



## *PATRIOTIC RECOLLECTIONS*



### NOTES OF THE TRIP TO GETTYSBURG 1913 (a)

Our train left the Union Station, Columbus Ohio, at One-thirty, June 30th, 1913. The train goes through to Gettysburg without change of cars, leaving the Main line of the Pennsylvania Railroad at Harrisburg. The Distance from Harrisburg to Gettysburg is Forty-five miles by rail. Just before boarding the train, I met Sergeant John Summers; He asked me if I lived in Columbus. I told him that I did, then he wanted to know if I knew John M. Morris, and I said "Yes, I'm the Kid!" We met for the first time, since being mustered out of the service in July 1865, both being boys. He was 25 years old , and I was only 20. He was quite feeble, yet I could see in his eye that some of the vim of 62 was still in him: He was a Gun Corporal, in the right section of Battery "L" at Gettysburg.

On the train, was Ben f. Reed. He was also of the right Section, we three, being the only Battery "L" Boys in Franklin County.

On the train, I met quite a jolly old Comrade, Mr. T. Moon, who belonged to Battery "A" 4th U.S. Artillery. This Battery suffered severely in the fight at the place named the " Bloody Angel." They received the center of General Pickett's world famous charge. Mr. Moon had a sore on his head, and had to keep it wrapped in a big white cloth. He said that his folks did not want him to come to Gettysburg, and he also said, "Gentlemen, I hate to be around among you young fellows with my head all tied up in a white rag, but a white rag, beats a Dead Man all to the devil, don't it?" And we all voted "Yes".

We certainly did travel in style, as our train was composed entirely of Pullman Cars, and as soon as we were fairly under way, we were assigned to our berths, and my ticket read, "Train 1, Car A, Section 5. At Newark, Governor Cox came in the car, and presented each of us with a very handsome badge as a Souvenir of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Battle of the Civil War, Gettysburg.

There is now going on a spirited discussion among the Boys as to the rapid promotion some men received, during the War, and our old Friend Comrade Moon, told us about a young fellow that Enlisted in his Company. "Why Gentlemen," said he, He was so awkward, that he would fall down standing still, and some one shouted to the Captain as he was swearing the young fellow into Service, Captain, what do you want with that young "Feller": as a Soldier? He won't be worth the Cracker and Sow Belly you will have to feed him to keep him up! And, yet this same young man turned out to be a natural born Soldier, and was discharged from the Army as an Officer of High Rank. So, said he, Boys you may think you know it all, but sometimes you can't always tell just what is going to happen.

Arriving in Pittsburgh on time, we found another surprise awaiting us. We formed a line, with Governor Cox at the head, and marched up to the Seventh Avenue Hotel, where we found a nice six o'clock dinner awaiting us, which all seemed to enjoy, their appetites being whetted by the Afternoon's ride from Columbus. When we returned to our train, we found our Berths made up, and we were all soon in bed and our train speeding on it's way through the Allegheny Hills for Gettysburg, where we arrived safely after a pleasant journey at Six-thirty o'clock, July 1st, 1913.

We did not have to walk over a quarter of a mile to where we found the tents in two rows, fronting on 40th and 41st Street, marked at the head of the Street in big black letters "OHIO". But we found our tents filled with New Jersey Boys, which was no fault of those in charge, as the New Jersey Boys arrived in the night, and without being regularly assigned to quarters, took possession of the Ohio Camp. However, this was soon settled by General Wood and within an hour or two, the "Troops from OHIO" were comfortably quartered and were busy "WASHING UP". Governor Cox never forgot to look after our comfort, and would come into our tents with his shirt sleeves rolled out, smokeing his pipe, and say " Well Boys, how are you all? I hope comfortable, but if not, report to headquarters." And, for fear some of our Boys might not have quarters, he personnally secured extra Tents and ground on which to erect them, so that everybody would be provided for. In fact, Governor Cox and his staff, were constantly on the outlook for any opportunity that might offer. Whereby they could do something to add to our comfort as Old Soldiers and their Guests, and they will long be remembered by the "Old Boys" of Ohio, as well as those from other States, as I heard a Massachusetts Man say, " Your Ohio Governor is a Daisy, with a big "D".

Our Camp is near the crest of Cemetary Ridge. Our tents occupy the ground over which General Pickett made his world famous Charge; Just across the Railroad, are tents occupied by the Confederates, and they are busy looking over the ground, where Fifty Years ago today, they put up such a valiant fight, and were just as valiently repulsed by their "Brother Yanks".

While there is a nice breeze blowing, the sun is very hot, but everybody is in good humor, shaking hands, and the salutation of "Hello Johnnie" and "Hello Yank" is quite often heard, but the excitement is not so intense, as it was Fifty Years ago, for about two o'clock in the afternoon of this day, it was a question as too "WHO was WHO".

Battery L, First Ohio Light Artillery, was composed of six twelve pound brass guns known as Napolians. The Battery was recruited by Captain L. N. Robinson, at Portsmouth, Ohio, in the year of 1861, but after the battle of Anteam he resigned, and the Battery was commanded to the close of the War by Captain F. C. Gibbs. They were engaged in the following Battles: Winchester, #1, Port Republic, Chantilly or 2nd Bull Run, Antietam, Fredricksburg, Chandellorsvile, Mine Run, New Hope Church, Gettysburg, Fisher's Hill, Winchester #2, Cedar Creek, and numerous other small engagements that I cannot recall. The names of the Boys that came to Gettysburg in 1913, and who took part in that Battle in 1865, are as follows"

Ben F. Reed	Right Section
John Summers	" "
James Miles	" "
John H. McGhee	" "
Marion Tempel	Center Section
John M. Morris	" "
Frank Piles	Left Section
Tip Massie	" "
Charlie Shaw	" "
Henry Wishon	" "
Joseph Hornung	" "
Billy Gage	" "
Abraham Doll	" "

I may have some of these names in the wrong Section, but they were all at Gettysburg, and took an

active part in the big fight, and it is a pleasure to meet them all, and talk over what happened here fifty years ago.

On July 1st, the day we arrived in Camp, as the sun was hot, we spent the day around the Camp in the afternoon, went over to the Confederate Camp for a little social visit, and was very pleasantly surprised at the cordial manner in which I was treated, and enjoyed my two hour visit over there very much. Came back to Camp, had a nice supper, and was entertained with a couple of old time songs by Ben Reed, who, by the way, said he was a good singer when he was a "Young Feller" but that of late years, he found that he could not hit some of the high notes as they should be hit.

After a good night's rest, we started in on July 2nd, to take in Little Round Top, where our Battery was engaged all day. Upon arriving there, we found no trouble in locating not only the position of the Battery, but of each individual gun. The scenery looked familiar. Just like looking at an old picture that you have not seen for years. While we were there, two Confederate Soldiers came over from where their lines was, shook hands with me, and one of them said, "Were you in this Battery?" I said that I was! "Well said he, "SHAKE" I belonged to the Brigade that charged your Battery twice. I'm from Georgia." I told him that I was glad to meet him and that I thought they did some pretty good charging. "Yes and we all thought you did some pretty good shooting, said he, and we tried to give you all your money's worth." And they surely did. He said, " This reunion here for both the Armies that were engaged in the fight, is one of the greatest, grandest things that a Nation on the face of the Globe can boast of. Here, Fifty years ago, we were engaged in one of the greatest battles of the Civil War. Today we meet as old neighbors and friends, anxious to let feeling be buried, and nothing but friendship and Brotherly love exist. Oh my Dear Sir! This is a great County, and one worth living for." Goodbye!! I am glad I met you: "And my Johnnie Friend was gone." After pulling a little Cedar Bush that grew up on the very spot our gun stood in that engagement, and Henry Wishon waved the flag that he brought with him from Portsmouth, Ohio, we turned our faces toward the Camp. I forgot to mention that the Commission have erected a very nice little Monument to mark the location of the Battery, with the following inscription:

**F.C. Gibbs  
BATTERY "L", FIRST  
OHIO LIGHT ARTILLERY**

He held this position under a galling fire all day July 2nd, 1863. It would be impossible for me to even attempt to describe the many beautiful Monuments and pieces of Statuary that have been erected to the memory of the different Regiments and Batteries that were engaged that day, as one can follow the line of Battle by the markers. On the way back to Camp, we passed the Monument which was erected to mark the highwater tide of the Rebellion. This was as far North as any fighting was done, and it is a large Bronze Book resting on a marble base. The next important point is what is known as "The Bloody Angle". This Angle is formed by two stone fences running at right angles. Here, the two lines met, and was the turning point in the famous "Pickett Charge", and I also think the turning point in the Battle in our favor. A Confederate Soldier who was wounded here at this Angle said to me. " I lay here for ever two hours, bleeding, and I saw more dead and dying men than it would seem possible to lay on such a small area. The time that I laid there, seemed ages to me. Not far from this point, Pennsylvania has a massive and very beautiful Monument erected to the memory of her Soldiers, who so gallantly fought to hold this line and to repulse the vicious assault of the "Pickett Brigade".

But here we are, opposite the Camp, and it is now noon! We decided to go down, and refresh the "Inner Man". For dinner we had:

Nice Roast Beef  
Brown Potatoes  
Green Peas

## Ice tea

Who would want anything better than this for a Camp dinner? Everything was nicely cooked, and the Cooks and the kitchen, faultlessly clean.

After dinner, Marion Tempel and I decided to take in the Cemetary Ridge and Culps Hill, where the first day's fight began. The first place of interest was the place where the unknown Dead are buried. "Eleven Hundred, unknown Dead". At the head of each grave is a small stone with only a number on it, which tells the sad story, that some poor fellow had to die alone with no Friend to "Write to the folks at home". But I feel sure, that for the Comrade who fought so gallantly fought, giving up his life for his Country's cause, there surely is a near seat around the "White Throne" in the Great Beyond.

It would be folly to even attempt to describe the many beautiful Monuments and Bronze pieces, that were erected all along the line of battle The Government has placed Cannons in the same position that they were on the day of the fight. The Rifle pits and Redoubts around the Guns are the same as they were, only covered with nice green sod. As I looked at those Breast Works that were thrown up there Fifty Years ago last night. I thought " If you could but talk, what a wonderful story you would tell!!"

We are now at Culps Hill, where the first day's fighting was done. Here, was charging and counter-charging. At this point, we were repulsed, loosing quite a number of men, killed, wounded, and taken prisoners. We also losted a number of pieces of Artillery. This news spread like wild-fire, down the line of battle, and matters began to look gloomy. The 5th and the 2nd Corps arrived that night which brightened the out-look, and the tide of Battle began to turn Yankeeward. In going back to Camp, we went through the town of Gettysburg, which had been made famous by this hard fought fight, and Battle.

It is quite a nice shady little place, but I hardly think she will ever enjoy again the distinction of entertaining the crowd, she has here during this reunion. Everybody is keeping Boarders, and I am informed the charges are very reasonable.

When we arrived at Camp, it was supper time, and our little jaunt over the line whetted my appetite. (which is pretty good at all times) and our supper tasted good, composed of the following:

Breakfast Bacon  
Fried Potatoes  
Boiled Eggs  
Coffee  
Bread and Butter

The Bugle sounded Taps, and we turned in. This morning, we decided to take in the line of Battle occupied by the Confederate Army, and we walked over this line, until we were opposite the position held by our Battery on Little Round Top. The Grays had all their commands marked, and one could easily tell what Brigade occupied certain positions. Wilcox Brigade, was in our front. About the center of this line, there is being erected a Monument in honor of General Lee, but it is not finished. Only the base or pedestal is completed. We also visited the old School-house, where General Longstreet had his head quarters. There were no familiar scenes along this line for us, as we are happy to say, we were not over there.

If there was any preferences in position of the two Armies, the Johnnies had it. And, as one of the Confederates said " If you had all been on the Offensive instead of the defensive, the result would have been quite different". I told him yes, " And if you had been successful, heaven alone knows what the results would have been, as this was not a victory of one Section over another, but the rescue of popular Government," and I handed him the Baltimore Sun from which I quoted, said "Goodbye" and we turned our steps toward camp, passed the house where General Sickels had his Head

Quarters. The General was sitting out on the porch, and while quite feeble, he was ever ready to extend a friendly hand shake to everyone. When we arrived at Camp we found a nice dinner awaiting us, which I need not say, we enjoyed very much.

This afternoon, Our Governor Cox made a nice speech at the big tent. We Ohio Boys, fell in line, and escorted him to the tent. Vice President Marshall, also Champ Clark and other, made speeches. In the evening, Governor Cox said "Boys, I am in receipt of an invitation to visit the Confederate Camp, this evening, and as you Boys met them Fifty Years ago, I would like to have you go with me, and show me how to do it." We again fell in line, with our Governor leading, and marched over to the Gray Camp, and were very cordially received, and spent quite a pleasant evening.

This evening down at the Village, someone made a disrespectful remark about President Lincoln, which was immediately taken up and quite a serious cutting scrape was the result. I understand it looked like a Riot for a while, but I am told it was all the out-come off too much drink.

I forgot to mention the very fine display of Fire-works that was given us from the side of "Little Round Top". It was certainly fine, and we enjoyed it very much.

This morning, July 4th, 1913, we were notified that our train would start for Ohio at One-forty, and that we should form at the foot of 41st Street at that hour, which we did, all present and accounted for except John Summers, who was taken to the Hospital sick. But General Wood left an Officer there to look after those who might have missed the train, and I was informed that Mr. Summers got home the next day safe.

We returned to Columbus, in the same cars in which we went. Had a splendid time, and were treated as nice as men could be, and as tenderly cared for, as men could be. Every little detail that would in the least add to our pleasure and comfort was looked after, and Governor Cox was on the job all the time, watching the interests of the Boys from Ohio.

On the morning of July 5th, 1913, we landed at the Union Station, Columbus, Ohio, at six o'clock. We held a meeting in the Station, and offered a vote of thanks to the Great STATE OF OHIO, who so generously provided for this trip, and to "OUR GOVERNOR" who was constantly with us, looking after our pleasure and comfort. When I attempt to say anything nice about "OUR GOVERNOR OF OHIO", my English fails me, as I cannot express in mere words how very kind and nice he and his Staff were to all of us.

General Wood and his Assistants were right with us in Camp, and two or three times a day would come to the different tents to know how we were getting along. Every little detail was worked out to perfection, and that great Camp was handled as smoothly as though it had been in operation for years. Everybody was pleased, Everybody in a good humor, and we all hope that the crowd that will assemble Fifty Years from now, to celebrate the Centennial of the Gettysburg Battle may have as nice a time and be as courteously treated as we were.

If I were to attempt to describe in detail, the beautiful Monuments and all the interesting things we saw and heard, it would make a book.

In closing, I wish to say, that the trip was greatly enjoyed by all, and I will always remember it, as one of the most pleasant affairs of my life.

John M. Morris  
Columbus, Ohio  
August 13, 1913

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**(a) Note: These notes are transcribed just as the author wrote them, complete with misspellings. Donald E. Darby.**

**Source: Morris, John M. 1913. Notes of the trip to Gettysburg, August 6, 1913. Columbus, Ohio.**

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**November 2000**