

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF

ANDREW MALONE HILL*

I have long intended to write out a sort of historical sketch of my service as a Confederate Soldier to leave to my children to which they might refer in after years as a proof of their decent from one whom had undergone the hardships and trials of a "Time that tried men's souls."

My father, Jacob Albert Hill, was born in Newberry County S. C. in 1820. Before he was grown the great question of Secession from the Union was being agitated in that State, and he wore what was called a Nullfier's button, as did all who favored Secession.

We moved from York County in the fall of 1858 to Walker Co. Ala. My father, true to his South Carolina blood, was a strong Secessionist whenever the issues that gave birth to the Confederate States of America were being discussed. So he was elected to the Alabama State Legislature in 1861, to represent the three counties of Walker, Winston, and Lawrence. My father's people (Chapman) also of Newberry County were all, so far as I know, Secessionists. So much by way of beginning.

In the spring of 1861 Col. W. A. Hewlet, a lawyer of Jasper Alabama, organized the first company of soldiers from Walker County under the call for men for twelve month's service. Father and I both belonged to this Company, and he took an active part in helping to make this company up. but before this company was ready for service the number of men called for by the state for twelve month's service had been obtained, and a call for men for three year's service had

* U. S. Adjutant General's records dated July 1, 1942, concerning the record of Capt. Hill show:

"The records show that Andrew M. Hill, name not found as Andrew Malone Hill, a private and sergeant of Company B, 16th Regiment Alabama Infantry, Confederate States Army, enlisted July 18, 1861 at Courtland. The company muster roll for March and April, 1862, last on file, shows him present.

"By order dated January 21, 1865, A. M. Hill, Lieutenant, company not stated, 16th Alabama Regiment was granted leave of absence for 24 days.

"The above named regiment was consolidated about April 9, 1865, with other Confederate States Army organizations and formed the 1st Regiment Alabama Infantry (Consolidated), Confederate States Army, and one A. M. Hill, a Captain of Company E, of that Regiment was paroled at Greensboro, North Carolina, May 1, 1865, in accordance with the terms of a Military Convention entered into on the 26th day of April, 1865, between General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding Confederate Army, and Major General W. T. Sherman, commanding United States Army in North Carolina. Date of promotion to Captain not shown."

gone out. Father was now busy in his campaign for State Senator, and was away from home much of the time. Some of the boys of our first Company had gone sixty five miles to Courtland in Lawrence County and joined an organized company, and came back to Walker County after more men to fill the company to 125 men. On the 30th of July 1861, in company with six others, I left home (all of us on foot) to go to Courtland, satisfied that if we waited much longer the war would be over, and we would know nothing about it. We joined the company, already organized, under Captain F. A. Ashford and called the Mountain Rangers. This company was made up of men from around Courtland, Leighton, and Mt. Hope. The regiment was soon organized with W. B. Wood of Florence, Alabama as Colonel,—Harris as Lieutenant-Colonel,—Helvenstein as Major, and in September we boarded the cars at Courtland for Virginia. When we reached Knoxville Tennessee, the Union men in East Tennessee had torn up the railroad track around Strawberry Plains. We went into camp, and never did get to Virginia.

After we were in camp about two weeks, measles broke out in the regiment, and it looked as if there would not be enough well men to wait on the sick. Two or three of the boys with whom I had left home took the measles, and, as I had had the measles when a boy, I was sent to the hospital to act as nurse. After a stay of six weeks or two months as nurse, I was ordered with about half of the regiment (which included my company) to go to Cumberland Gap. The Surgeon in charge of the hospital was anxious for me to stay with him; but I was just as anxious for some experience before the War should close. (let me say here, that at this time very few people thought the trouble would last long).

I do not remember how many days we were in going from Knoxville to the Gap. Pushing over as hilly, rough country as I had ever seen up to that time, and the finest apple orchards that I have ever seen in life we arrived at the Gap. Was there only a short time, and left, going by Tazwell, to join the remainder of the regiment at Mill Springs. Here we had considerable force under the command of General Zollicoffer of Nashville, who was killed in the Battle of Fishing Creek fought, if I do not mistake, on the 19th of January 1862. In this battle we were badly worsted, a number of our men were killed, others with our camp equipments, wagon trains, etc were captured. We crossed the Cumberland River that night, and suffered almost as much from exposure and no rations as at any other time of the war. (We were not used to such things).

We joined the army under General Albert Sidney Johnston at Murfreesboro, I think, and continued retreating south until the spring of 1862 found us at Corinth, Mississippi. Here, just before the Battle of Shilo, I was given, by Capt. Ashford, the Fourth Sergeant's place, that officer having been detailed as Wagon Master of the Brigade. Gen. Wood being brother of our Col., another brother Major Henry Wood being quarter master. In the great battle of Shiloh our Regiment was in the front line and so completely were the enemy by surprise when we attacked them before sunrise on Sunday morning, that I remember distinctly seeing them run out of their tents with their clothes in their hands, actually had not gotten up until we were shooting at them. Sometime in the latter part of the day we had captured a Yankee Surgeon and I was ordered to take charge of him and carry him to the field Hospital where the wounded were all being carried, he was set to work at once on his own men, I was ordered by the Surgeon in charge to go to waiting on the wounded, giving water etc. I did not know then but what he had the authority to keep me there and I was not with the Regiment in Monday's fight and retreat. I had been at the field Hospital but a short time when who should come but Father, he had come from home on a visit, and hearing of the great battle, had come from Corinth and found me. Every thing that could walk was ordered to make his way back to Corinth and here I rejoined the Regiment, after a deal of fighting and hardships around Corinth we fell back down the M. & O. railroad where we remained until we were ordered to board the cars for Chattanooga, and the Campaign into Ky., General Bragg who had been placed in command of the army was on, this was the later part of summer. In the fall I shared the fate of a soldier, in all the tramp till Perryville where our Regiment was put in support of the battle, and as our men drove the enemy all the evening we were not in the line of action, to a strong position from which the enemies had been driven, and half a mile at our best speed we followed, it proved that others had been ordered to the same position and for an hour or more the earth trembled with the roar of the twelve pieces of artillery that were pouring their concentrated fire upon retreating forces, it seemed as if the commanders expected the enemy to try to retake the position as there were three lines of infantry in support of the artillery. We left Ky. by way of Cumberland Gap to Knoxville, from which point we went to Murfreesboro by rail road, where after considerable skirmishing and manœuvering of the forces, the battle of Murfreesboro or Stone River, as the Yankees called it, was fought on the last days of December. This was the only general battle that I was not in during the war, during the skirmishing before the battle we

were on the left wing at Triune, some distance from Murfreesboro, and our orders were to hold a skirmish line as long as possible, then retreat in order to draw the enemy away from Nashville and during one of these retreats across the open field I attempted to jump a big ditch or gully but fell into a hole of water, I did not lose any time in getting out for the Yankees were coming, and I had no hankering for prison life, and though I was wet we fought and retreated till late in the evening when we were ordered to join the main army at Murfreesboro. I dried as best I could by rail fire but slept all night in those clothes and the next morning I had such a pain in my left hip I could not keep with the marching went to the Dr. and told him my condition, he ordered me to stay with the ambulance so I missed this engagement, after the battle which seemed a kind of drawn engagement, we fell back to Wartrace the main body of the army to Tullahoma where we wintered. When activities began in the spring of '63 we were gradually forced back by superior numbers to Chattanooga, and, after much marching and skirmish fighting the enemy, finally crossed the Tenn. river and in September came the great battle of Chickamauga where but for the right wing of the enemy general Thomas the route would have been complete, on Sunday about twelve o'clock the entire left wing of Rosencranz's army being completely routed from their position and retreating in great disorder to Chattanooga. During the fearful engagement on Sunday morning I was hit on the point of the left shoulder while lying down by a piece of shell that had burst over us and but for my blanket which folded and belted over the shoulder I would have been seriously hurt, as it was the blanket protected me through I could not get my arm up to a level for a week or ten days. Among others we lost our first Lt. I. C. Madding, and I find this statement in my diary kept at that time our Regiment came out of the battle the fifty one privates, eight non commissioned and nine commissioned officers showing our fearful loss, yet I have often thought since that time that if our generals had ordered us at once to follow the enemy and thrown us in the rear of their right wing, who fought till nearly night, and then withdrew in good order, that we might have captured them, for rejoicing as we were over the victory, the men would have attempted almost the impossible, but a private soldier knows only what he sees, and can have only an indefinite idea of what should be done. In a few days the army moves gradually toward Chattanooga where the enemy is, and occupy Missionary Ridge where the rounds of picket duty, the scarcity of rations, and exposure causes considerable grumbling, a soldier's privilege that he always uses. Longstreet has been detached and sent against Knoxville, where considerable force of the enemy is located. This weakens

our line so that the center is only a skirmish line, though the position is a very strong one, but the enemy was so reinforced with troops from Vicksburg and getting the weak points in our line from occasional deserters that in December they attack in such force that our center is broken and almost a route follows. Cleburns division is on the extreme right and our Brigade on the right of the division, the enemy's line does not reach us, though we witness the change made and repulsed by Govans Ark. Brigade, and our division is put in to cover the retreat to Dalton, and some of the hardest fighting falls to us with wading rivers and exposure till we reached Tunnel Hill, where we go into winter quarters. At one time near Resaca there were one thousand wagons parked in a large field just in rear of our line, ready to cut the teams aloose and fire the whole, if our division had failed to hold it's position, but late in the evening they began to drive out and were saved. After the battle of Chickamauga where we lost our first Lt., our Captain (Ashford) was promoted to major, making two vacancies for commissions and the boys elected myself as 2nd Lt. and W. J. Wasson third our former second Lt. going to Captain, and third to first Lt., our commissions dating back to Chickamauga, just after receiving my commission Father came up to Tunnel Hill on a visit, and we go home together after an absence of nearly two and a half years, it is needless to add that I was proud to return to my Mother as second LT. in a company into which I had gone with only a few acquaintances, and chosen to the place by the boys with whom I had served.

'64 opens up with myself and Father on our way home as above stated and for a few short days I enjoy social privileges rare and pleasant, returning to Tunnel Hill I found everything much as I had left it, the boys all housed up and fairly comfortable, and furloughs being granted in goodly numbers to those longest away from home. In February there was a considerable force of the enemy came out as if to feel of our strength and Clayton's Brigade and another division had a sharp fight near our old camps, and my diary for the 26th of February has this circumstance noted, an old man with his wife and daughter was sent south through our lines, and nearly all of our Regiment knew them as they washed and done many terms for some of the men of the Regiment, but on being sent South the Yankees had literally burned and killed everything they had except the clothes they had on, one of the men of the Regiment fell in with them, carried them through the Brigade telling the circumstance and taking up a collection for them and in about two hours had raised twenty five hundred dollars.

Our camp is changed from Tunnel Hill to Dalton and I am re

lieved of guard duty, picket and drill. I fill up the time till the first of May, when everything is in motion and the beginning of the campaign which ended in the capture of Atlanta. Our time was taken up with marching, building breast works, and figuring on rebuilding some portion of the lines almost everyday. Our first loss of men from our company came on the 19th of June. We being on Picket duty are ordinarily out in front of the line while the Regiment is some 200 yards to our rear was building breast works. This was the beginning of the New Line as it was called by the army. Well, the enemy advances and during the evening reinforced their picket line three times, trying to drive us from position, but we hold, shooting over forty rounds of ammunition to the man, but we loose three of our best men, dying of wounds in the Hospital, as hot a contest as I was ever in, the Yankees seemed to think they were fighting cavalry as we distinctly heard the commanding officer at one time say "Charge them boys, charge them it's nothing but cavalry," when Old Jim Martin of our company, who was only a few feet from me, jumped high as he could, popped his feet together and shouted back "yes, come up on here this is Cleburns cavalry," but they never came, we held the line till night, at one time I went along the line to see how all were, and on the extreme left of the company were two of the boys Porter Hughston and Monroe Stevenson taking it time about getting behind a tree to load, and then step out and woe to the Yankee that moved or shook a bush, it was like squirrel hunting. While around Atlanta later on Doc Sherer, one of the Walker county boys was hit by a spent ball fairly in the top of his head, we were all lying as close to the ground as we could get, and crowed so close that I distinctly felt him shiver when hit, and asked him if he was hurt much, he said "No I believe not" though the blood ran down on his face, At Jonesboro below Atlanta, the Yankees by sheer force of numbers over powered and captured Govans Ark. Brigade, and in a day or so after I met Bob Neely with whom I had gone to school when a boy in South Carolina but who had moved to Ark. and was in that Brigade, and asked him how it was that he was not captured with the rest, he replied, "I beat them by hard running," for which he was noted when at school. About the middle of September we leave the enemy at and near Atlanta, and begin the movement which finally carries us to Tenn., tearing up the rail road at several points as we made our way by Rome, Georgia and into Alabama. As we get into Lawrence county all three day furloughs and go by their homes, as it is too far for us to walk for such a short time, we go home with Mt. Hope boys and spend our time there. Brother John has come of from home, contrary to my advice, and is now with the command fall-

ing in with the Regiment near Courtland. We march on toward Tusculumbia where we are to cross the Tenn. River. This brings us up to about the first of November '64, remaining around Tusculumbia and Florence for two or three weeks, we finally took the road toward Nashville, finding the enemy in force at Columbia, we cross Duck river by a flank movement and strike them again at Spring Hill. Our division attack them at once driving them from position killing some and capturing others, and the whole corps is put into line and anxiously wait the order to advance, but it never comes, and here was made one of the worst blunders of the war, our line of battle did not cross the Columbia and Franklin Pike, but only reached near enough to it to hear the enemy all night retreating from Columbia, when if the advantage of the evening had been pushed we had them already cut off. But they are allowed to escape and the next day the 30th of November, they cut us to pieces at Franklin as we fought through an open field and they behind breast works.

In doing some research in the work in the summer of '39 I came across and copied the following extract, which supports what my father referred to in the last paragraph above.

I have often heard my father tell of this incident when relating his army experiences.