

SOUTHERN Historical Society Papers

NEW SERIES—NUMBER III
WHOLE NUMBER XLI



SEPTEMBER, 1916

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

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2120 STUART AVENUE

RICHMOND, VA.

Southern Historical Society Papers.

NEW SERIES.

Richmond, Va., Sept., 1916.

VOLUME III.

THE SOUTH

By FATHER RYAN.

Yes, give me the land
Where the ruins are spread,
And the living tread light
On the heart of the dead;
Yes, give me the land
That is blest by the dust,
And bright with the deeds
Of the down trodden just.

Yes, give me the land
Where the battle's red blast
Has flashed on the future
The form of the past;
Yes, give me the land
That has legends and lays
That tell of the memories
Of long-vanished days.

Yes, give me the land
That hath story and song
To tell of the strife
Of the right with the wrong;
Yes, give me the land
With a grave in each spot
And the names in the graves
That shall not be forgot.

THE NEW MARKET CAMPAIGN.

"THE NEW MARKET CAMPAIGN—MAY, 1864." By Edward Raymond Turner, Professor of European History, University of Michigan, 12 mo. 203 pages—maps and engravings. Whittet & Shepperson, Richmond, Va.

Not for a long time have we had in our hands a contribution to war history so attractive and deeply interesting as this masterly study of the campaign in the Valley of Virginia which culminated on May 15, 1864, in the Battle of New Market. The book is well made, printed accurately in good type, and very tastefully bound with maps and illustrations, index, appendix and bibliography. In all this regard it is a model of the best in modern book making.

For various reasons, though not great in the numbers engaged, the battle of which this book is a study was one of importance in itself, and of interest and attractiveness that have grown through the nearly fifty years that have passed. The very notable skill and energy of the Confederate leader, General Breckenridge, the unity of action on the field, the courage and gallantry of officers and men of all commands, the part taken by the boys of the V. M. I. Cadet Corps, and the signal victory of the Confederate force against somewhat superior numbers, and at a time of general depression and discouragement, have combined to make the Battle of New Market an event of much historic interest, and have given it a halo of some romantic heroism.

In the latter part of the war between the sections, when the Confederate ranks were growing thin and supplies of all kind were failing, while General Lee was holding Grant in check in Hanover before Richmond, large Federal forces were closing in through Western Virginia beyond the Blue Ridge. From the

Kanawha Valley General Crook was advancing into Southwestern Virginia to seize and destroy the railroad which is now the Norfolk and Western, and to take possession of the important mines of salt and lead, with Lynchburg as his ultimate objective. General Sigel from Martinsburg on the Baltimore and Ohio Railway and Winchester was moving up the Shenandoah Valley with Staunton and the Chesapeake and Ohio as his aim. Both of these expeditions failed of entire success, but were followed in another campaign of interruption and destruction that had much to do with the final evacuation of Richmond and the falling of the curtain at Appomattox.

When the advance of Sigel up the valley became formidable and threatening, General Imboden with his small and active force, singularly made up of mounted infantry and dismounted cavalry, was reinforced by the troops from the Southwest; General John C. Breckinridge taking command of the united force with headquarters at Staunton. Moving down the Valley Turnpike, promptly and fearlessly, Breckinridge's small command of about five thousand of all arms came into conflict with the command of Sigel, or the head of his column, for much of it was not yet on the field, at New Market, on the morning of Sunday, May 15. New Market is a small town on the old turnpike in the western branch of the Shenandoah Valley, fifty miles from Staunton, and forty-eight miles from Winchester, having some strategic importance, as the road from Luray over a gap in the Massanutton Mountains here crosses the Valley Turnpike on its way to Moorefield. The engagement which lasted through the day was most vigorously fought, with changes in the lines and formations and with advancing positions until in the evening victory perched on the Battle Flag of the South and the Federal force withdrew from the whole field. It was not a great battle as to the numbers engaged, but was important in holding in check the Federal campaign for the possession of the Shenandoah Valley, of Staunton and the railroad which brought the supplies of Western Virginia to the support of Richmond and the Army of Northern Virginia. And the story is one of the most thrilling in all the narratives of minor and separate cam-

paigns. While inferior in numbers and equipment to its opposing lines, the Confederate force was most ably and skilfully handled, with the whole force brought on the field, with admirable harmony of action, with prompt obedience to orders and vigorous initiative when called for, and with much of conspicuous courage by officers and men in all parts of the action.

The general commanding, the handsome John Cabell Breckinridge, so evidently a born soldier and leader of brave men, in the midst of the battalions and batteries, directed and led with a skill and energy beyond question or criticism. With him were General Imboden of the valley and Generals Echols and Wharton from the Southwest. And under them were the Colonels, Edgar and George Smith and Derrick. With the cadet battalion was Colonel Scott Shipp, with the artillery Major McLaughlin, and on the staff Major Stoddard Johnston. Familiar and distinguished names are found throughout the Confederate force, some in office and some in the ranks of all the commands.

The part taken in this battle by the Corps of Cadets of the Virginia Military Institute has given to the whole engagement a peculiar and pathetic interest, in Virginia and the South and in the North as well.

It was a battalion of boys, numbering about 280, in four companies, too young to be enlisted in the army, suddenly called from the barracks and lecture rooms of their school, unused to the march and the field of battle, who yet after a march of more than usual exposure and fatigue went into the fire of battle with the veterans of many fields, and light and boyish as they were, weary, hungry, physically fainting, held their alignment like regulars and moved steadily forward from one position to another, leaving some dead and many wounded behind, until in the closing struggle they were in the centre of the force which charged and secured the victory that crowned the day. History will tell the story over and over again. Those who from the Federal side saw the steady coming of that line of boys in grey have told of it a hundred times with admiration and applause and Virginia will never forget them.

It was not long after midnight that the sleeping battalion

was called from the wet ground into line. In the shadows of the night, at Colonel Shipp's suggestion, Captain Frank Preston of Company B, offered prayer to God that all might do their duty well and yet their heads be covered in the day of battle. And all through the long day until night came again there was no faltering step nor unwilling thought. It was the purpose of the general commanding to hold the cadet battalion in reserve and use it only in action should there be great need.

But through the changes in formation and the new alignments the cadet line, moving steadily onward, gradually came to the front until at the last making the centre of the Confederate advance, the battalion passed around the two sides of the Bushong House, and, uniting, charged through the orchard and seized the guns that were sweeping the field, and so, breaking the centre of the Federal line, compelled its retirement, and the day was won.

It was not by any means true that the V. M. I. Cadets were the only heroes of the field of New Market. The 26th Virginia Battalion, under Colonel George W. Edgar, on the extreme left of the Confederate line, fought with such courage and steadiness and ultimate success that history will not fail to record its fame, All over the field and in all arms of the command there were signal displays of soldierly courage and gallantry, and "there was glory enough for all." But these were stalwart men, the veterans of other campaigns and battles, who knew well the smell of powder and were hardened and steeled in muscle and courage. It was a wonder and a joy to them to see the Virginia boys as they came into place in line and then in the evening made their victorious charge.

The field was not won by the cadet corps alone, nor could it have been won without it.

The amount of literature of the Battle of New Market is unusual. In the North and in the South, following the official reports, came the published letters of many participants. Then came addresses by accomplished and eloquent men, histories of regiments and histories of the campaign. And with this growing literature came divergencies, contradictions, and some rhetor-

ical over-statement. In the interest especially of the Virginia Military Institute Cadet Corps, the task of unravelling the complicated tangle, and preparing a reliable history, just to all parts of the Confederate force, was devolved upon Captain Henry A. Wise, of Baltimore, captain of Company A of the Cadet Battalion, and, after Colonel Shipp was disabled, the senior officer commanding. However, the matter accumulated in his hands until it had become extensive and somewhat conflicting. The difficulty of writing a history that would be impartial and satisfactory to all seemed too great for one who himself was on the field. Captain Wise determined to devolve the preparation of a history of the New Market campaign upon some competent historian, one not personally connected with the battle or any of the commands engaged. Mr. Edward Raymond Turner, Ph. D., of Johns Hopkins University, a trained and able historical student and writer, was selected for this work. Into his hands came the extraordinary accumulation of literary gathered by Captain Wise, and to him was committed also the valuable material gathered by Colonel Edgar, who was preparing to write a history of the battle. Through this large amount of matter, printed and in manuscript, Professor Turner, with remarkable patience and fidelity, has worked his way, seeking to untangle all complications and to make a complete, accurate and impartial history. After writing and rewriting the story it is said as many as four times, Professor Turner has given us a history which we doubt not is faithful and just. Carefully attested by references and quotations in a great number of foot notes, and which will be eminently satisfactory to all concerned. It is unpartisan and impartial and is written in a style that is clear and strong, and while firm in defense of the conclusions reached in matters that have been in controversy, is yet just and courteous to all.

This book is a chapter of great interest in the history of the War between the States. It will be through generations a significant part in the story of the Shenandoah Valley through which the tides of war swept to and fro, through all the four

years of thrilling and destructive campaigns. It is a crown of honor to the Virginia Military Institute, and an imperishable chaplet of laurel for all the heroic youth who wore the grey both the veterans and the boys, who followed the Stars and Bars, and seized the guns and won the day.

JAMES POWER SMITH.