

Promptly at 8 o'clock P. M., the boys formed line and marched to Cushwa's Restaurant where a bountiful supper was waiting, to which they sat down and enjoyed with great relish; at its conclusion a good mental feast was served up to the boys, leading off under the able and eloquent Chaplain Whitehead, followed by Captain Edwin Nicar with his graceful and winning "talk." There arose in their midst the form of Captain John Smith whose fair and jolly face was radiant with a happy smile. He spoke with words of kindness, followed with the most sympathetic and affectionate words of kindly remembrance by J. W. Hamilton.

Then came Capt. Benj. F. Hegler with that easy flow of pleasing language so constructed as to carry one back to the oft-repeated scenes of other days not covered with the silver sheen of peace yet soothing to the mind. Again the scenes are changed with the glowing pathos of Thomas Campbell; the mind is carried to more higher and nobler themes than those fused into the elements of war. Then Captain H. K. Warren spoke in his very pleasing manner of scenes familiar to all, when all were gathered together as one family. His words brought many a pleasant remembrance back to mind.

Comrade Maxson closed the entertainment with a most fluent discourse and all went away most highly pleased that they had been permitted to live through the havoc of war and the years of peace to enjoy the pleasures of this occasion.

Of the speeches made on this occasion that of Chaplain Whitehead and of Captain Edwin Nicar are printed on other pages. It is to be regretted that all could not have been published as they were replete with many good "things."

During the forenoon of the 21st the boys collected in the Post Hall and had a very pleasant time recounting the old war life and telling pleasing stories.

By motion it was decided to hold the next reunion of the 15th Boys at Attica, Indiana, in connection with the 8th War District Veteran Association, on the 20th and 21st of September, 1889.

E. M. BURNS,

Secretary of the Association.

#### REMARKS OF COMRADE EDWIN NICAR.

I thank you, my comrades, for the kindness of your greeting, and beg you to believe that my heart goes out to each and every one of you in warmest affection. Were it possible to use a nearer and dearer name than comrade, I would gladly do so; but that term expresses all that the heart can feel or the lips utter, and in addressing you as my comrades I give you the full measure of all that is best in my heart.

I am grateful to Chaplain Whitehead for the complimentary manner in which he has seen fit to refer to my record as a soldier and citizen, but am inclined to think that his personal bias in my favor has led him to say more for me than my merits deserve. However, I am grateful all the same and thank him for his kind expressions.

In referring to the various members of our regiment with whom he has come in contact since the war closed, the Chaplain has given us the pleasant information that the old 15th boys, as a rule, are doing well; that many of them have risen to a high place in the "sweet conquests of peace"; that they are law abiding and honored citizens of the great republic they helped to save; that the lessons learned in following the flag have not been lost, and that, last of all, their love for each other has increased with the years of their life.

The Chaplain's modesty forbade his speaking of one honored member of our regiment, and I know you will be glad to have me supply the omission. Comrades, do you remember that Chaplain Whitehead was always at his post of duty? Do you remember how in the red front of battle he carried wounded men from the battlefield on his brawny shoulders; how his arms supported the dying soldier and tenderly laid him to rest in that sleep which knows no waking? Do you remember how he gave comfort to the mortally wounded soldier whose life's blood was fast ebbing away; how he received his last messages for the loved ones at home and faithfully delivered them to those for whom they were intended?

You do remember these, and much more, and with me you are ready to say 'May God bless and keep John M. Whitehead.' Another feature of the Chaplain's character always elicited my warmest admiration, and I trust he will take no exceptions when I say that he was one of the best foragers it was ever my good fortune to meet. No turkey or chicken was safe from his raids; no roost was high enough for them to escape his acute vision; "even the sweet potatoes started from the ground" at his approach, and milk and honey were as natural to our mess chest as if they had always belonged there. I speak whereof I know, as, for a long time I was a member of the Chaplain's mess, but I will do him the justice to say that he paid for all these good things in lawful money and did not attempt to palm off genuine or bogus confederate money on the guileless "Reb" of whom he purchased.

Comrades, the record of our regiment is part of the history of our country and we may all be proud of it. Standing here to-night, looking into your faces, the present fades away and the past with its troop of tender and glorious memories is before me. The firing on the flag and the call to arms brought us together as comrades;

as comrades we served faithfully in camp and in field, in advance and retreat, in charge and countercharge, on the battlefield, on the march and in the bivouac, and through all, our faith in our flag and in the ultimate triumph of our cause never faltered.

Time will not permit me to recite the achievements of our regiment, nor can I weary your patience with the many details of our service which came under my personal notice. Let me say however, that from the 14th of June 1861, when at Camp Tippecanoe we stood with uplifted hands and swore allegiance to our country and her flag, to the 25th day of June 1864, when after more than three years of service we ceased to exist as an organization, our record was unswayed by any act which might cause our countrymen to blush for us.

Our dead sleep in Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi and elsewhere, and our long list of dead and wounded attest with what fidelity we strove to do our duty. Stone River and Mission Ridge are sad yet glorious pages in our history, and are recorded in letters of living light on our hearts, never to perish while we live.

Our old division commanders, Reynolds, Nelson, Wood and Sheridan, have, with a single exception, joined the great army of the dead, while Wagner, our regimental and brigade commander long since passed to the other side. Col. Wood, our eccentric, but brave Colonel, still lives—a poor, weak old man—but with a warm regard for his old comrades that disarms all criticisms and fixes him in our hearts as one of us.

I cannot tell you, my comrades, with what impatience and interest I have looked forward to this reunion. My waking and sleeping hours have been full of the idea of meeting the "boys", taking them by the hand, greeting them with a 'God bless you', and living over with them

the days when we wore the blue and followed the flag. The realization is all that I pictured it and I am gratified indeed for the privilege of being with you. How I should like to talk of the "lights and shadows" of our soldier life; but others are to speak and I must not trespass too far on your good nature. Let us meet again and again; let us spur up the laggard; hold up the hands of the weak; aid the needy and each year come together in sacred and glorious reunion.

I am not ashamed of the tears that come unbidden as I look into your faces and in bidding you good night I say fervently from my heart, "God bless you, my comrades of the 15th Indiana."

I thank you, comrades, for your patience and kindness in listening to me and will now give way to some other comrade.

#### ADDRESS BY CHAPLAIN JOHN M. WHITEHEAD,

Fellow comrades of the 15th Regiment Indiana Volunteers: this is certainly a very rare occasion to me, and doubtless it is to all of you; an occasion that may only occur once in a whole life-time. After the long period of nearly twenty-five years of separation, each of us following the peaceful pursuits of quiet life in common with other peaceful citizens, we are assembled here from a dozen states to meet in the state from which we enlisted in the service of our country.

During this long time of separation a full generation of children has been born of our own and of others, who have grown up to full manhood and womanhood.

We are met, many of us for the first time, to look into each others faces as fellow comrades and talk over the thrilling battle-scenes of a generation ago—battle-scenes

not printed on paper or canvas, or sham battle-scenes, but real battle-scenes where the thundering war of cannon and the sharp rattle of musketry and the flash of the keen saber and deadly, bristling bayonets were dread realities. Battle-scenes in which we were always found in the front ranks of an army numbering in its aggregate over two millions of brave soldiers; an army of the best young men of the best nation the sun ever shone upon. We were not serfs, or slaves, or hirelings, but boys from the homes of America.

I assure you that to me this is an occasion of great pleasure; once more to greet the "boys" I used to see daily, and with whom I shared with you in your hard toils, long, dreary marches; sore and sad reverses, and shouted with you when victories perched upon our banners. I have come almost a thousand miles from that great historic State of Kansas where sixty of your beloved comrades reside. And allow me to say, that for this occasion I am indebted to two of our beloved comrades of the 15th Regiment,—Capt. John H. Smith, warden of the state prison at Lansing, near Leavenworth and Hon. J. W. Hamilton, state treasurer of Kansas.—I came here as their guest. I am proud to say that they are honored and respected in the State of Kansas as good true business men, in whom the confidence of all the people rest.

Allow me to say to you and all the absent members of the 15th Indiana Regiment, I am real glad to greet you as fellow comrades. I have a right to say some things about the 15th Indiana Regiment that others might not feel free to say. My official position as your Chaplain gave me a real knowledge of the true nature and mettle of my comrades when in camp, hospital, or on long gloomy marches; also on the terrible battle-fields; I know their true nature at home and in camp life; I know their history well, and I can say truthfully, for bravery on the



battle-field ; for endurance in hardships, and true soldierly conduct, no regiment can be named with a *better record*, no truer men be found, who defended the old flag of our fathers.

I still remember one of the old "boys" who was tried as with fire and found true to the old flag and brave as was one of the little Spartan band that fought at the battle of Thermopylae ; he was ever found in the battle's front, always ready for duty let it be ever so unpleasant or dangerous. I refer to Captain Nicar who served so faithfully as our adjutant, and performed his every duty with that generous spirit that won the love and respect of all. } This Regiment had no paid historian nor pet newspaper reporters to blaze abroad every little skirmish or march and counter-march that was made ; they wrote their history on bloody battle-fields, where its pages were written in the blood of our bravest and best men we left dead on the battle-field ; or written from the blood of many wounded men who will carry their scars to their graves ; written in the wasted forms of prisoners pent in prison pens worse than death.

Again I have a right to say something of a Regiment whose officers and men never refused to do all I ever asked of them ; a regiment of men I learned to love as only soldiers inured to hardships can love each other. I have a right to say, I know you, I know your history ; for I have marched with you in mid-summer's hottest sun ; I have camped with you in mid-winter's coldest days ; in camp and on marches ; when I slept on the ground with you ; with tents and without tents or shelter. I have shared with you when we had full rations and when we had no rations ; I have sorrowed with you when defeat was unavoidable ; I have also shared with you in outbursts of joy when shouts of victory followed as the *old Flag* has waived over rebel fortifications and

over battle-fields you have done credit and given glory to soldiers of long years of

The history of the volunteers was one of active servianemy, ever holding ground gaivance when ordered to do so. y battle-field of "Stone River that would have done honor tards" on any battle-field. No ; more than hold that hazardoutween Stone River and the railof the *battle-field of Stone River* more stubborn resistance agaof an enemy than did the 15thnce of their heroism there, onlounded who lay two hundred aof the line of battle.

Where the attacks en was made and driven back ; yonet charges were made and many times the attacks of ovesf men we had ; at the same tin pris- oners than you numberee dead and wounded that you learged.

Never were there ch. and never did soldiers charge *and even lines*. Just think ansup- ported, to charge a brightout any support. This was e face of an army confronting

Wednesday Decemr to be remembered by the sole Vol- unteers. Truly you *held of Stone River*." Each of ith far

more clearness than I can possibly describe it; for in that tragical scene you were actors; you held the stage of that *great theatre*; your part was to "*hold that point at all hazards*." How well you fulfilled your part of that programme I will not speak of now; only by calling over the Roll Call on the bank of Stone River, January 1, 1862, when fifty of our bravest and best men lay dead on the field.

Let Captain Templeton speak; let Captain Joel W. Foster speak; *yea* let the dead and wounded speak; call over the roll and every alternate man was either killed or wounded. From day-light until star-light on December 31, 1862, you were on the line of battle and under a galling fire from cannon and small arms; every moment of the time your hands were on your guns and your lives in your hands. On the Friday following you were active in successfully repelling Gen. Breckenridge's forces across Stone River on our left; and on Friday afternoon from four o'clock until five o'clock the battle raged until the whole Confederate army retreated in great haste and in greater disorder and pressed close by our infantry and cavalry.

I remember well that afternoon, Friday January 2, 1863. I was assisting in the field hospital; I saw that battle clear and without any obstruction. I shall never forget when ten thousand cavalry stretched along the Murfreesboro turnpike were waiting in ranks of "Four"; when the command was carried down the line of over a mile, by a swift orderly, with the order, shouting "*Forward! Forward!*" How grand as they advanced on double-quick, with the clanking of sabers and carbines. I said then as I stood in front of our hospital, "Had I the power of Joshua I would have used it and said at that hour '*Sun stand thou still upon Gibeon and thou moon in the valley of Ajalon*,' until this victory shall crown all our arms and this cursed rebellion shall close forever."

I shall never recall it. Let that old flag waive unmolested on every battle-field and on every foot of this God-given America henceforth and forever, and the man under the folds of that old flag who does not love it, I look on him as an enemy of my country and can only love him as an enemy and pray for him only as our blessed Master taught us to "*Love your enemies and pray for those who spitefully use you.*"

Another grander battle-field, far more imposing, was that of *Missionary Ridge*. Its scenery was brilliant beyond description. Off to our right stood Lookout Mountain—that old sentinel of nature's first works—rising two thousand four hundred feet above the Tennessee River which sweeps its rock-bound base; and from its summit the eye, by the aid of a field-glass, could sweep far across the hills and valleys and see into seven states. A scenery embracing mountain after mountain, rising higher and higher, until the eye passes from nature's grandest scenery up to nature's God.

Around and across the rushing waters of Tennessee River stands Moccasin's Point, where lay our deadly batteries; and still around and across the valley farther Northward lay Waldron's Ridge, whose bold, impassable, rocky sides arise two thousand feet for miles Eastward until it left the only open gap, closed by the Tennessee River, to Missionary Ridge. There around that somewhat evenly ambitheatre forum, extending some three miles from Tennessee Hill on the Northeast to Lookout Mountain on the Southwest, was the *Confederate Army* on that ridge with two well entrenched fortifications of earth-works giving slope below both on its top and sides, reaching around the entire ridge.

On the top of that semi-circle was General Bragg's headquarters midway on the top of Missionary Ridge with two earth-works of lines down the sides of the ridge.

while in the valley below, shut up in Chattanooga, was the Army of the Cumberland in the center; reinforced by General Sherman's Army of the Tennessee on our left; with General Hooker's 11th and 12th Corps of the Potomac on the South.

Just look at those two armies for months confronting each other, with picket-men within hailing distance of each other. Three battles had been fought within sight of us or hearing distance, only a few months before;—Chickamauga, Wauhatchie and Lookout Mountain. Now we were hemmed in, with rations cut off. You remember with more keenness of memory when our daily rations were extended and only given every *five days* and then far less than "half rations" were doled out to us. You remember when corn around the Quarter-master's market was at a premium; guards were placed over the horses and mules during their mealtime to prevent hungry soldiers from robbing them of their far less than half rations.

Such *bear starvation* faced us as we never experienced before; "already," Gen. U. S. Grant says in his official report, "more than ten thousand horses and mules had starved to death in six week's time before the battle of Missionary Ridge was fought." Our Quarter-master killed our bees to keep them from dying. We had that kind of meat dealt out to us in quantities and qualities that even appeared to shrink up in cooking it. There was not *fat* enough on a whole pot for a mess to grease your eye. This is not by any means an overdrawn picture before the battle of Wauhatchie was fought.

Some strange things are found in war. Just think of it; *the battle of Missionary Ridge!* What a name for a battle-field. "*Missionary Ridge!*" What a blending together of strange extremes in one strange contrast. A Ridge where the followers of a meek and lowly saviour had once established a school to teach the nation's sava-

ges the religion of the Man of Calvary; but here now, a hundred thousand men on either side were confronting each other to see whether the grand old flag of our beloved should float on that *crest* or the Confederate *bars* and *stars* should supplant it. That test was made Nov. 24, 25 and 26, 1863.

The *battle of Missionary Ridge* will ever be regarded as one of the grandest scenes of history for numbers; for perfect ambitheatre scenes; for grandeur in victory.

From Lookout Mountain on the South-west to the river over Tunnell Hill on the North-east, inside the mountains, Missionary Ridge, the Tennessee River and the Confederate Army lay Chattanooga and the Union Army on November 24, 1863, in line of battle, ready for the advance on the enemy's works.—The battle commenced; its scenery you better understand than pen can depict.

The part you took in that grand heroic fight was directly in front of Gen. Bragg's Head-quarters as your objective point. How well you performed your duty along that bloody line was seen in the fact that the *Flag* of the 15th Regt. Ind. Volunteers was planted *first* on Missionary Ridge on the fortifications at Bragg's Head-quarters. It was not planted there without the costly sacrifice of blood and life of sixty per cent. of the Regiment.

*Our old Flag, God bless its sacred memory still.* It was shot down with its brave bearers six times in succession but it rose each time in a new hand and landed triumphant at last. Its bearer, Comrade George L. Banks, of Co. "C," fell first, then another gathered it up, and another, until five times it fell, then Comrade Banks raised it on high again and the sixth time it fell; when at last Lieut. Thomas N. Graham, of Co. "G," sprang to the breach, seized it, leaped across the fortifications and planted its tattered folds at Bragg's Head quarters; *first*



*flag to float along Missionary Ridge*; when in a few minutes afterwards over one hundred flags waved proudly along the entire ridge. That old flag is now in the State Capital with all other Indiana flags.

Some unsanctified official usurper said to the Librarian into whose hands these flags are entrusted, "We have no room for them—throw them out and burn them—they are in our way and take up room here." The old soldier, the loyal people and Sons of Veterans say with one united voice to any one who dare lay hands on those flags: "*Drop those flags*," thou uncircumcised usurper who ever he may be,—the chief executive of the nation or any other man.

Some one may say who are these brave heroes of whom you are speaking? I answer that they are the boys of thirty years ago. They went from the loyal homes all over this country; from your counting rooms, colleges, schools and farms. You may select from the history of all battle-fields the most daring and brilliant acts on record and *our soldiers* in putting down the late rebellion will duplicate even such acts on more than one hundred battle-fields.

At home to-day these soldiers are among our best men, filling offices in State, Nation, Military and Civil life; they stand in the front of every good work to-day. Out of near fifty of the 15th Indiana present, by request, of all who were members of any church, thirty raised their hands. *God bless our soldiers.*

## Members of the 15th Ind. Regiment now living

And their residence at the present writing.

Colonel Gustavus A. Wood,	Chattanooga, Tenn.
Lieut. Colonel Richard Owen,	New Harmony, Ind.
Lieut. Colonel John M. Comparet,	Blanco, Texas.
Major Alexander Fowler,	Bronson, Kansas.
Surgeon Richard Bond,	Aurora, Ind.
Surgeon James R. Adams,	Petersburg, "
Assistant Surgeon Gideon Wonsutler,	Hicksville, Ohio.
Chaplain John M. Whitehead,	Silver Lake, Kan.
Hospital Steward Thomas F. Dryden,	Clayton, Ind.
BAND.	
Capt. George W. Warren,	Evansville, Ind.
E. G. Black,	Lafayette, "
Otto M. F. Pfaffin,	Evansville, "
John D. Jones,	New Harmony, "
William A. Twiggs,	" "
John P. Bennett,	" "
William M. Bennett,	" "
William G. Wheatcraft,	Grayville, Ill.
COMPANY A.	
Rice, Alexander A.,	Captain,
Hegler, Benj. F.,	" "
McNight, John T.,	First Lieutenant,
Hamilton, J. W.,	Corporal,
Todd, Clayton H.,	" "
Campbell, Thomas P.,	Private,

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