Read to
Marjorie, Aug. 14" 1917, by Mr. C. G. that is, Mo[illegible]

Soldier Life. Joliet, Mch. [illegible]

Graduating at College in 1st East in 18[illegible]

~~To begin my story properly, I must go back to the Fall of 1860, when a newly-fledged graduate of Dickinson College,~~ I ~~flew~~ rushed into battle of life, ~~with high hopes and an almost unbounded ambition; I began~~ by accepting a position ~~procured me by the kind~~ of ~~Rev. L. D. Huston, then of Nashville Tenn.~~ a friend ~~and~~ in October, ~~became~~ as Senior Professor and Vice President of McKenzie College, Clarkesville Texas, ~~It was~~ a school of 200 pupils, ~~the children of the most affluent families in that region and the bordering states.~~ ~~My income was to be $1500 the first year, $1800 the second, $2000 the third, $2300 the fourth, $2500 the fifth with the Presidency of the Institution. As this was payable in gold, I considered my prospects pretty good.~~

~~Reared in Kentucky, my principles have always been conservative. I had witnessed the trial of some of the~~

John Brown raiders in Pennsylvania, where they were arrested and from my standpoint had set them down as fanatics. I was soon destined to witness a fanaticism equally as extreme in the far South.

The President of our Institution was a very remarkable man who for twenty years had been laying the foundations of this School. His reputation had spread over all the Southwest and many a bad boy was sent there to be broken in and to learn discipline.

The discipline of the School was a wise combination of Prayer and the rod. This was administered by the President only.

Morning and evening every day and several times on Sabbath, all the pupils were assembled for worship, in which ~~on a evening in the week and~~ on Sabbaths the surrounding community participated. Our services were quite plain as the institution was situated ~~three miles from town~~ in the Country.

There was a large forest ~~on the west~~ appropriated to the young men and

a beautiful shady grove ~~on the South~~ to the use of the young ladies, as a place of for recreation ~~and retirement~~ and an hour per day was given the whole school in which to visit these groves and spend it in reading, or conversation or prayer as they pleased. Every professing Christian in that school had his or her peculiar bower to which they thus resorted for devotion, and oftentimes those groves resounded throughout the hour with alternate singing and prayer. ~~And often~~ One ~~could~~ might walk more than a mile without ever being out of the sound of prayer.

It was under these hallowed associations that I was converted and became satisfied it was my duty to become an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the midst of these heavenly thoughts, the horrid mutterings of War grated most harshly, or appears. The excitement ~~It~~ was inaugurated by the hoisting of the Lone-Star and Rattlesnake flags on the day of Mr Lin-

first election, to share the honors of that day at the Polls. It made Union-loving hearts burn ~~with rage that day~~ that evening to see the Stars and Stripes compulsorily withdrawn. From that November Morning until the next Fourth of July I saw no more of the emblem of my country.

Being of Union sentiments, I soon found myself from my position in the College at the head of a band of Unionists who privately consulted on the situation. By degrees as the ravages of Secession spread, our numbers decreased until our coterie was reduced to three. Feeling the consciousness of being a free-born American Citizen, I made no secret of my sentiments, though I took no public stand in regard to Union. It was with considerable surprise therefore that I found myself accosted one day by a fellow-Professor, who as a friend advised me that my sentiments were obnoxious to the Vigilance Committee and that while

I might think as I pleased, I must keep my mouth shut. To enforce this advice I was informed of the "hanging of Rev. Mr. Beverly at Fort Washita about 40 miles away and of the arrest of several other citizens with whom it would probably go hard, if they didn't change."

Well I yielded gracefully to this gentle hint and have a distinct remembrance of waking up many nights to see if I really had spoken aloud my thoughts ~~aloud~~ and if my bed-fellow had heard them.

On Feb. 23rd 1861. Texas seceded Gov. Sam. Houston was deposed and a red-hot Southern placed in his seat. That day was one of intense excitement. As I was not yet of age I had no vote and so did not go to the Polls, but I went that night to a Union neighbor's house both to learn the news and to share his sympathy.

We were all Unionists that were there that night at Bro. Barry's house. He was a genuine Christian man, ~~notwithstanding his ownership of 15 slaves~~. After tea the doors were locked and the blinds drawn closely down and we all unconsciously spoke in subdued tones.

"Today" said my friend, "when I went to the Polls a young lawyer who owns neither land nor slaves, met me as I was about to vote and knowing my sentiments said, 'Why Mr. Barry are you going to disgrace yourself by voting to save the Union. Would you kiss Old Abe Lincoln's foot to ~~stay under his hated abolition rule~~ save the Union?" "Sir said Mr. B. in reply, It is no disgrace to vote for the preservation of that Union which was handed down to us as the most precious legacy of our fathers; and if kissing Abe Lincoln's foot would save it, I would kiss it a thousand times." Tears of bitter sorrow ran down

our faces as my friend proceeded, "My dear young friend said he, my advice to you is to go home ~~to Kentucky~~. Don't stay to finish your year ~~out~~. Go right away; if you wait, it may be too late. Yesterday said he I could have got 15 dollars for every acre of this farm (some 1500 acres.) Today I would gladly accept $5 ~~and let my negroes go~~. I'm resolved what I'll do. I shall take ~~my negroes &~~ my family and go to the north part of the Indian Nation till the War is over. ~~If we weather it out well, but in my judgment this war will never end until the negroes are all free!~~"

With our weeping and praying and talking, the night slipped fast away. When we concluded to retire we were astonished to find it was two o'clock A.M.

Orders were issued by the new Governor that all the Schools & Colleges of the State

should be turned into Drill-schools preparatory to the defence of the Sovereign State of Texas, ostensibly against the Indians, but really to prepare us for the Rebel Army.

Military companies sprang up in the town armed with Sabres made at the blacksmith's shops and after they were mounted, assumed the title of Rangers.

I still had one friend left, a fellow-Professor in College, a graduate of West Point, who now became my sole confidant, and with him I often walked out into our grove. One Thursday he refused to go. I urged him but he would not go. I looked into his eye and said, "Durfee, what the matter." "Why said he these fools in town have raised a company & elected me to be their Captain. They know I'm a West-Pointer and I have but one of two things to do, to accept or fly." "Oh well said I thats soon decided, I'd fly." "Yes said he tapping his boot with

a switch, you might, but all my interests are here; but said he I shall never accept a Captaincy. My military education entitles me to at least a Colonelcy or Brigadier-general-ship and I shall just accept them as my first Company!"

"Well sir said I, I hope you will not betray the sentiments which I have expressed to you in confidence."

"No said he, I shall not, but my advice to you is to go home, as quickly as you can."

Our school had then been drilling two to four hours per day for several months but our names had not been enrolled. Matters began to assume a belligerant form and the news was hailed with eclat that our guns were on the way and would be on hands in two weeks.

To fire our patriotism and prepare

us for the realities of war, the young ladies made with their delicate hands and presented us with a silken banner, ~~euphoniously and poetically styled~~ entitled The Stars & Bars.

I shall never forget the sensation of choking which I experienced and how my chin involuntarily fell upon my breast ~~that day~~ as I was forced to stand there, with many others unwillingly and receive that flag and dare not revolt against it.

3) Kentucky Neutrality was quite popular then. She was playing feeder for the Confederacy, they said. Arms & provisions and medicines were being poured into the South through her singular Neutrality. Seizing upon this subterfuge, I suddenly became a strong Advocate of State Sovereignty ~~though I do not believe in it a bit~~ and demanded that as my allegiance was due to the Sovereign State of Kentucky I should be permitted to go home.

~~As Kentuckians were popular, I found little difficulty in making my way 1300 miles by private conveyance home.~~ (5)

(5) I arrived at home on July 11th & ten days afterward occurred the battle of Bull-Run. On the first Monday of August the Kentucky State election was held and the question of Union or Secession was submitted to the people. My ~~first~~ maiden vote was cast for the Union and the State was ~~carried by a great majority~~ saved from Secession.

Vice President John C. Breckinridge, James B. Clay, a son of Henry Clay, & John Morgan combined their power at Lexington to defeat this vote of Kentucky and to draw out of the State the entire body of the drilled State-guard, with their arms as ~~reinforcements~~ recruits for the Rebel Army.

Mr. Lincoln had however already secretly organized several regiments among the loyal Mountaineers and rendezvoused them at Camp Dick Robinson, 30 miles south of Lexington. He was also organizing others and had 20000 stand of arms on their way from Cincinnati to Lexington for them. A band of rebels, under Morgan at Cynthiana stopped the train

and compelled them to return to Cincinnati. But in less than 24 hours they arrived in Lexington by way of Louisville, and the regiments from Camp Dick Robison were there to receive them. Morgan & Breckinridge blew a bugle from their armory to rally their men and capture these arms. ~~There was but one stairway by which these men could descend from their armory and a few Union men with Colts Navies kept them in.~~

A counter alarm was rung by the Union men from the Court-house and without an hour's reflection, I leaped up from my mother's door-step where I had been listening, excitedly to Morgan's ~~bugle~~, and rushed to arms.

We organized at the depot as Home-guards and went into Camp that night at the Fair-Grounds. Morgan fled taking the state arms and a number of drilled men with him to the Southern Army.

The next night I was put on guard. My post was in a strip of woods in the

rear part of the grounds, just opposite a hole in the fence which I was ~~charged~~ specially to guard. It was intensely dark and rained heavily. From my beat the hole was about invisible, sometimes I thought I saw it, sometimes I didn't. When I would turned suddenly toward it. I thought I thought I saw it, but when I looked straight at it, I knew I didn't ~~could not~~. The thought haunted me all that night, that it was much easier for some Rebel to slip up outside of the fence and see me pacing my beat and shoot me, than for me to see and shoot him. I was just eight hours on my beat ~~that night~~ and how thankful I was that it rained nearly all the time. To be sure it wet my cap and my coat and and my vest and my shirt and my pants and filled my shoes and wilted my cartridge box; but all that was pleasant compared with the danger of being shot by an unseen enemy.

Grand Guard – The next night that I

was placed on duty, was not so dark. All passed well until about two oclock when I heard some one approaching. My orders were very strict and I prepared to obey them to the letter. When the party approached within about 30 feet of me, I heard a quavering voice, which I could hardly recognize as my own, cry out "Halt." To my great relief they halted. "Who comes there?" "A friend." "Advance friend and give the Countersign." The friend advanced and I recognized Col. Bramlette, afterwards Governor of Ky. He laid his hand on my gun and began to talk to me when I came to a charge bayonets and demanded the Countersign. He gave it and then after a pretended reprimand for letting him get so close to me he passed on.

~~They succeeded that night in getting his gun from a soldier named~~

did not succeed so well, but had his gun taken from him and was put under arrest.

Mike Doyle ~~So~~ they put him in the guard-house, for it. The next time he was on guard and compelled him next day to mark time as a punishment

Mike took his revenge, as the grand guard, an entirely different set of men from the former guard, approached, he sang out, "Who comes there?" "Grand Guard." "Oh! Yis ye bloody spalpeen, Mark time." "Why Mike - you must'nt do that way, you should ask for the countersign and let us pass." "Ah! ye bloody villains, ye got my gun once, but ye'll not do it again. Mark time I say!" and he made them do so until they called for the Corporal of the Guard to relieve them.

In a few weeks the lines were definitely drawn, often separating the closest friends, dividing households and breaking the tenderest ties. Those sympathizing with the South fled to Tennessee, while the Union men remained to be enlisted for three years or during the War. My brother John and I being unmarried resolved to enlist and do the fighting for the family.

But an obstacle ~~met~~ - my gaze. How could I ever inform my Mother or gain her consent?

I had always been delicate and somewhat of a pet with the whole family. How would she bear it? I broached the matter timidly and as gently as I could. "Can I let you go?" said she indignantly, "Somebody's sons have to go and why not mine? I gave you to God and your country from your birth. Yes, go, and if God ~~wills~~ has a mission for you on earth, he will preserve you to fulfil it. It is better to die for your country than to have no country in which to live."

I must say I was disappointed for I had anticipated a regular scene, and if my Mother ever shed a tear over our going, I never ~~knew~~ knew it. She still lives and some of you may some day see her.

Our Company was made up of Lexington boys chiefly from well-to do families, had been school-fellows together and were mostly well-educated. One stranger insisted on being received into our mess. His frequent oaths, his jockey ways and the rumor that he had been a horse-racer and

a gambler set me completely against him. His free and easy way of talking to me, his dubbing me "Parson Gunn" and last of all proposing to share my pallet with his terrier pup at his feet, utterly disgusted me. I wished I had not enlisted. I seriously began to seek a transfer to another Company. But night came and I had to go to bed with Thos. Scott and his pup. On going into Camp ~~Before returning~~ I had resolved to read my chapter in my Testament every night, and to pray. So I placing a piece of candle in my bayonet and sticking it ~~the bayonet~~ into the ground ~~and~~ I began silently to read ~~to myself~~. The other 16 boys & the pup were tucked in Spoon ~~apple pie~~ fashion. To the surprise of every one present Tom Scott rose on his elbow and said vehemently, "Parson Gunn read that Testament aloud, there's not one of us but need to hear it more than you do." "Certainly" said I, if the rest are agreed." "Certainly certainly" cried they all; and I read. When I closed the book and was about to put out the light ~~when~~ Tom Scott a-

gain put in: "Now, Parson, pray aloud, for we need your prayers more than you do." The boys echoed "Certainly" again and I prayed. Thus day by day as long as this mess were together we closed the day with reading and prayer and I never was disgusted with Lew Scott any more.

Our Colonel, Ethelbert Dudley, was a most gallant spirit, a celebrated Surgeon and Physician, with the eye of an eagle and the dash of a Marion. His bright-eyed boy, our old school-fellow attended him as Adjutant of the Regiment.

Rations — Among our first notable experiences was drawing rations. A loaf of fresh warm Baker's bread with beans & meat and potatoes in proportion was dealt to every man. We were divided into messes, and served by cooks hired at our own expense. At the very

first meal some of the boys refused to eat such stuff, (although some of them had usually been fed on corn-bread,) and turned the loaves of bread into foot-balls. When these despised loaves were substituted by hard-tack, their indignation knew no bounds. It was not a month before the amusing cry could be heard, "Oh! for a loaf of that sour Baker's bread which we turned into footballs."

The next sensation was Daily Drill four hours pr. day. The boys were about ready for mutiny. "They hadn't enlisted to be trotted to death." They had volunteered to fight and were spoiling for the fray. But drill, drill, drill was the order of the day, until even the soberest of us became somewhat wearied with the monotony.

As a large number of Regiments were being organized and none of them were full and their presence was needed at the front, the Governor issued an order for consolidation, (to be known as the 21st Ky Vol. Infty) and we were to march immediately to

the southern part of Kentucky to combine with another command. But we thus lost one half of our officers as both Regts had a full ~~quota~~ complement under commission.

And now our camp was all life. A full ~~quota~~ supply of clothing according to Army Regulations was issued to every man. Many of us already had several full ~~sacks~~ changes of underwear made at home But we all drew all that we were entitled to, ~~and~~ some of the boys ~~wantonly tore~~ sold them ~~up~~, others gave them away to the darkies who thronged our camp.

At length the day for marching came. We were all up at daylight. Tents were struck, wagons loaded and all preparations made to depart by 10 a.m. but sundry unexpected contingencies arose to delay us until between 3 & 4 P.M. We were then drawn up near the Floral Hall, presented with a Testament each by the Ladies of the Lexington Bible-Society. A few words

Music!

of parting were said by citizens & the Colonel, and we gaily filed out the Fair-Grounds & on the Nicholasville Road, to the animating tune of "The Girl I left behind me." At the gate our Lieut. Dud. Craig found his Mother and a young lady friend sitting in their carriage, bathed in tears. Brickey's wife and six children were there on foot and the scene threatened to become dramatic. Most of us had playfully said goodbye at home and exacted a promise from our friends ~~of them~~ not to afflict us with a second edition.

The Sun shone gayly that afternoon and the mud formed by the melting of a slight snow was light and thin. Many of the boys, besides a well-stuffed knapsack with a blue overcoat on top, and the gun and accoutrements, had an extra belt with a Colt's Navy Revolver and a two pound Bowie knife. How ~~they~~ ever imagined ~~they~~ could travel thus heavily loaded, I do not know. However we reached Nicholasville (12 miles) that night in less than ~~after only~~ four hours march, & camped in the

Court-House and other public buildings
The next morning there was a general auction of pistols and bowie knives, and so slow was the sale that some were given away. ~~That night~~ At the end of that day's march, we reached Camp Dick Robison and ~~slept~~ were quartered in some sheds made of rich boards. It was very ~~hard~~ difficult to find the soft-side of a plank that night. Tom Kelly, our Irishman groaned till midnight, keeping the rest of us awake. At last when we could endure it no longer one of us exclaimed, "Kelly what on earth's the matter?" "Ow, the boils, said he, the gum boils on my fate." "Ow-w-w me counthry, quavered he, with evident feeling, how I suffer for yiz." This patriotic sentiment became a byword in our Reg't from that time forward and if any body grew weary or vexed, good humor was at once restored by the cry, "Ow, me Counthry."

~~A five days march~~ Three days more through Danville & Lebanon, brought us to Campbellsville where we ~~met~~ met the Green River boys with whom we were to be consolidated.

They dubbed us the Blue-Grass boys and eyed us with envy. We called them the Green-River boys and looked upon them with commiseration. As we were dressed in sky-blue and they in Navy; ~~they~~ we became the Blue-Jackets, they the Black-Jackets. Rivalry and jealousy became rife; and like oil and water, we could n't mix.

Long-Roll.

Our Camp was in a thickly-set briar-field just south of the town. One night our Lieut. who was then in command whispered to us. "Boys don't take off your things, there's going to be a long-roll to-night, and I want Company E to be first into line." Now the long roll is an alarm to notify that an enemy is approaching. So we slept on our arms and sure enough the long-roll was sounded and to our ~~disgust~~ great chagrin the whole Regiment was in line as promptly as ourselves. We were formed in line however and the joke was carried so far as to charge half a dozen briar-patches

tearing clothes and skin until we were heartily glad when retreat was sounded. Like the Ill. Nat. Guards in the recent Braidwood Campaign we did not know what enemy we had to meet and we went almost into ecstacies when we found there were none.

But the Campaign was upon us. Gen. Thomas had his fight at Mill-Spring with Zollicoffer, only 50 or 60 miles from us and we were marching to the fight, when we received news of Zollicoffer's death and the first Union Victory.

We were now stationed at Green River Bridge between Campbellsville & Columbia to guard it. Our boys were once more outraged. They hadn't enlisted to guard bridges but to fight. We settled down to their utter disgust in a swampy beach land and spent the remainder of that winter there, at Greensburg and in Columbia, in a hand to hand conflict with measles, scarlet-fever and a host of other soldierly ailments, in which it took all the well men to attend the sick. My brother, from attending others fell sick & I was his nurse, till my mother came and took him home. He soon recovered & rejoined us.

But our noble Colonel overworked and disheartened from care and sympathy for his men, took sick and died.

A disgraceful scramble now ensued among the officers for promotion. Some of them hurried to Frankfort, without leave, to secure their own promotion. The Regiment became demoralized. There was no drill, no dress-parade, no picket-guard, and only a feeble camp-guard; yet we were in the very heart of the enemy's country. Many of the Green-River boys at the risk of being captured went home to see how their families were getting along.

Meanwhile the Governor filled the vacancy, regardless of the advice or importunities of the office-seekers and ordered them all to their posts. The new Colonel who proved to be our old Major thrown out by consolidation came immediately to the field expecting a glad welcome. To his surprise he found us in a sorry plight with ~~the most majority~~ a large number of both officers and men opposed to his coming

But like the brave soldier that he was Col. Price began work as soon as he arrived in Camp. He laid hold with a vigorous hand, arrested the drunken, threw out pickets, began company and Battalion Drill and soon had the sick well and the whole command in fighting trim. His worst enemies were forced to acknowledge his excellence and skill. A mutiny among the officers was promptly quelled and the old feud between Blue-jacket and Black-jacket buried forever by putting the Regiment in uniform.

By this time Forts Donalson & Henry, Columbus, Bowling Green, and Nashville had fallen and we were ordered to Columbia Tennessee, to reinforce Buell at Pittsburg Landing. But the battle was over just as we came within hearing distance and we spent the summer in Shelbyville, Lullabona, McMinnville & thereabout.

The ~~fall~~ summer was one of severe marches and counter-marches with several months of furious drill under that American Jehu Genl. Nelson. Our last day under his command will never be forgotten by any who participated in it.

Rumor said that Bragg was marching into Kentucky. To test the matter Genl Nelson was ordered to "feel of Bragg" to prove if this were so. Our Brigade then stationed at McMinnville was ordered to ~~Sparta~~ Altamont. We marched ~~7 or 8~~ 19 miles in 7 or 8 hours over the stiffest of roads and just at nightfall waded a chilly mountain stream, to camp in a dense wood on the cliff beyond. A ~~cold~~ very heavy rain set in and lasted till daylight rendering sleep impossible, when without time for breakfast we were compelled to make a precipitate retreat, with, what seemed to us, the whole rebel Army at our heels. We had felt of Bragg and were satisfied. At 10 A.M. we were back in our old quarters having made

38 miles in 24 hours, without sleep or breakfast.

~~Next~~ That night we made a pile of crackers, bacon, shoes and clothing 20 ft high and 30 feet in diameter and burned them and set out for Louisville, via Nashville, in what is now known in history as Buell's famous Retreat. For twenty-two days, we wearily raced side by side with Bragg's Army. Sometimes they were ahead, sometimes we; and each could see the cloud of dust raised by the other. Neither dared to attack. It was afterwards learned that our army had but 17 rounds of ammunition, not enough to stand a fight of over two hours. But Bragg didn't happen to know that. This was Buell's reason for permitting the capture of the gallant Colonel Wilder and his command at Munfordville, Ky.

It was with a breath of relief that

During this march through what are known as "the Barrens" in Kentucky, there were very few streams, we obtained our drinking water from the ponds after the mules had been served and often half-famished we strained the clay out with our teeth and spit it out. Our only ration was raw flour. The dust-begrimed Army stacked their arms on the Louisville Common. The march had been skillfully performed, the Army having been converted into a wheel or rather endless chain, the rear part marching ahead until it was at the front and then camping until it became the rear again. Thus we were in continual motion, moving forward every 8 to 12 hours and camping the same. The dust at that time was so dense that we often walked for hours without seeing the the head of our own Regt, and at night not even being able to see the man before us. Many of us learned the art of somnambulism only waking up when the command came to a halt. The joy of the Citizens of Louisville and vicinity was only equalled by the satisfaction of the Nation that Buell had made a successful retreat. Friends and kindred crowded about us and among those in-

quired for, were my brother John and myself. On presenting ourselves to our Uncle & Bro. we were greeted, to our surprise with a vacant stare which made us painfully aware that we were unrecognized. "Do you know said they to us, a couple of boys named Gunn." "Why Uncle, why Bro. Will, don't you know us?" Recognizing our voices, they took one reassuring gaze and sidling, our hands. ~~and throwing their arms about our necks~~ they actually shed tears, exclaiming, "Poor boys, poor boys." "Tut- tut, exclaimed we, loosening their grasp, we'll be all right, as soon as we get washed."

In two days' time that ragged, dingy, footsore Army was rested, and transformed into a clean, freshly-clad, reinforced host, ready and eager to dash upon Bragg and Kirby Smith and annihilate them. For had the Union Army been handled with skill and determination not a man of the Southern Army before them could ~~will~~ to have escaped.