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Copy made — May - 1937 - Miss Mary - aged 87 years -
for J. Leland Jordan

Recollections of "Stuart's raid" through
Maryland and Westminster's part in the
"Battle of Gettysburg"
by

Mary Bostwick Shullman.

To the mind of a child, just budding
into youth, sixty years seems an Eternity
of time, but to those of us who have
reached the high water mark between
youth and old age, sixty years seem
"but as a day that is told, and we look
forward into the future with anxiety,
lest the years pass by too rapidly for
us to accomplish anything before we
reach the border land of eternity."

And so, as I look back over the more than
sixty years which have passed since the
war cloud hung so black over the land,
and two contending armies, father
against son, and brother against brother
were engaged in the fiercest battle of

(-)

the Civil War, one to be crowned with Victory and the other doomed to disappointment and defeat, the vision comes to me so vividly, that it seems to me but yesterday, I joined my young companions in the cry - "The Rebels are coming! The Rebels are coming!"

Until then war had been to us only one big, fourth of July - a time to hoist the flag out when the Union Soldiers came, and to hide it away when the Confederates drew near, but of its horrors we knew little or nothing.

It was in the early part of September 1862, that Col. afterward Genl. Rosser, with a small body of Cavalry, dashed into town and spent a few hours. But although the coming of the Confederates had been looked forward to with dread, the visit after all seemed more like a friendly evening call, than the invasion of an enemy.

The march toward Gettysburg was conducted more slowly than it would have been, had the movement of the Federal army been known.

On the afternoon of July 1st. 1863, Genl. Lee, who until then had been cut off from all communication with Genl. Stuart received intelligence of his arrival at Carlisle Pa. and he was ordered to march at once to Gettysburg and take position on his left.

The delay of Stuart in reaching Gettysburg is spoken of, in all the reports with regret, as an unfortunate occurrence, and it is of the cause of that delay on June 29th. 1863 that I wish to speak.

Westminster was a mile in length with one street running South East and North West on the Baltimore and Gettysburg turn pike, and about mid-way

Three times the Confederates visited our little town of Westminster, Maryland, but it was during the second raid when, Stuart's Cavalry, met and engaged in a fight, the 1st. Delaware Vol. Cavalry U.S.A., that we realized war meant more than play and excitement.

In General Rpt. E. Lee's official report of the Gettysburg Campaign he speaks of Genl. J. E. B. Stuart's efforts to impede the progress of the Federal army as it advanced into Maryland and says (quote) "Finding himself unable to delay the enemy materially, he crossed the river at Seneca and marched through Westminster to Carlisle, where he arrived after Genl. Emell had left for Gettysburg. By the route he pursued, the Federal Army was interposed between his command and our main body preventing any communication with him until his arrival at Carlisle."

Between the two places.

At the "West End" the street forked, one side continuing some distance up the Gettysburg Pike, and the other leading direct to Taneytown.

The broad field on top of the hill between the two sections was known as "The Commons" and made a fine camping ground, commanding a view of the Country for miles around on all sides and the roads leading into the town. It was here that the 1st. Delaware Vol. Cavalry, U.S.A., two companies, pitched their tents, when on the morning of June 28th. 1863 they came into Westminster.

They had been encamped near Baltimore, and in obedience to special orders from head quarters of the Eighth Army Corps. had moved on Saturday evening the 27th. to Reisterstown

where they encamped over night, arriving in Westminster about eleven o'clock on Sunday morning.

They came in so quietly and orderly that but few people knew of their coming, as the majority of the inhabitants were at that hour attending Divine services in the various Churches.

Having encamped on the "Commons" martial law was declared and pickets sent out on all roads leading into town, far enough away to give ample notice of the approach by the Confederates.

About 16 soldiers belonging to the 150th New York Vol. Infantry, under the command of Lieut. Bowman had been stationed in Westminster about two months on provost duty, with head quarters at Odd Fellows Hall near the Eastern End of the town. These reported to the Cavalry, that there were no Confederates at either

Gettysburg or Hanover, the report being confirmed by citizens coming from both points.

About nine o'clock on the evening of the 28th. The firing of a signal gun by the pickets stationed on the Manchester Road called on immediate response from the Cavalry, who were quickly in the saddle, and dashing down the street, expecting to meet the enemy, which was reported to be marching toward Westminster from Manchester, only nine miles away, and rapidly nearing town.

Lieut. Bowmaker and his little body of infantry followed as rapidly as possible after them, and remained on duty during the entire night.

Of course there was great excitement in town, but as the alarm seemed to be without cause, the Cavalry returned

and again occupied the ~~Hill~~ town, sending the pickets, however, to greater distances.

All was reported quiet on the morning of June 29th., and the infantry, weary with their long night of watching, were resting quietly at their quarters, with no thought of the appearance of "Johnny Reb", when aroused this time with reason by the familiar cry, "the Rebels are coming".

From an old diary written in faded ink and yellow with the years it has laid away, with bits of shell and flattened bullets - buttons cut from uniforms and other relics of the war, I copy the following account of the events which followed.

The afternoon was hot and sultry - soldiers and citizens were resting after the events of the night before, no Confederates

were reported to be within many miles of Westminster, and Every thing was peaceful and quiet.

But like Calm before the Summer Storm the unusual stillness, was but the fore-runner of the most memorable day in the history of the town.

Five of the Delaware boys were having their horses shod at the Blacksmith shop of Mr. Michal Baughman at the East End of town, when quietly and without warning, a party of Confederate Cavalry rode up to them and demanded their surrender, taking them prisoners and retaining their fine horses. A few minutes later, about four o'clock, Dr. William Mathias who had been visiting a patient in the Country, drove into town, stating that there were about thirty Confederate Cavalry a short distance down the

Washington road, and that he had conversed with Henry Neale (^{now} an uncle of Judge F. Neale Parke of Westminster) a young man from Westminster, who had espoused the Cause of the South.

Mr. Isaac E. Pearson, a young lawyer, ^{student} hastened to carry the news and give the alarm to the sleeping infantrymen, while my brother, Harry Jones Shellman and others hastened to warn the Cavalry on the Hill.

All was now terror and excitement, as the number of the enemy was unknown and it was feared Westminster might be the battle ground between two large armies. Orders were given to clear the streets and all citizens to remain indoors.

One intrepid old man, Mr. Francis Shriver, a staunch Unionist however, seizing a musket rode daringly down town with the Cavalry until ordered

peremptorily to leave them at the lower end of the street, as they did not want to needlessly sacrifice the life of so loyal a citizen - Heeding the Command to look out for himself, and "considering discretion the better part of valor" he rode across Country and escaped capture.

The charge, the fight and the retreat through the town lasted but a few moments in reality, but to us, anxious and frightened, knowing not what was in store for us, it seemed hours that were passed behind our closed doors.

We must remember this was before the days of telephones, and the number of the enemy could not be transmitted to us nor to them in a minute then as now, or the attack might have gone down in the annals of history, as fool hardy.

As it was, the gallant charge was made

against an unknown number which subsequent events proved ^{far} too many for them, disputing every inch as they rode -

War was now to us a stern reality.

"Somebody's darling" was lying cold in death at our very doors - as a result of those few moments of conflict between sons of one common Country, one nationality and one tongue.

The air was full of vague rumors of the coming battle and we waited, awe struck and silent, all that the next few days might have in store for us.

The Delaware Cavalry numbered in all, ninety five men, so with the loss of the outlying pickets and several who were captured at the blacksmith shop where they were having their horses shod, only 70 men and horses were available -

The advance guard of 12 men under the

Command of Lieut. D. W. C. Clark, ~~who~~ made the first charge down the street, followed by the remainder of the command under Captain Corbit and Lieut. Caleb Cushman -

The Confederates were driven back down the Washington Road, until re-enforced by the main body of Stuart's Cavalry compelled the two two companies of gallant Delaware men to retreat, and they were forced back to town, fighting bravely all the way; some retreating toward Baltimore, and followed by the Confederates to within a few miles of Reisterstown which is midway between Baltimore and Westminster, ~~where~~ others charging back through the town.

A portion of Stuart's Cavalry had passed back by the town, entering at the opposite end and cutting off all retreat by that way.

Those of the Delaware Cavalry, who attempted to escape through town towards Gettysburg, fought stubbornly pursued and pursuer in close conflict, as they dashed back through the street, not knowing of the occupancy of that outlet by the Confederates — There were two killed and a number wounded on each side, the loss of the Delaware cavalry, being 67 in killed, wounded and captured — 2 flags, 1 wagon loaded with hospital stores, camp and garrison equipment, ~~Regimental~~ books, maps and papers.

Of the men of the 150th New York Infantry, all but two were captured, these two managing to make their escape —

It was all over in a little while, and was an act of daring and bravery on the part of the very young men who

composed the 1st. Delaware Cavalry, unsurpassed by any similar body during the war -

They simply knew their duty, and unquestioningly answered to its call. Directly in front of the "City Hotel" still standing, with its more than a century of years, two men engaged in a hand to hand conflict, the Delaware man falling from his horse apparently mortally wounded, and was carried into the hotel to die - (Note - The City Hotel is now known as the Main Court - corner of Main & Court streets)

In a recent conversation with one of Stuart's Cavalry, who had fired as he supposed the fatal shot, was rejoiced to find that his man had recovered and was an honored citizen of the State of Delaware -

Almost a square further on, still

another of the Delaware boys, whose horse had been shot from under him, and whose head was badly cut and bleeding from a sabre thrust, rushed through the wide gate way and into the yard of what fortunately for him, proved to belong to of the staunchest Union women in the town, Mrs. Jacob Reese, mother of the late Dr. James W. Reese, professor of Ancient languages at Western Maryland College.

Quickly she opened the door of an out building ^{for him}, locking the door and removing the key before his pursuer had time to reach it, and meeting the Confederate horseman ~~and~~ as he rode through with so much apparent surprise that he was completely non-plussed and turned away without capturing his man.

After the Confederates had left, she released him from his hiding place, and he

was removed to the temporary hospital. Note (The Reese residence stood on the corner, now occupied by Matthias' man-ble garden.)

Still another incident of the fight is called to mind. Two of the Delaware men, whose horses had been shot from under them sought to escape through the garden of a nearby house. As they reached the front yard, one of them asked the other - "Are you hit?" On receiving a negative answer he continued - "Well, I must be, look here." and he drew a bullet from the breast of his coat where it had lodged - His comrade seeing a riderless horse (Confederate horse), jumped on his back and attempted to escape, but was almost instantly captured and brought back, where he was surprised to find his comrade lying face downward

apparently lifeless where he had left him -

A surgeon belonging to a North Carolina Regt. examined him finding he was shot through the lung and giving his opinion he could live only a few minutes, he was carried into the house of Mrs. John Crouse opposite, who promised to take care of his body until his friends could be communicated with. When a few days later, his father came to claim his dead body, he was delighted to find his son living, and he was living 30 years after - minus one lung, but a mental and physical illustration of the endurance of the human frame.

The wounded of both sides were carried into the homes of citizens, where they were tenderly cared for until able to be removed to hospitals.

There were four men killed - 2 privates

in the Delaware Cavalry, and 2 Confederate officers. The latter proved to be Lieut. St Pierre Eison, and Lieut. John Wm. Murray of the 4th Va. Cavalry, of whom Genl. Stuart spoke, in his report of the engagement as "gallant and meritorious, with sacrifices to the cause."

The bodies of the four men were carried into the undertaking establishment of F. A. Sharrer, and prepared for burial.

The Delaware boys were temporarily interred in the town cemetery, and afterward removed to Wilmington, Delaware.

Southern sympathizers amongst the ladies of the place, begged Genl. Stuart's permission to care for the bodies of the two Confederates, and it is a tribute to the character of Genl. Robert E. Lee, that this portion of Genl. Stuart's report, is put in italics, with the note from Genl. Lee, "omit if published," he, evidently fearing the

ladies in question might get into trouble because of their pronounced sympathies. A Virginia lady, Miss Dennis, Governor in the family of Mr. Thomas Van Bither, of "Aron - dale" near town, hearing of the death of the young officers, came into town to see them, and recognizing in one of them a friend and in the other, a relative, and knowing them to be members of the Protestant Episcopal Church, their bodies were interred in the beautiful little Church yard back of the Church and marked with simple head stones, by the ladies.

The body of Lieut. Murray still rests where it was first laid, and every 30th. of May, on Memorial Day, members of Burns Post No. 13 G. A. R. place a flag and flowers upon it, with as much tenderness as upon those of their own comrades in arms.

The brave fight of the Delaware boys, has not been given the prominence

it deserves.

If Stuart's delay in reaching Gettysburg had any bearing on the result, then the cause of it should be given its proper place in the pages of history -

The head of Stuart's Column, following the Ridge Road, reached Westminster on the afternoon of June 29th.

In his official report he states that it was important for him to reach Lee with as little delay as possible, in order that he might acquaint him with the movements of the Union forces, whom he had ascertained were moving rapidly into Frederick City, and also that he might place with his column, his own Cavalry force.

To use his own words, "At Westminster our advance was obstinately disputed for a short time by a squadron of the 1st Delaware Cavalry, but what were not

killed, were either captured or saved themselves by precipitate flight.... The fugitives were pursued a long distance on the Baltimore road, and I afterward heard created a panic in that City, impressing the authorities, that we were just at their heels."

"Here for the first time since leaving Rector's Cross Roads, we obtained a supply of forage, but the delay and difficulty of procuring it, kept many of the men up all night."

The head of the Column, Genl. Fitz Hugh Lee in advance, halted at Union Mills, midway between Washington and Gettysburg for the night, scouts reporting that the Union Cavalry had encamped at Littlestown a few miles distant.

All night long and until daylight, the early hours of the morning, we heard the ~~heavy~~ steady tread of the Cavalry horses, as columns after columns passed on its march to

Gettysburg and defeat.

After the fight as the people emerged from their homes, the sentiment of the citizens was plainly manifest -

They were about equally divided in their opinions, and had sent the flower of their young manhood to take up arms either in defense of the Union or to espouse the cause of the South.

The Southern sympathizers showed their unbounded joy, and as the men halted, many were entertained at private homes, and the strains of the "Bonnie Blue Flag" could be heard on all sides.

The loyal citizens kept quietly at home contenting themselves with watching the passing troops from their ^{own} door ways - and in many instances giving them food and drink.

At one house, however, a young "Barbara Fritchie" made herself an object for

you nasty, lousy rebels - Go back or I'll throw stones at you" - and throw them she did, with hearty, good will, while the soldiers threw at her laughing rejoinders and passed on their way.

But the mistress of the house, who was an ardent Rebel herself, called her in and scolded her soundly, for what she termed her insolence.

By midnight, all the Confederates, with the exception of a few Marylanders who lingered a few hours longer, to visit friends, passed on toward Gettysburg and what proved to many of them their last march and the citizens settled down to rest after the exciting experience of the day -

Very early the next morning we were aroused by the familiar tread of cavalry horses as Gregg's Union Cavalry entered the town by the same road the Confederates

had come the day before -

Not being aware of the fact that they had left, the people at the lower end of town were greatly excited, and fearing a repetition a repetition of the flight, only on a larger scale, the women ran out, begging and entreating them to turn back. It is needless to say, they proceeded quietly on their way followed by the 6th Corps of the Army by the Potomac, and as the men, like the enemy who had preceded them, behaved with exemplary courtesy and thorough discipline, they soon found their fears were groundless, and flags were thrown out at windows, and those who had been compelled the day before, to watch an invading army, in silence, wept tears of joy, as they ~~emerged~~ cheered and welcomed the gallant defenders of the old flag, and of their Country.

My own joy was unbounded at the sight of the "Blue Coats"; My little companions and I were temporarily "on the outs" as the children say.

I was the only "Union Shrieker" in the crowd, and emulating the spirit of the grown ups in a small way, we were practically enemies while the soldiers were ~~there~~ here.

Besides, on the day of the skirmish, Gen. J. E. B. Stuart noting my antagonism, amidst the pronounced joy of my companions, had shown me unusual courtesy, and called me his little captive, and given me the much wished for ~~two~~ kiss, and therefore, I was an object of envy and under the ban.

I can remember yet, how, child as I was, I cheered and waved, while my sister, who was a Southern

sympathizers, tried to hold back my hand. But there is an old saying that brass buttons are irresistible, and so, before the week had passed, "Southern Sympathizers" of 16 and 17 found "Yankee officers" not so black as they were painted, and Southern homes were opened as freely to the Federal soldiers, as they had been to the Confederates with but few exceptions.

By the evening of June 30th. The soldiers, who had been passing all day, were gone, and again all was quiet, until about three o'clock in the morning of July 1st, a small portion of a wagon train passed through.

The following days, however were full of anxiety and excitement.

The booming of the Cannon at Gettysburg could be heard distinctly

Westminster was made the base of supplies, and army wagons, two three and even four abreast, passed up and down, but deep in the mud of the unpaved street.

Fields and meadows were covered with the little white tents of the soldiers. Martial law was proclaimed, and to add to the anxiety siege guns were planted, preparatory to the expected retreat of Lee this way.

On July 2nd, the first prisoners numbering 500, passed through town, and on the morning of July 3d, temporary hospitals were established, one at the old "Union Meeting House," and the other at the large, shady yard adjoining the Roman Catholic Church.

As the wounded were brought in, the citizens hastened to their relief, the older ones carrying delicacies and helping to care for them, while the younger ones were set to work scraping lint.

The City Hotel with its cool, shady porch, also served as a temporary hospital, and sheltered for several days men who had served with distinction in the three days conflict.

On the morning of July 4th. 1860 prisoners passed through and during the day, many others in small groups, some of them greeting the flags which were hung from windows with dignified silence, and others with good natured jeers, calling out "Take in your rag, Lee will retreat this way, and he will take it in for you."

One tall lank fellow, lifted his battered

hat, and called out, "Hello! old flag. My grand-father fought under you at Bennington, and now I am fighting again for you."

By Tuesday, July 7th. The soldiers were all gone. Camp had been struck, the wounded removed to Baltimore and Washington, and we had settled down to the usual quiet and monotony of village life.

Soldiers often passed through Westminster during the remaining months of the war, but it was not until the summer of 1864 that the Cavalry force, under Genl. Bradley T. Johnson and Major Harry Gilmore made their famous raid extending to the very doors of Baltimore, that we were again visited by the Rebels. Our house was made head quarters during their brief stay, they only

remaining a few hours.

It is due to the soldiers of both armies, to state, that at no time did they give any trouble, and that with the exception of the pilfering of a few camp followers, or the taking of necessary provisions for their horses the three raids of the Confederates; the occupancy of the town by the Union soldiers, and the frequent visits of scouting parties, or returning soldiers, can only be remembered with pleasure.

The old "Meeting House" which was used as a hospital, and was built before the Revolutionary War, was torn down a few years ago, but until that time, bore on its time stained walls, ~~the~~ and the wood work of the high pulpit, many autographs

and pathetic little messages of the soldiers who spent that memorable week under its friendly roof.

One little note, written on the margin of a news paper, and wrapped around a faded bunch of flowers, I still cherish as a memento of Stuart's raid and the march of the 6th U. S. A. Corps following -

It was dropped on my lap as I sat on our front door step by a soldier, who ran out of the passing ranks to give it to me - as the 5th Wisconsin troops passed by, and is as follows -

"Oh! Maryland we can not give thee up,
To traitor hands and desolation -
I would tear the life blood from our
hearts -

And ruin a beloved Nation.

On the reverse side ~~was~~ is the address of the soldier, and the sentiment, "The sympathy of Maryland girls is like balm to the wounded soldier."

We lay it away again, tenderly in memory of the unknown writer, who has doubtless, long ago answered the last roll call, and perhaps today sleeps in a nameless grave on the hills of Gettysburg.

The ranks of two outstanding armies are growing thinner every year - and the "Boys in Blue", and the "Boys in Gray" fraternize together and talk over old times calmly and without prejudice - and as Memorial Day comes around and the men who faced each other on the field of battle, lay with trembling fingers their floral tributes alike on graves of friend and foe - we feel the

Civil War is indeed over, and naught
remains but memory -

Then came the Spanish War
And when a foreign foe man, fired on
Old Glory -

How quick they answered to the call, I
love to tell the story -

How Blue and Gray, together stood, and
bravely fought and died -

That closed the breach for ever - And so
we stand today -

And speak about the stirring times, between
the "Blue and Gray" -

With out one tinge of bitterness, and give
to each their due -

For they were brave and gallant men, who
wore the "Gray and Blue" -

Mary Bostwick Shellman

Westminster Maryland -

Adopted Comrade ~~Wilson~~ Wilson Post No 1 E.A. R.
Baltimore Maryland
(over)