would come out close to the sentry beat of the guards, but Rose had noticed that this beat was nearly twenty yards long and it was decided that in the dark there would be a fair chance of slipping through unseen. Once again Rose and Hamilton started on this new task alone. They had finally obtained another chisel and this was the only tool which they had. Once more Rose did the digging. Hamilton would fan with all his strength and Rose would work until he felt his senses going, then he would crawl back into the cellar and rest and get his breath. The earth was dragged out in an old wooden cuspidor which they had smuggled down from their room and Hamilton would hide this under a pile of straw in the cellar. The tunnel became longer and longer, but Rose was nearly at the end of his strength. It was absolutely impossible to breathe the fetid air in the farther end of the tunnel, nor could Hamilton alone fan any fresh air to him. Once again, and with great difficulty, a new party of ten was organized. These worked in shifts – one man dug and two or three fanned the air through the tunnel with their hats, another man dragged the earth into the cellar and a fifth kept watch. The first five would work until exhausted and then their places would be taken by the second shift. They finally decided to work also by day and now the digging went on without interruption every

minute of the twenty-four hours. Finally, the little band of exhausted workers had gone nearly fifty feet underground. They were on the point of breaking down from absolute exhaustion. The night-shift would come out into Rat Hell and be too tired and dazed to find their way out and would have to be looked after in the dark and led back to the rooms above like little children.

Rose, in spite of all that he had been through, was the strongest of the lot and could work after every other man had fallen out. It was still necessary for the tunnel to be carried five feet further to clear the wall. Once again a sickening series of accidents and surprises occurred. The day-shift always ran the risk of being missed at roll-call, which was held every morning and afternoon. Usually this was got around by repeating – one man running from the end of the line behind the backs of his comrades and answering the name of the missing man. On one occasion, however, there were two missing and a search was at once begun which might have resulted in finding the entrance to the tunnel. There was just time to pull these two up out of the dark and brush off the telltale dirt from their hands and clothes and tell them to lie down and play sick. Neither one of them needed to do much pretending and they both showed such signs of breakdown that the prison inspector came near sending them to the hospital, which would also have delayed operations. The next day, while one man was inside the tunnel, a party of guards entered Rat Hell and remained there so long that it was evident they must have suspected that something was going on. Colonel Rose called his band together for a conference. He believed that two days of solid work would finish the tunnel. The rest of the men, however, pleaded for time. They were half sick, wholly exhausted and discouraged. Rose decided that he would risk no further delay and that the last two days' work should be entrusted to no one except himself. The next day was Sunday and the cellar was usually not inspected on that day. He posted his fanners and sentries and at early dawn crawled into the tunnel and worked all day long and far into the night lying full length in a stifling hole hardly two feet in diameter. When he dragged himself out that night, he could not stand but had to be carried across the cellar and up the rope ladder and fanned and sponged with cold water and fed what soup they could obtain until he was able to talk. He then told the band that he believed that twelve hours more of work would carry the tunnel beyond the danger line. He slept for a few hours and then, in spite of the protests of the others, crawled down into the reeking hole again, followed by the strongest of the band who were to act as fanners.

For seventeen days they had been working and the tunnel was now fifty-three feet long. In order to save time, Rose had made the last few feet so narrow that it was impossible for him to even turn over or shift his position. All day long he worked. Night came and he still toiled on, although his strokes were so feeble that he only advanced by inches each hour. Finally it was nearly midnight of the last day and Rose had reached the limit of his strength. The fanners were so exhausted that they could no longer push the air to the end of the tunnel. Rose felt himself dying of suffocation. He was too weak to crawl backward, nor had he strength to take another stroke. The air became fouler and thicker and he felt his senses leaving him and he gasped again and again in a struggle for one breath of pure air. In what he felt was his death agony, he finally forced himself over on his back and struck the earth above him with his fists as he unconsciously clutched at his throat in the throes of suffocation. Thrusting out his arms in one last convulsive struggle, he suddenly felt both fists go through the earth and a draught of pure, life-giving air came in. For a moment Rose had the terrible feeling that it was too late and that he was too sick to rally. Once again, however, his indomitable courage drove back death. For some minutes he lay slowly breathing the air of out-of-doors. It was like the elixir of life to him after long months of breathing the foul atmosphere of the prison and tunnel. Little by little his strength came back and he slowly enlarged the hole and finally thrust his head and shoulders cautiously out into the yard. The first thing that caught his eye was a star and he felt as if he had broken out of the grave and come back again to hope and life. He found that he was still on the prison side of the wall, but directly in front of him was a gate which was fastened only by a swinging bar. Rose spent some moments practicing raising this bar until he felt sure he could do it quietly and swiftly. Just outside was the sentry beat. Rose waited until the sentry's back was turned,

opened the gate and peered out, convincing himself that there was plenty of time to pass out of the gate and into the darkness beyond before the sentry turned to come back. He then lowered himself again into the stifling tunnel, drew a plank which he found in the yard over the opening, after first carefully concealing the fresh earth, and crept back again into Rat Hell.

It was three o'clock in the morning when Rose gathered together his little band and told them that at last Libby Prison was open. Rose and Hamilton, the leaders, were anxious to start at once. They had seen so many accidents and so many strokes of misfortune that they urged an instant escape. The others, however, begged them to wait and to leave early the next evening so that they could gain a whole night's start before their absence was found at the morning roll-call. With many misgivings, Rose at last consented to do this. The next day was the most nerve-racking day of his life. Every noise or whisper of the guard seemed to him to be a sign that the tunnel had been discovered. The time finally dragged along and nothing happened and once again the party met in Rat Hell at seven o'clock in the evening of February 9th and Rose and the faithful Hamilton led the way through the tunnel to freedom. Every move was carefully planned. The plank was raised noiselessly and Rose had taken the precaution to leave the gate half-open so that the sentry on duty that night would see nothing unusual. He found it just as he had left it. All that was necessary now to do was for each man to wait until the sentry had passed a few yards beyond the gate and then to start noiselessly through and out to freedom. All thirteen escaped easily. The last man left a message that the prison was open to any one who dared try the tunnel. By nine o'clock that night the message flashed through each ward that the colonel and a party had escaped. There was a rush for the hole at the fireplace and one hundred and nine other prisoners slipped through and got safely past the guard. After days and weeks of hiding, starving and freezing, the original party and many of the others got safely through to the Union lines.

Castle Despair had again been broken by Mr. Great Heart.

CHAPTER III
TWO AGAINST A CITY

It takes brave men to fight battles. It takes braver men to face death without fighting.

In the spring of 1862 New Orleans, the Queen City of the South, was blockaded by the Union fleet. No one could come in or go out. The grass grew in her empty streets. The wharves were deserted and cobwebs lay on the shut and barred warehouses. The river itself, which had been thronged with the masts and funnels of a thousand crowded craft, flowed yellow and empty as the Amazon.

As business stopped and wages grew scarce and scarcer, the fierce, dangerous part of the population which comes to the surface in times of siege began to gain more and more control of the city. For years there had been a secret society of criminals in New Orleans which had often controlled her city government. It was known as the "Thugs." Heretofore they had always worked in secret and underground. Now criminals who formerly would only come out at night and secretly, were seen on the streets in open day. As the Union lines closed around the city by sea and land, the crowds of men and women without money and without work became as fierce and bitter and dangerous as rats in a trap. For a while they told each other that the city could never be taken. Nothing afloat, they said again and again, can pass by the great chain and the sunken ships that block the river. If they could they would sink under the withering fire of Fort Jackson, a great star-shaped fort of stone and mortar, or Fort St. Phillip with its fifty-two guns which could be brought to bear on any vessel going up or down the river. Beyond the forts was a fleet of rams and gunboats and in a shipyard over at Jefferson, one of the suburbs of New Orleans, was building the great iron-clad *Mississippi*, which alone they felt would be equal to the whole blockading fleet. So thought and said the swarming unemployed thousands of New Orleans. Finally came a dreadful day when the tops of the naked masts of the hated Yankee fleet showed against the evening sky across one of the bends of the river. Then came the roar of distant guns for a day and a night as the Union vessels attacked the forts and concealed batteries. Still the people believed in their defenses although the firing came nearer and nearer. Not until they saw the city troops carry the cotton out of the cotton-presses down to the wharves to be burned in miles of twisting flame to save it from the Union Army did they realize how close was the day of the surrender of the city. Then all the empty ships which had been moored out in the river were fired and the warehouses of provisions still left were broken open. Mobs of desperate men and women surged back and forth fighting for the sugar and rice and molasses with which the wharves were covered. Suddenly around Slaughter House Point, silent, grim and terrible, came the black fleet which had safely run the gauntlet of forts, gunboats, batteries and torpedoes. For the first time since the war had begun, the Stars and Stripes floated again in sight of New Orleans. As the fleet came nearer and nearer, the crowds which blackened the wharves and levees of New Orleans shouted for the *Mississippi*.

"Where is the *Mississippi*? Ram the Yanks! Mississippi! Mississippi! Mississippi!" thousands of voices roared across the water and through the forsaken streets of the doomed city. And then, as if called by the shout of her city, around a bend suddenly floated the great iron-clad *Mississippi* which was to save New Orleans, – a helpless, drifting mass of flames. There was a moment of utter silence and then a scream of rage and despair went up that drowned the crackling of the flames.

"Betrayed! Betrayed! We have been betrayed!" was the cry which went up everywhere. No stranger's life was worth a moment's purchase. One man whose only crime was that he was unknown to the mob was seized at one of the wharves and in an instant was swinging, twisting and choking, from the end of a rope at a lamp-post. Through the crowds flitted the Thugs and began a reign of terror against all whom they hated or feared. Men were hung and shot and stabbed to death that day at a word. The mob was as dangerous, desperate and as unreasoning as a mad dog. Through

this roaring, frothing, cursing crowd it was necessary for Admiral Farragut to send messengers to the mayor at the City Hall to demand the surrender of the city. It seemed to the men in the ships like going into a den of trapped wild beasts, yet instantly Captain Theodorus Bailey, the second in command, demanded from the admiral the right to undertake this dangerous mission. With a little guard of twenty men he was landed on the levee in front of a howling mob which crowded the river-front as far as the eye could reach. They offered an impenetrable line through which no man could pass. Captain Bailey drew his marines up in line and tried to reason with the mob, but could not even be heard. He then ordered his men to level their muskets and take aim. In an instant the mob had pushed forward to the front crowds of women and children and dared the Yanks to shoot. Captain Bailey realized that nothing could be done by force without a useless slaughter of men and women and children. In order to save this he decided to try what could be done by two unarmed men. If this plan failed, it would be time enough to try what could be done by grape and canister. Taking a flag of truce and choosing as his companion a young midshipman named Read, whom he knew to be a man of singular coolness, Captain Bailey started up the street to the City Hall. It was a desperate chance. The mob had already tasted blood and it was almost certain that some one would shoot or stab these two representatives of the hated Yanks as soon as they were out of sight of the ships. The slightest sign of fear or hesitation would mean the death of both of them. Captain Bailey and Midshipman Read, however, were men who would take just such a chance. Slowly, unconcernedly, they walked along the streets through a roar of shouts, and curses, and cheers for Jeff Davis. As they reached the middle of the city, the crowd became more and more threatening. They were pushed and jostled while men, many of them members of the dreaded Thugs, thrust cocked revolvers into their faces and waved bowie-knives close to their throats. Others rushed up with coils of rope which had already done dreadful service. Captain Bailey never even glanced at the men around him, but looking straight ahead walked on as unconcernedly as if he were treading his own quarter-deck. Young Read acted as if he were bored with the whole proceeding. He examined carefully the brandished revolvers and knives and smiled pleasantly into the distorted, scowling, gnashing faces which were thrust up against his. Occasionally he would half pause to examine some building which seemed to impress him as particularly interesting and would then saunter unconcernedly along after his captain.

Right on through the gauntlet of death passed the two men with never a quiver of the eye or a motion of the face to show that they even knew the mob was there. Little by little, men who had retained something of their self-control began to persuade the more lawless part of the rabble to fall back. It was whispered around that Farragut, that old man of iron and fire, had said that he would level the city as flat as the river if a hand were even laid on his envoys. Finally through the surging streets appeared the City Hall and the end of that desperate march was in sight. At the very steps of the City Hall the mob took a last stand. Half-a-dozen howling young ruffians, with cocked revolvers in either hand, stood on the lower step and dared the Union messengers to go an inch farther. Midshipman Read stepped smilingly ahead of his captain and gently pushed with either hand two of the cursing young desperadoes far enough to one side to allow for a passageway between them. Both of them actually placed the muzzles of their cocked revolvers against his neck as a last threat, but even the touch of cold steel did not drive away Read's amused smile. The mob gave up. Evidently these men had resources about which they knew nothing.

"They were so sure that we wouldn't kill them that we couldn't," said one of the Thugs afterward in explaining why the hated messengers had been allowed to march up the steps.

They sauntered into the mayor's room where they met a group of white-faced, trembling men who were the mayor and his council. Captain Bailey delivered the admiral's summons for the surrender of the city to the mayor. The mob, which at first had stayed back, at this point surged up to the windows and shouted curses and threats into the very mayor's room, threatening him and the council if they dared to surrender the city. Captain Bailey and his companion gave the trembling city officials a few minutes in which to make up their minds. Suddenly there was heard a roar outside

louder than any which had come before. The mob had torn down the Union flag which had been hoisted over the custom house and rushing to the mayor's office, tore it to pieces outside the open windows and threw the fragments in at the seated envoys. This insult to their flag aroused Captain Bailey and young Read as no threats against them personally had been able to do. Turning to the mayor and the shrinking council, Bailey said, "As there is a God in heaven, the man who tore down that Union flag shall hang for it." Later on this promise was carried out by the inflexible General Butler when he took over the city from Admiral Farragut and hanged Mumford, the man who tore down the flag in the city square, before the very mob which had so violently applauded his action. This incident was the last straw for the mayor and his associates. They neither dared to refuse to surrender the city lest it should be bombarded by Farragut nor did they dare to surrender it for fear of the mob which had gathered around them with significant coils of rope over their arms. In a half-whisper they hurriedly notified Captain Bailey that they could not surrender the city, but that they would make no resistance if the Union forces occupied it. Looking at them contemptuously, Captain Bailey turned away, picked up the fragments of the torn flag and faced the mob outside threateningly. The man who had torn the flag slunk back and his example was contagious. One by one men commenced to sneak away and in a minute the City Hall was deserted and Captain Bailey and Midshipman Read were able to leave the building and drive back to the vessels in a carriage obtained for them by the mayor's secretary.

So ended what one of the mob, who afterward became a valued citizen of his state, described as the bravest deed he had ever seen – two unarmed men facing and defeating a mob of murderers and madmen.

CHAPTER IV
BOY HEROES

One doesn't have to be big, or old, or strong to be brave. But one does have to believe in something so much and so hard that nothing else counts, even death. An idea that is so big that everything else seems small is called an ideal. It is easy for a boy with an ideal to be brave. Cassabianca, the boy who stayed on the burning ship because he had been ordered to wait there by his dead father, had made obedience his ideal. The boy of Holland who found a leak in the dyke which could only be stopped by his hand, and who stayed through the long night and saved his village but lost his right hand had learned this great ideal of self-sacrifice. The shepherd boy who saved his sheep from a lion and a bear and who afterward was the only one who dared enter the fatal valley and meet the fierce giant-warrior had as his ideal faith. He believed so strongly that he was doing God's will that he shared God's strength.

In the great war between slavery and freedom which swept like fire over the country, boys learned the ideals for which their fathers fought. They learned to believe so entirely in freedom that there was no room left for fear. Many of them went to the war as drummer boys, the only way in which boys could enlist. One of these was Johnny McLaughlin of the Tenth Indiana. Johnny lived at a place called Lafayette and was not quite eleven years old. From the minute that the war broke out he thought of nothing but what he could do for his country and for freedom. Other boys played at drilling and marching, but this was not enough for him. He made inquiries and found that if he could learn to drum, there was a chance that he might be allowed to enlist. He said nothing at first to his father and mother about his plans, but saved all his spending-money and worked every holiday in order to get enough to buy a drum. Times were hard, however. There was little money for men, much less for boys, and after Johnny had worked for over two months, he had saved exactly two dollars. In the village was a drummer who had been sent home to recover from his wounds and to him Johnny went one day to ask how much more he would have to save before he could buy a drum. The man told him that a good drum would cost him at least ten dollars. Johnny sighed and turned away very much discouraged.

"Why don't you play something else?" said the man. "You can get more fun out of ten dollars than buying a drum with it."

"I don't want it to play with," said Johnny. "I want to learn to drum so that I can enlist."

At first the man laughed at the boy – he seemed so little, but when he found that Johnny had made up his mind to do his share for his country in the great fight, Donaldson, as he was named, became serious.

"I tell you what I'll do," he said at last. "If you are really in earnest about learning to drum, I'll give you lessons myself, for," said he modestly, "I was the best drummer in my regiment. If you can learn and they will take you, I'll give you the old drum. I'll send it to the front even if I can't go myself."

This was enough for Johnny. Morning, noon and night he was with his friend Donaldson and it was a wonder that the drum-head was not worn out long before he learned. Learn he did, however, and in a few months there was not a roll or a call which he could not play. One morning as the school-bell was ringing, Johnny presented himself to his parents with the big drum around his neck looking nearly as large as he was.

"I'm going to enlist," he said simply.

At first his father and mother, like Donaldson, were inclined to laugh at him, he was such a little boy, but Johnny was in earnest and a boy who is in earnest always gets what he wants. A few days later found him a drummer for the Tenth Indiana and as he led the regiment, beating the long roll, Johnny was the proudest boy that had ever come out of Indiana. He had his first taste of fire

at Fort Donelson and afterward at the bloody battle of Shiloh. Johnny drummed until the terrible drumming of the muskets drowned out even his loud notes. Then he laid down his sticks, carefully hid his drum, took a musket and cartridge box from off one of the dead soldiers and ran on with his regiment and fought in the front with the bravest of them all. He had a quick eye and it was not long before he could shoot as accurately as any man there.

It was just after Shiloh that Johnny had a narrow escape from being captured. Wanting to try everything, he obtained permission to do picket duty at night although this work was not required of drummer boys. As he had shown himself such a cool and ready fighter, his colonel felt that he was entirely able to do this duty and one dark night put him on picket. His post was some distance away from the camp. Just at dawn he was suddenly rushed by a party of rebel cavalry. As they burst out of the bushes Johnny fired his carbine at the first one, dropping him, and ran across an open field about fifty yards wide. At the other side was an old, rotten, log fence and beyond that a mass of briers and underbrush where he was sure the horses could not follow. Fortunately for him the rains had made the field a mass of mud. There his lightness gave him the advantage, for the horses slumped through at every step. The rebels fired constantly at him as they rode with their pistols. One ball went through his hat, another clear through his cartridge box and lodged in his coat, fortunately without exploding any of the cartridges. Beyond the middle of the field the ground was drier and the horsemen commenced to gain on him, but he reached the fence well ahead and with one jump landed on the top. The rotten rails gave way underneath him and he plunged headlong over into the brush, right on the back of a big sleeping wild pig who had rooted out a lair at this place. The pig jumped up grunting and crashed through the underbrush and Johnny heard his pursuers smashing through the broken fence not a rod away. He curled up into the round hole which the pig had left, drew down the bushes over his head and lay perfectly quiet. The horsemen, hearing the rustling of leaves and the smashing of branches as the pig dashed off down a pathway, followed after at full gallop and were out of sight in a minute. As soon as the sound of their galloping had died away, Johnny crawled cautiously out of his hole and made the best of his way back to camp. The next day some of the rebel cavalry were taken prisoners and Johnny recognized one of them as the leader of the squad which had so nearly caught him. The prisoner recognized the boy at the same time and they both grinned cheerfully at each other.

"Did you catch that pig yesterday?" finally said Johnny.

"We did that," retorted the prisoner, "but it wasn't the one we were after."

Johnny had always been able to ride the most spirited horses on the farm and after Shiloh he asked to be transferred from the infantry to Colonel Jacob's Kentucky Cavalry. There he attracted the attention of the colonel so that the latter gave him one of the best horses in the regiment and a place in the Fighting First, as the best-mounted company was called, which the colonel always led personally in every charge. In this company Johnny was taught how to handle a sabre. The regular sabre was too heavy for him, but Colonel Jacob had one light, short one specially made which Johnny learned to handle like a flash. A German sergeant, who had been a great fencer on the Continent, taught him all that he knew and before long Johnny was an expert in tricks of fence which stood him in good stead later on. One in special he so perfected that it was never parried. Instead of striking down with the sabre as is generally done, Johnny learned a whirling, flashing upper-cut which came so rapidly that generally an opponent could not even see much less parry it. He was also armed with the regulation revolver and a light carbine instead of the heavy revolving rifle used by the rest of the troop. At Perryville he fought his first battle with his new regiment. In the charge he stuck close to Colonel Jacob and received a ball through his left leg above the knee. Fortunately it did not break any bone and Johnny tore a strip off his shirt, bandaged the hole and went on with the fight. While he was doing this, the greater part of the regiment passed on and when Johnny started to join his colonel, he could not find him. He rode like the wind over the field and soon behind a little patch of woods saw Colonel Jacobs with only six or seven men, the rest having been scattered in the fight. Johnny spurred his horse over to him and the colonel was delighted to be joined by his little body-

guard. As they were riding along to rejoin the rest of the regiment, from out a clump of bushes a squad of fifty men led by a Confederate major dashed out calling on them to surrender. Colonel Jacob hesitated, for some of his men were wounded and the odds seemed too great for a fight. Before he had time to answer, Johnny slipped in front of him, drew out his revolver and fired directly into the Confederate officer's face, killing him instantly and then drawing his sabre dashed into the ranks of the enemy. The first man he met was a big fellow whose bare, brawny arm and blood-stained sabre proved him a master with his weapon. Johnny never gave him a chance to strike. At the whirl of his light sabre his opponent instinctively raised his weapon in the ordinary parry of a down-blow and the point of Johnny's sabre caught him under the chin and toppled him off his horse. The Union men gave a cheer, followed their little leader, breaking clear through the demoralized Confederates and joined their command at the other side of the field.

A few weeks later they had a skirmish with the troop of John Morgan, the most dreaded cavalry leader and fighter in all the South. Johnny, as usual, was in the front of the charge and had just cut at one man when another aimed a tremendous blow at his head in passing. There was just time for Johnny to raise the pommel of his sabre to save his head, but the deflected blow caught him on the leg and he fell from the horse with blood spurting out of his other leg this time. He lay perfectly quiet, but another rebel had seen him fall and spurring forward, caught him by the collar, saying:

"We'll keep this little Yankee in a cage to show the children."

Johnny did not approve of this cage-idea and although there was no room to use the sabre, managed to work his left hand back into his belt, draw his revolver and shoot his captor dead. In another minute his company came riding back and he was whirled up behind his colonel and rode back of him to safety. This last wound proved to be a serious one and he was sent back to Indiana on a furlough to give it time to heal. On the way back he was stopped by a provost guard and asked for his pass.

"My colonel forgot to give me any passes," said Johnny, "but here are two that the rebels gave me," showing his bandaged legs, and the guard agreed with him that this was pass enough for any one. As his wound refused to heal, against his wishes he was discharged and once more returned home. He then tried to enlist again, but each time he was turned down because of the unhealed wound. Finally, Johnny traveled clear to Washington and had a personal talk with President Lincoln and explained to him that his wound would never heal except in active service. His arguments had such force with the President that a special order was made for his enlistment and he fought through the whole war and afterward joined the regular army.

The littlest hero of the war was Eddie Lee. Shortly before the battle of Wilson's Creek, one of the Iowa regiments was ordered to join General Lyon in his march to the creek. The drummer of one of the companies was taken sick and had to go to the hospital. The day before the regiment was to march a negro came to the camp and told the captain that he knew of a drummer who would like to enlist. The captain told him to bring the boy in the next morning and if he could drum well he would give him a chance. The next day during the beating of the reveille, a woman in deep mourning came in leading by the hand a little chap about as big as a penny and apparently not more than five or six years old. She inquired for the captain and when the latter came out, told him that she had brought him a drummer boy.

"Drummer boy," said the captain; "why, madam, we don't take them as small as this. That boy hasn't been out of the cradle many months."

"He has been out long enough," spoke up the boy, "to play any tune you want."

His mother then told the captain that she was from East Tennessee where her husband had been killed by the rebels and all her property destroyed and she must find a place for the boy.

"Well, well," said the captain, impatiently, "Sergeant, bring the drum and order our fifer to come forward."

In a few moments the drum was produced and the fifer, a tall, good-natured fellow over six feet in height, made his appearance.

"Here's your new side-partner, Bill," said the captain.

Bill stooped down, and down and down until his hands rested on his ankles and peered into the boy's face carefully.

"Why, captain," said he, "he ain't much taller than the drum."

"Little man, can you really drum?" he asked.

"Yes, sir," said the boy. "I used to drum for Captain Hill in Tennessee. I am nearly ten years old and I want the place."

The fifer straightened himself up slowly, placed his fife at his mouth and commenced to play "The Flowers of the Forest," one of the most difficult pieces to follow on the drum. The little chap accompanied him without a mistake and when he had finished began a perfect fusillade of rolls and calls and rallies which came so fast that they sounded like a volley of musketry. When the noise had finally died out, the captain turned to his mother and said:

"Madam, I'll take that boy. He isn't much bigger than a minute but he certainly can drum."

The woman kissed the boy and nearly broke down.

"You'll surely bring him back to me, captain," she said.

"Sure," said the captain; "we'll all be discharged in about six weeks."

An hour later Eddie was marching at the head of the Iowa First playing "The Girl I Left Behind Me" as it had never been played before. He and Bill, the fifer, became great chums and Eddie was the favorite of the whole regiment. Whenever anything especially nice was brought back by the foraging parties, Eddie always had his share and the captain said that he was in far more danger from watermelons than he was from bullets. On heavy marches the fifer would carry him on his back, drum and all, and this was always Eddie's position in fording the numerous streams.

At the Battle of Wilson's Creek the Iowa regiment and a part of an Illinois regiment were ordered to clear out a flanking party concealed in a ravine upon the left of the Union forces. The ravine was a deep, long one with high trees and heavy underbrush and dark even at noontime. The Union regiments marched down and there was a dreadful hand-to-hand fight in the brush in the semi-twilight. Men became separated from each other and as in the great battle between David and Absalom, the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured. The fight was going against the Union men when suddenly a Union battery wheeled into line on a near-by hill and poured a rain of grape and canister into the Confederates which drove them out in short order. Later on the word was passed through the Union Army that General Lyon had been killed and soon after came the order to fall back upon Springfield. The Iowa regiment and two companies of a Missouri regiment were ordered to camp on the battle-field and act as a rear guard to cover a retreat. When the men came together that night there was no drummer boy. In the hurry and rush of hand-to-hand fighting, Eddie had become separated from Bill and although the latter raged back and forth through the brush like an angry bull, never a trace of his little comrade could he find. That night the sentries stood guard over the abandoned field and along the edge of the dark ravine now filled with the dead of both sides. It was a wild, desolate country and as the men passed back and forth over the stricken field, they could hear the long, mournful, wailing howl of the wolves which were brought by the smell of blood from the wilderness to the battle-field from miles around. That night poor Bill was unable to sleep and moaned and tossed on his blanket and said for the thousandth time:

"If only I had kept closer to the little chap."

Suddenly he sprang to his feet and roused the sleeping men all around him.

"Don't you hear a drum?" said he.

They all listened sadly, but could hear nothing.

"Lie down, Bill," said one of them. "Eddie's gone. We all did the best we could."

"He's down there in the dark," cried poor Bill, "drumming for help, and I must go to him."

The others tried to hold him back for it was impossible to see a foot through the tangled ravine at night and moreover the orders were strict against any one leaving camp. Bill went to the sentry who guarded the captain's tent and finally persuaded the man to wake up the captain. The latter lay exhausted with fatigue and sorrow, but came out and listened as did all the rest for the drum, but nothing could be heard.

"You imagined it, my poor fellow," he said. "There's nothing you could do to-night anyway. Wait until morning."

Bill paced restlessly up and down all through that dark night and just as the dawn-light came in the sky, he heard again faint and far away a drum beating the morning call from out of the silence of the deep ravine. Again he went to the captain.

"Of course you can go," said the latter, kindly, "but you must be back as soon as possible for we march at daybreak. Look out for yourself as the place is full of bushwhackers and rebel scouts."

Bill started down the hill through the thick underbrush and wandered around for a time trying to locate the drum-beats which were thrown back by the trees so that it was difficult to determine from what point they came. As he crept along through the underbrush, they sounded louder and louder and finally in the darkest, deepest part of the ravine, he came out from behind a great pin-oak and saw his little comrade sitting on the ground leaning against the trunk of a fallen tree and beating his drum which was hung on a bush in front of him.

"Eddie, Eddie, dear old Eddie," shouted Bill, bursting through the thicket. At the sound the little chap dropped his drumsticks and exclaimed:

"Oh, Bill, I am so glad to see you. I knew you would come. Do get me a drink."

Bill started to take his canteen down to a little near-by brook when Eddie called him back.

"You'll come back, Bill, won't you," he said, "for I can't walk."

Bill looked down and saw that both of his feet had been shot away by a cannon-ball and that the little fellow was sitting in a pool of his own blood. Choking back his sobs, the big fifer crawled down to the brook and soon came back with his canteen full of cold water which Eddie emptied again and again.

"You don't think I am going to die, do you, Bill?" said the little boy at last. "I do so want to finish out my time and go back to mother. This man said I would not and that the surgeon would be able to cure me."

For the first time Bill noticed that just at Eddie's feet lay a dead Confederate. He had been shot through the stomach and had fallen near where Eddie lay. Realizing that he could not live and seeing the condition of the boy, he had crawled up to him and taking off his buckskin suspenders had bandaged with them the little fellow's legs so that he would not bleed to death and on tying the last knot had fallen back dead himself. Eddie had just finished telling Bill all about it in a whisper, for his strength was going fast, when there was a trampling of horses through the ravine and in a minute a Confederate scouting party broke through the brush, calling upon Bill to surrender.

"I'll do anything you want," said Bill, "if you will only take my little pal here safe back to camp and get him into the hands of a surgeon."

The Confederate captain stooped down and spoke gently to the boy and in a minute took him up and mounted him in front of him on his own horse and they rode carefully back to the Confederate camp, but when they reached the tents of the nearest Confederate company they found that little Eddie had served out his time and had given his life for his country.

On June 30, 1862, was fought the stubborn battle of Glendale, one of the Seven Days' Battles between McClellan, the general of the Union forces, and Lee, the Confederate commander. This battle was part of McClellan's campaign against Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy which he had within his grasp when he was out-generaled by Lee, who that month for the first time had been placed in supreme command of the Confederate Army. With him were his two great generals, Stonewall Jackson and Longstreet. McClellan was within sight of the promised land. The spires of

Richmond showed against the sky. Instead of fighting he hesitated and procrastinated away every chance of victory. Lee was even then planning that wonderful strategy which was to halt a victorious army, turn it away from the beleaguered capital of the Confederacy and send it stumbling back North in a series of defeats. It was necessary for him to have a conference with Stonewall Jackson, his great fighting right-hand in military matters. Jackson rode almost alone fifty miles and attended a conference with Lee, Longstreet and Generals D. H. and A. P. Hill. To each of them General Lee assigned the part that he was to play. In the meantime, knowing that McClellan always read and pondered the Richmond papers, he arranged that simultaneously every paper should publish as news the pretended facts that strong reinforcements had been sent to the Shenandoah Valley. McClellan fell into the trap and instead of pressing forward to attack Richmond, which was now only guarded by a small force, he, as usual, waited for reinforcements and allowed his antagonists to march around him and start flanking battles which threatened to cut off his line of communications. The battle of Gaines Mill was fought in which battle General Fitz John Porter with thirty-one thousand men stubbornly faced Lee and Jackson's forces of fifty-five thousand and with sullen obstinacy only retreated when it was absolutely impossible longer to hold his ground. This defeat, which occurred simply because McClellan could not bring himself to send Porter the necessary reinforcements, made General McClellan resolve to withdraw, although even then, with a superior army, he could have fought his way to Richmond. From June 25th to July 1, 1862, occurred the Seven Days' Battles fought by the retreating Union Army. By one of the few mistakes which General Lee made in that campaign, the Union Army was allowed a respite of twenty-four hours to organize its retreat and were well on their way before pursuit was given. On June 29th there was a battle between the rear guard of the Union force and the Confederate's under General Magruder in which the Confederates were defeated. The next day came the battle of Glendale. Generals Longstreet and A. P. Hill commanded the Confederate Army while the rear guard of the retreating Union forces was made up of General McCall's division and that of General Heintzelman and a part of the corps under General Sumner which had done such gallant fighting the day before. It was a stern and stubborn battle. If the Confederates could cut through the rear guard, they would have the retreating army at their mercy. On the other hand, if they could be held back, the main army would have time to occupy a favorable position and entrench and could be saved. For a time it seemed as if the Confederate attack could not be checked. Every available man was called into action. Back at the rear were posted the hospital corps where the sick and wounded lay. With them were stationed the band and the drum-corps made up of drummer boys who were supposed to keep out of actual fighting as much as possible. Among them was a little Jewish boy named Benjamin Levy, who was only sixteen years old and small for his age. Benjamin stayed back with the hospital while the roar of the battle grew louder and louder. Finally there was a tremendous chorus of yells and groans and shouts mingled with the rattle of rifle-shots and the heavy thudding sounds which sabres and bayonets make as they slash and pierce living flesh. Little groups of wounded men came straggling back or were carried back to the hospital and each one told a fresh story of the fierce fight which was going on at the near-by front. Benjamin could stand it no longer. The last wounded man that came in hobbled along with a broken leg, using his rifle for a crutch. The boy helped him to a near-by cot and made him as comfortable as he could.

"Now you lie quiet," he said, "until the doctor comes and I'll just borrow this rifle of yours and do a little fighting in your place," and Benjamin picked up the gun and slipped on the other's cartridge belt.

"Hi there, you come back with my gun," yelled the wounded man after him. "That front's no place for kids like you."

Benjamin, however, was well on his way before the man had finished speaking and slipping past an indignant doctor who was trying to stop him, he ran forward, keeping as much as possible in the shelter of the trees among which the bullets and grape-shot were whining and humming. He passed many wounded limping to the rear and rows of prostrate men, some still, some writhing in

the agony of their wounds. These were the men who had fallen on their way back to the hospital. A minute later Benjamin found himself in the thick of the fight. There had been a Confederate charge which the Union soldiers had just barely been able to drive back. The men were still panting and shouting and firing volleys at the gray forces who were reluctantly withdrawing to rally for another attack. The boy lay down with the rest and loaded and fired his borrowed rifle as rapidly as he could. No one seemed to notice him except the color-bearer who happened to be the man next to him. He had stopped firing to wipe his face and saw the little fellow close by his arm.

"Why don't you get back to the rear where you belong?" he said, pretending to talk very fiercely. "This is no place for little boys. When those gray-backs come back, you'll scamper quick enough, so you had better be on your way now."

"No I won't," said Benjamin positively. "I guess boys have got as much right to fight in this war as men have. Anyway, you won't see me do much running."

Benjamin was mistaken in that last statement, for a minute later the colonel of this particular regiment decided that instead of waiting for a Confederate attack, he would do a little charging on his own account. The signal came. The men sprang over the earthworks and Benjamin found himself running neck and neck with the color-bearer at the head of them all. It was a glorious charge. The ground ahead was smooth, the fierce flag of the regiment streamed just in front and all around were men panting and cheering as they ran. It was almost like a race on the old school-green at home. They came nearer and nearer to the masses of gray-clothed men who were hurriedly arranging themselves in regular ranks out of the hurry and confusion of their retreat. When they were only a short hundred yards distant, suddenly a wavering line of fire and smoke ran all up and down the straggling line in front of them. Men plunged headlong here and there and Benjamin noticed that he and the color-bearer seemed to have drawn away from the rest and were racing almost alone. Suddenly his friend with the colors stopped in full stride, swung the flag over his head once with a shout and dropped backward with a bullet through his heart. As he fell the colors slowly dropped down through the air and were about to settle on the blood-stained grass when the boy, hardly knowing what he did, shifted his rifle to his left hand, caught the staff of the flag and once more the colors of the regiment were leading the men on. Right up to the gray line he carried them, followed by the whole regiment. Firing, cutting and stabbing with their bayonets they broke straight through the Confederates and after a hand-to-hand fight, drove them out of their position. They carried the boy, still clinging to the colors, on their shoulders to their colonel and to the end of his life Benjamin remembered the moment when the colonel shook hands with him before the cheering regiment as the climax of the greatest day of his life.

CHAPTER V
THE CHARGE OF ZAGONYI

In battle the charge is the climax. In other kinds of fighting men have a certain amount of shelter and respite and at long range it makes little difference whether the fighter is strong or weak. In a charge, however, the fighting is hand to hand. As in the days of old, men fight at close grips with their enemy and each one must depend upon his own strength and skill and bravery.

There have been three charges in modern battles which have been celebrated over and over again. The first of these was the last desperate charge of the Old Guard at Waterloo. A thin red line of English held a hill which Napoleon, the greatest of modern generals, saw was the keystone of the battle. If that could be taken, the whole arch of the English and Belgium forces would crumble away into defeat. Again and again the French stormed at this hill and each time were driven back by the coolly-waiting deadly ranks of the English. Toward nightfall Napoleon made one last desperate effort. The Old Guard was to him what the great Tenth Legion had been to Julius Cæsar, the best and bravest veterans of his army who boasted that they had never yet been defeated. Calling them up with every last one of his reserves, he ordered a final desperate charge to break the battle center. To the grim drumming of what guns the little general had left, they rushed again up that blood-stained slope in desperate dark masses of unbeaten men. With a storm of cheers, the columns surged up in a vast blue battle-wave which seemed as if it must dash off by its weight the little group of silent, grim defenders. The Englishmen waited and waited and waited until the rushing ranks were almost on them. Then they poured in a volley at such close range that every bullet did the work of two and with a deep English cheer sprang on the broken ranks with their favorite weapon, the bayonet. That great battle-wave broke in a foam of shattered, dying and defeated men and the sunset of that day was the sunset of Napoleon's glory.

Fifty years later in the great war which England with her allies was waging to keep the vast, fierce hordes of Russia from ruling Europe, happened another glorious, useless charge. Owing to a misunderstanding of orders, a little squad of six hundred cavalrymen charged down a mile-long valley flanked on all sides by Russian artillery against a battery of guns whose fire faced them all the way. Every schoolboy who has ever spoken a piece on Friday afternoon knows what comes next. How the gallant Six Hundred, stormed at with shot and shell, made the charge to the wonder and admiration of three watching armies and how they forced their way into the jaws of death and into the mouth of hell and sabred the gunners and then rode back – all that was left of them.

In our own Civil War occurred the most famous charge of modern days, Pickett's charge at the battle of Gettysburg. For three days raged the first battle which the Confederates had been able to fight on Northern soil. If their great General Lee, with his seventy thousand veterans, won this battle, Washington, Philadelphia and even New York were at his mercy. On the afternoon of the third day he made one last desperate effort to break the center of the Union forces. Pickett's division of the Virginia infantry was the center of the attacking forces and the column numbered altogether over fifteen thousand men. For two hours Lee cannonaded the Union center with one hundred and fifteen guns. He was answered by the Union artillery although they could only muster eighty guns. Finally the Union fire was stopped in order that the guns might cool for Hunt, the Union chief of artillery, realized that the cannonade was started to mask some last great attack. Suddenly three lines, each over a mile long, of Virginia, North Carolina, Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee regiments started to cover the mile and a half which separated them from the Union center. The Union crest was held by the Pennsylvania regiments who were posted back of the stone wall on the very summit. As the gray lines rushed over the distance with a score of fierce battle flags flaming and fluttering over their ranks, the eighty guns which had cooled so that they could now be used with good effect opened up on

them first with solid shot and then with the tremendous explosive shells. As they charged, the Virginia regiments moved away to the left leaving a gap between them and the men from Alabama on the right. The Union leaders took advantage of this gap and forced in there the Vermont brigade and a half brigade of New York men. By suddenly changing front these men were enabled to attack the charging thousands on their flank. The Union guns did terrible execution, opening up great gaps through the running, leaping, shouting men. As the charge came nearer and nearer the batteries changed to the more terrible grape and canister which cut the men down like grass before a reaper. Still they came on until they were face to face with the waiting Union soldiers who poured in a volley at short range. For a moment the battle flags of the foremost Confederate regiments stood on the crest. The effort had been too much. Over half of the men had been killed or wounded and many others had turned to meet the flank attack of the Vermont and New York regiments so that when the Pennsylvania troops met them at last with the bayonet, the gray line wavered, broke, and the North was saved.

All three of these great charges were brave, glorious failures. This is the story of a charge, an almost forgotten charge, just as brave, just as glorious, which succeeded, a charge in which one hundred and sixty men and boys broke and routed a force of over two thousand entrenched infantry and cavalry.

At the breaking out of the war, one of the most popular of the Union commanders was John C. Fremont, the Pathfinder. He had opened up the far West and had made known to the people the true greatness of the country beyond the Mississippi. At the birth of the Republican or Free-Soil Party, he was the first candidate. The country rang with a campaign song sung to the tune of the Marseillaise, the chorus of which was:

"March on, march on, ye braves,
And let your war cry be,
Free soil, free press, free votes, free men,
Fremont and victory."

He was one of the first generals appointed. Among those whom the fascination of his romantic and adventurous life had attracted to his side was a Hungarian refugee named Zagonyi. In his boyhood he had fought in the desperate but unsuccessful war which Hungary made to free herself from the Austrian yoke. He served in the Hungarian cavalry; and in a desperate charge upon the Austrians, in which half the force were killed, Zagonyi was wounded and captured and for two years was a prisoner. He was finally released on condition that he leave his country forever. As an experienced soldier, he was welcomed by General Fremont and was authorized to raise a company to be known as Fremont's Body-Guard. In a few days two full companies, composed mostly of very young men, had been enrolled. A little later another company composed entirely of Kentucky boys was included in the guards. They were all magnificently mounted on picked horses and very handsomely uniformed. Because of their outfit and name they soon excited the envy of the other parts of the army who used to call them the "kid-glove brigade." Although well-trained and enthusiastic, they had no active service until October, 1861, when Zagonyi, who had been appointed their major, was ordered to take one hundred and sixty of his men and explore the country around Springfield, Missouri, through which the main army was intending to advance. There were rumors that a Confederate force was approaching to take possession of the city of Springfield and the body-guard marched seventeen hours without stopping in order to occupy this town before the enemy should arrive. As they came within two miles of Springfield, however, they were met by a farmer who informed them that the Confederates had beaten them in the race to Springfield and were already in camp on a hill about half a mile west of the town. Their rear was protected by a grove of trees and there was a deep brook at the foot of the hill. The only way to approach them was through a blind lane which ran into fences and ploughed fields. This was covered by sharpshooters and infantry while four hundred Confederate

horsemen were posted on the flank of the main body of infantry which guarded the top of the hill. Altogether the force numbered over two thousand men. It seemed an absolutely hopeless undertaking for a little body of tired boys to attack twenty times their own number. Zagonyi, however, had been used to fighting against odds in his battles with the Austrians. He hurriedly called his men together and announced to them that he did not intend to go back without a fight after riding so far.

"If any of you men," he said, "are too tired or too weak, or too afraid, go back now before it is too late. There is one thing about it," he added grimly, "if there are any of us left when we are through we won't hear much more about kid gloves."

Not a man stirred to go back. Zagonyi gathered them into open order and drawing his sabre gave the word to start up the fatal lane. At first there was no sight or sound of any enemy, but as the horses broke into a run, there was a volley from the woods and a number of men swayed in their saddles and sank to the ground. Down the steep, stony lane they rushed in a solid column in spite of volley after volley which poured into their ranks. Some leaped, others crashed through fences and across the ploughed fields and jumped the brook and finally gained the shelter of the foot of the hill. There was a constant whistle of bullets and scream of minie balls over their heads. They stopped for a minute to re-form, for nearly half the squad was down. Zagonyi detached thirty of his best horsemen and instructed them to charge up the hill at the Confederate cavalry which, four hundred strong, were posted along the edge of the wood, and to hold them engaged so that the rest of the force could make a front attack on the infantry. The rest of the troop watched the little band gallop up the hillside and they were fully half-way up before it dawned upon the Confederates that these thirty men were really intending to attack a force over ten times their number. As they swept up the last slope, the Confederate cavalry poured a volley from their revolvers instead of getting the jump on them by a down-hill charge.

Lieutenant Mathenyi, another Hungarian and an accomplished swordsman, led the attack and cut his way through the first line of the Confederate horsemen, closely followed by the score of men who had managed to get up the hill. With their sabres flashing over their heads, they disappeared in the gray cloud of Confederates which awaited them. At that moment Zagonyi gave the word for the main charge and his column opened out and rushed up the hill from all sides like a whirlwind. Even as they breasted the slope they saw the solid mass of Confederate cavalry open out and scatter in every direction while a blue wedge of men cut clear through and turned back to sabre the scattering Confederates. With a tremendous cheer, Zagonyi and the rest of the band rushed on to the massed infantry.

They had time for only one volley when the young horsemen were among them, cutting, thrusting, hacking and shooting with their revolvers. In a minute the main body followed the example of the cavalry and broke and scattered everywhere. Some of them, however, were real fighters; they retreated into the woods and kept up a murderous fire from behind trees. One young Union soldier dashed in after them to drive them out, but was caught under the shoulders by a grape-vine and swept off his horse and hung struggling in the air until rescued by his comrades. Down into the village swarmed the fugitives with the guards close at their heels. At a great barn just outside of the village a number of them rallied and drove back the Kentucky squad which had been pursuing them. This time Zagonyi himself dashed up, and shouting, "Come on, old Kentuck, I'm with you," rushed at the group which stood in the doorway. As he came on, a man sprang out from behind the door and leveled his rifle at Zagonyi's head. The latter spurred his horse until he reared, and swinging him around on his hind legs, cut his opponent clear through the neck and shoulders with such tremendous force that the blood spurted clear up to the top of the door.

Another hero of the fight was Sergeant Hunter, the drill-master of the squad. It had always been an open question with the men as to whether he or Major Zagonyi was the better swordsman. In this fight Hunter killed five men with his sabre, one after the other, showing off fatal tricks of fence against bayonet and sabre as coolly as if giving a lesson, while several men fell before his revolver.

His last encounter was with a Southern lieutenant who had been flying by, but suddenly turned and fought desperately. The sergeant had lost three horses and was now mounted on his fourth, a riderless, unmanageable horse which he had caught, and was somewhat at a disadvantage. In spite of this he proceeded to give those of his squad who were near him a lecture on the fine points of the sabre.

"Always parry in secant," said he, suiting his action to the word, "because," he went on, slashing his opponent across the thigh, "a regular fencer like this Confed is liable to leave himself open. It is easy then to ride on two paces and catch him with a back-hand sweep," and at the words he dealt his opponent a last fatal blow across the side of the head which toppled him out of his saddle.

A young Southern officer magnificently mounted refused to follow the fugitives, but charged alone at the line of the guards. He passed clear through without being touched, killing one man as he went. Instantly he wheeled, charged back and again broke through, leaving another Union cavalryman dead. A third time he cut his way clear up to Zagonyi's side and suddenly dropping his sabre, placed a revolver against the major's breast and fired. Zagonyi, however, was like lightning in his movements. The instant he felt the pressure of the revolver he swerved so that the bullet passed through his tunic, and shortening his sabre he ran his opponent through the throat killing him before he had time to shoot again.

Holding his dripping sabre in his hand, the major shouted an order to his men to come together in the middle of the town. One of the first to come back was his bugler, whom Zagonyi had ordered to sound a signal in the fiercest part of the fight. The bugler had apparently paid no attention to him, but darted off with Lieutenant Mathenyi's squad and was seen pursuing the flying horsemen vigorously. When his men were gathered together, Major Zagonyi ordered him to step out and said:

"In the middle of the battle you disobeyed my order to sound the recall. It might have meant the loss of our whole company. You are not worthy to be a member of this guard and I dismiss you."

The bugler was a little Frenchman and he nearly exploded with indignation.

"No," he said, "me, you shall not dismiss," and he showed his bugle to his major with the mouthpiece carried away by a stray bullet. "The mouth was shoot off," he said. "I could not bugle wiz my bugle and so I bugle wiz my pistol and sabre."

The major recalled the order of dismissal.

So ended one of the most desperate charges of the Civil War. One hundred and forty-eight men had defeated twenty-two hundred, with the loss of fifty-three killed and more than thirty wounded.

CHAPTER VI
THE LOCOMOTIVE CHASE

Courage does not depend upon success. Sometimes it takes a braver man to lose than to win. A man may meet defeat and even death in doing his duty, but if he has not flinched or given up, he has not failed. A brave deed is never wasted whether men live or die.

In the spring of 1862, James J. Andrews and a little band of nineteen other men staked their lives and liberty for the freedom of Tennessee and although they lost, the story of their courage helped other men to be brave.

At the beginning of the Civil War, the eastern part of Tennessee was held by the Confederates although the mountaineers were for the most part Union men. The city of Chattanooga was the key to that part of the state and was held by the Confederates. A railroad line into that city ran through Georgia and was occupied by the Southern army. If that could be destroyed, Chattanooga could be cut off from reënforcements and captured by the small body of Union troops which could be risked for that purpose. This road was guarded by detachments of Confederate troops and extended for two hundred miles through Confederate territory and it seemed as if it could not be destroyed by any force less than an army. There was no army that could be spared.

One April evening a stranger came to the tent of General O. M. Mitchel, commander of the Union forces in middle Tennessee, and asked to see the general. The sentry refused to admit him unless he stated his name and errand.

"Tell the general," said the man quietly, "that James J. Andrews wants to speak to him on a matter of great importance."

The sentry stared at him for there were few in the army who had not heard of Andrews, the scout, but fewer still who had ever seen him. No man had passed through the enemy's lines so many times, knew the country better or had been sent more often on dangerous errands. In a minute he was ushered in to where General Mitchel sat writing in the inner tent. With his deep-set gray eyes and waving hair brushed back from his broad, smooth forehead, he looked more like a poet than a fighter. The general noticed, however, that his eyes never flickered and that although he spoke in a very low voice, there was something about him that at once commanded attention. Andrews wasted no time.

"General Mitchel," he said, "if you will let me have twenty-four men, I will capture a train, burn the bridges on the Georgia railroad and cut off Chattanooga."

"It can't be done," returned General Mitchel.

"Well, general," answered Andrews slowly, "don't you think it's worth trying? You know I generally make good on what I set out to do. In this matter if we lose, we lose only twenty-five men. If we win, we take Chattanooga and all Tennessee without a battle."

There was a long pause while the general studied the scout.

"You shall have the men," he said finally.

Andrews saluted and left the tent. That night twenty-four men from three regiments were told that they were to have the first chance to volunteer for secret and dangerous service. Not a man chosen refused to serve. The next evening they were told to meet at a great boulder at sunset about a mile below the camp and wait until joined by their captain. Each man was furnished with the camp countersign as well as a special watchword by which they could know each other. One by one the men gathered at dusk, recognized each other by the watchword and sat down in the brush back of the boulder to wait. Just at dark there was a rustling in the underbrush at the other side of the road and the scout stepped out, joined them and gave the countersign. Without a word, he moved to the thick bushes at one corner of the boulder and pushing them aside showed a tiny hidden path which wound through the brush. Into this he stepped and beckoned them to follow. The path twisted back

and forth among the great stones and trees and through patches of underbrush and the men in single file followed Andrews. Finally nearly a mile from the road, he led them down into a dense thicket in a little ravine. There the brush had been cut out so as to make a kind of room in the thicket about ten feet square. When they were all inside, the scout motioned them to sit down and then circled around through the underbrush and doubled back on his track so as to make sure that they had not been followed by any spy. Then he returned and lighted a small lantern which hung to one of the saplings and for the first time his men had a good look at their captain. As usual, Andrews wasted no time.

"Boys," he said simply, "I have chosen you to come with me and capture a train from an army and then run it two hundred miles through the enemy's country. We will have to pass every train we meet and while we are doing this we must tear up a lot of track and burn down two bridges. There is every chance of being wrecked or shot and if we are captured, we will be hung for spies. It is a desperate chance and I picked you fellows out as the best men in the whole army to take such a chance. If any of you think it is too dangerous, now is the time to stand up and draw out."

There was a long pause. Each man tried to see what his companions were thinking of in the dim light.

"Well, captain," at last drawled a long, lank chap with a comical face, who had the reputation of being the worst daredevil in his regiment, "I would like to stand up for you've got me kind of scared, but my foot's asleep and I guess I'll have to go with you."

"That's the way I feel," said the man next to him, as every one laughed, and the same answer went all around the circle.

In a whisper the scout then outlined his plan. The men were to change their uniforms and put on the butternut-colored clothes of the South and to carry no arms except a revolver and bowie-knife. Then they were to cross the country on foot until they got to Chattanooga and were then to go back on their tracks by train and meet at a little town called Marietta in the middle of Georgia. No one would, of course, suspect men coming out of a Confederate city to be Union soldiers. If questioned they were to say that they were Kentuckians on their way to join the Southern army. At Marietta they were to take rooms at the Marietta Hotel and meet at the scout's room on the following Saturday morning at two o'clock.

Disguised as a quinine seller, Andrews reached Marietta ahead of the others. At the time appointed, he sat fully dressed in the silent hotel waiting for the arrival of his little company and wondering how many would appear. Just as the town clock struck the hour from the old-fashioned court house, there came a light tapping at the door and one by one nineteen of the twenty-four glided in and reported for duty. All had gone through various adventures and several had only escaped capture by quick thinking and cool action. One of the missing ones had been delayed by a wreck and did not reach Marietta in time, two others were forced to enlist in the Southern army, and two more reached Marietta but by some mistake did not join the others. The twenty who were left, however, were the kind of men whose courage flares highest when things seem most desperate and they were not at all discouraged by the loss of a fifth of their force, and they all agreed with Brown, the man whose foot had been asleep, when he drawled out in his comical way, "The fewer fellows the more fun for those who are left."

After reporting, they went back to their rooms and got what sleep they could. At daylight they were all at the ticket office in time for the north-bound mail train. In order to prevent any suspicion, each man bought a ticket for a different station along the line in the direction of Chattanooga. Eight miles out of Marietta was a little station called Big Shanty where the train was scheduled to stop twenty minutes for breakfast. It was a lonely place at the foot of Kenesaw Mountain and there were only the station, a freight-house, a restaurant and one or two dwelling houses. Andrews had planned to capture the train there, believing that there would be few, if any, bystanders at so small a place early in the morning. As the train came around the curve of the mountain, however, the scout and his men, who were scattered through the train, were horrified to see scores of tents showing white through the

morning mist. A detachment of Confederate soldiers was in camp there and it was now necessary for the little squad of Union soldiers to capture the train not only from its crew and passengers, but under the very eyes of a regiment. There was no flinching. The minute the train stopped there was the usual wild scramble by the passengers for breakfast in which the engineer, fireman and conductor joined. In a minute the engine was left entirely unguarded. In those days engines were named like steamboats, and this one had been christened "General." Andrews and his men loitered behind. In his squad were two engineers and a fireman. These at once hurried forward and began to uncouple the engine with its tender and three baggage-cars. The rest of the party grouped around, playing the part of bystanders, but with their hands on their revolvers, for within a dozen feet of the engine stood a sentry with his loaded musket in his hand watching the whole thing, while other sentries and a large group of soldiers were only a few yards farther off. The men worked desperately at the coupling and finally succeeded in freeing the cars. Then the engineers and fireman sprang into the cab of the engine while Andrews stood with his hand on the rail and foot on the step, and the rest of the band tumbled into the baggage-cars. This was the most critical moment of all, for although the watching soldiers might think it natural to change the crew, yet their suspicions would certainly be aroused at the sight of fifteen men climbing into baggage-cars. The nearest sentry cocked his musket and stepped forward to investigate. At this moment Brown climbed into the engine along with one of the engineers, coolly smoking a cigar. Poking his head out of the window he called back as if to one of the crew, "Tell those fellows not to eat up all the breakfast. We'll be back just as soon as we can take those other cars on at the siding." All this time Andrews was standing with his foot on the step watching the men enter the baggage-cars. The track was on a high bank and it was necessary for the first man to be raised up on the shoulders of two others in order to open the door. Once inside, the other men were tossed up to him and he pulled them in like bags of meal. Finally there were only two left and these jumped, caught the outstretched hands of two inside and were hauled up into the car. Not until then did Andrews step aboard under the very nose of the suspicious sentry. The engineer was so anxious to start that he pulled the throttle wide open and for a few seconds the wheels spun round and round without catching on the rails. He finally slowed up enough to allow the wheels to bite and the engine started off with a jerk which took all the soldiers in the baggage-cars off their feet. Just at this moment the fat engineer waddled out of the eating-house shouting at the top of his voice, "Stop, thief! Stop, thief!" He was followed by the fireman who bellowed to the sentry, "Shoot 'em, shoot 'em! They're Yanks!" It was too late. The General was taking the first curve on two wheels, leaving the quiet little station swarming and buzzing like a hornet's nest struck by a stone. The train had been captured without losing a man.

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