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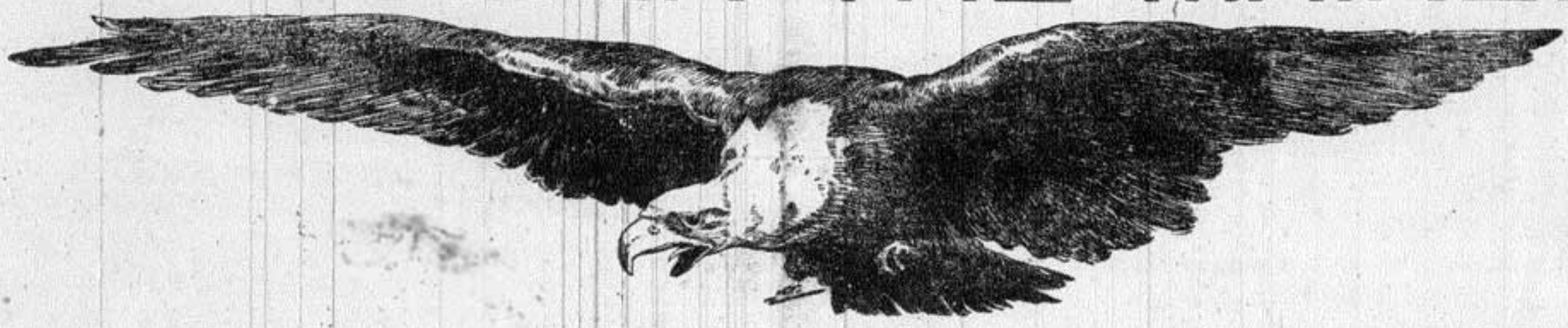
REMEMBER THE MAINE!



A Visit to Camp Bryan Grimes.

I spent two hours at Camp Bryan Grimes yesterday morning, and found the boys in fine condition, and the camp rapidly becoming all that could be desired. The first day the arrangements were so imperfect that some of the companies had insufficient food and slept in cramped quarters. This gave rise to much complaint, and many of the volunteers wrote to their homes, telling their home folks that they were not being cared for. One way, I think he was from Charlotte, who had no food for several hours after his arrival, sought out Captain Robertson (by the way he is the senior officer here, and one of the best anywhere) and said:

"Captain, I desire to make a requisition for a looking glass."

"A looking-glass," repeated the captain, "and what do you want with a looking glass now?"

"To see myself starve to death," was the reply.

Reports of the lack of proper food have gone out all over the State, and many of the good fathers and mothers have been naturally distressed about it. One gentleman with a big heart, who was a brave Confederate soldier, who was moved by these reports, wrote to a friend inquiring about the truth, and said:

"These young men whom we have sent to Raleigh are our neighbors and our neighbor's sons; they are very close to us, and we do not propose that they shall be treated in any such manner without violent protest. War is war, and the young gentlemen are likely enough to suffer inconveniences and distress at the hands of the enemy; never let it be said that our friends joined in the onslaught upon them. Please investigate and let the people know the truth."

There is not a good North Carolinian who will not feel that this sort of indignation was righteous if the conditions were as bad as they had been represented. I have talked to the privates, the petty officers, and the commissioned officers, and have myself partaken of the food served at the camp in order to know exactly how the soldiers are faring in Camp Bryan Grimes. In doing this I have followed the plan Jefferson adopted when he was in France, to find out the true conditions of the people. Writing to Lafayette of his journeyings, he said that he had lifted the lids off the pots in the homes of the peasants to see what food they lived upon, and sat on their beds to see with what comfort they slept. In a desire to get at the truth, I yesterday became a literal disciple of the sage of Monticello. First, I learned that very poor provision had been made for the reception of the troops on Monday, and that quite a number of the men did not get enough to eat that night. So far as the people of Raleigh are concerned, they would not have permitted such a condition of affairs if they had known that it existed. The regulations provide that rations shall be issued upon requisition, and each company shall arrange to cook its rations for the men. Coming in late Monday afternoon, without such management as ought to have existed, there was much confusion and more delay, which resulted in little to eat and crowded quarters to sleep, and if the young men had not kicked and kicked pretty hard they would have been nearer saints than we have in North Carolina.

Now, however, since the soldiers have been mustered in and the officers have had time to secure discipline, the reasons for complaint have been removed. One of the best captains, who kicked some on Monday night, said: "The fare is good. Every company is getting along all right that has a good commissary officer and a good cook. It all depends on them." This seems to tell the whole story of camp living.

* * *

One of the first men I saw in camp was Capt. Perry Gray, of the Guilford Grays. He was directing the putting up of tents for the Wilmington company, and his men, most of whom had never seen a tent before, were working as expertly as if they had never done anything else but put up tents. It took a very few minutes for them to have a tent put up and ready for occupancy.

JOSEPH F. ARMFIELD, U. S. A.
Colonel Commanding the 1st Regiment N. C. N.

It was a novel sight to see young men who had never been accustomed to hard work, using axes and hammers with as much dexterity as a blacksmith or a carpenter. "Our company is composed of a fine set of men," said Captain Gray, "and they will do most anything, and do it well." After watching them put up tents, I followed my nose and went to the kitchen where dinner was being prepared for the Guilford boys. The men who do the cooking in all the companies are regular members, detailed for that duty. Here is what was being cooked for dinner: Roast mutton, fried bacon, Irish potatoes, onions, coffee, and as fine baker's bread as I sat down to a few weeks ago at the Raleigh cafe in Washington—the best restaurant in the South. It was cooked well and there was an abundance. The boys were served with breakfast, consisting of sausage, fried onions, beef, potatoes, wheat bread and coffee. For supper there was boiled and roast beef, bacon, onions, and coffee. At the adjacent kitchen of the Washington Light Infantry, the cooks were frying nice fresh pork. The bill of fare varies. The commissary officer is given a requisition for certain quantities of food. If he knows how to exchange well with the contractor, he can serve a variety every day. If he does not understand how to economize and how much to give out each day, he is liable to have the rations run short by cooking too much when he first gets his supply.

While, as I have said, the food is good and abundant, it is of course not served like it is at a modern hotel. There are no hired waiters and no elaborate service. Each fellow takes his common plate and coffee and sits down with it on the ground, and serves himself. He has to look out for himself, and if he has been accustomed to finger bowls and such, he finds that he must unlearn all his elegant service, and come down to more primitive methods of eating. But it would surprise many a doting mother, who has petted her boy and given him the choicest cuts of steak, the first strawberry of the season, and other delicacies, to see him sitting on the ground eating bacon and fried onions on a tin plate, with a relish he has not known at home.

I saw one boy yesterday, the son of a doting mother, who has been brought up most tenderly. At home he could not bear the sight of grease, it would make him sick. He had little appetite, and his mother had special dishes prepared to tempt it. If that mother could see him "sopping" his bread in the gravy left from his fried bacon, she would not recognize her own boy. I saw another delicately nurtured young man, whose nervous temperament made him sleepless. With a soft bed and a room containing every comfort, he often found it impossible to sleep until the early morning. Since he has been in camp, he has been drilling four hours a day, eating plain food, and sleeping on a bed of straw on the ground, with only a blanket over him. The third morning his mother was anxious to know how he managed to endure the rough life. She was sure he could not sleep a wink on a hard bed in a tent with three other men. He wrote home, in answer to her solicitous letter: "I sleep like a top and haven't had such good sleep since I was in a crib by your bed." In these cases, you see, camp life has cured sleeplessness and indigestion.

I must not be understood to say that camp life is like home. It has many drawbacks and inconveniences and most of the young men here, having been accustomed to many comforts, find it a hard life. Compared to home, it is hard in every way, but since the enlistments the boys get plenty of good food wherever the commissary sergeants and the cooks are capable and have foresight. The Goldsboro company fit was so good that every man in it was accepted, and this was true of no other company) has been kicking because the men have had no plates and have to eat as they can. The delay in supplying plates and other necessaries from Washington has been most annoying. But of soldiers, in camps in battle:

"Their's not to make reply,
Thiers not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die."

* * *

The health of the troops is excellent. The free use of the bathing pool in the pavilion makes them a Godly set of men, if it be true that cleanliness is next to Godliness. There was a general moving about yesterday, and there were scraps of paper scattered here and there in their wake, but otherwise the camp was as neat and clean as one could desire. But the paper worried Dr. Wilder. He was born at Wilder's Grove, Wake county, and that accounts for his desire to have everything in apple-pie order. Seeing the paper, he said: "I am going to have this camp clean or I am going to have somebody hung."

* * *

The officers live like fighting cocks. They pay for their own board and they are living high. The colonel and high officers mess together. The captains and other officers have made arrangements with Giersch and he feeds them the best the market affords at seventy-five a day. One officer, just quitting dinner, said: "I am living much better than at home, and but for seeing the wife and babies I could be satisfied here all summer."

* * *

All are pleased with the location of the camp. There are but two objections. The drill grounds are too far from the camp, the boys saying that the march tires them out before they begin to "shoulder arms" etc. The second is that the water has to be carried from St. Mary's, a distance of something like half a mile. The water is good and the supply is sufficient, though it is a pity that the city water does not run to the camp so as to make it as plentiful as it is in Raleigh.

* * *

So much for a two hours' observation and experience at the camp. The chief impression conveyed by this visit was that the State ought to be proud of this body of gallant volunteer soldiers. They are the flower of the youth of the State. Many of them are trained in their home companies and many more are fresh from their offices, their stores, their shops, and their farms, ignorant of military tactics but having the "stuff" of which soldiers are made. There has been an unaccountable delay in sending the uniforms and guns from Washington, and many of the men are wearing citizens clothes. "You cannot drill men well or get a camp into real military order," said a capable officer to me, "unless he is in uniform. That makes him feel like a soldier. No sooner does he put on uniform than he feels that all eyes are upon him, and he resolves to do his best."

* * *

Without equipments, and without the discipline that follows enlistment, it is a matter of common remark that the volunteers have shown a willingness to obey orders, and to conduct themselves in a way to bring credit upon the camp. Among so large a body of young men, away from the restraints of home, it is natural that there should be more or less rowdyism and some tendency to wildness. The good habits and the excellent behavior of the young men shows that they come from good homes, and that the quiet and elevating influence of those homes has followed them here.

The camp is not a Sunday school, it is not as religious as the old fashioned Methodist camp meeting, though resembling it in many ways. But it is an encampment of young men of character and high purpose, drawn together by the patriotic love of country and willingness to risk all for the honor of their country. As I looked at them and talked with those brave men, I felt like lifting my hat in reverence to the humblest youth from the humblest home, who has come to make ready "for glory or the grave." Apparently careless, and indifferent, laughing and passing merry jests, these are the descendants of the men who made King's Mountain, Bull Run, and an hundred other battle fields theatres for the display of a courage that illumine the pages of our history. The sons are worthy of their sires. I do not believe that occasion will offer for them to drive the Spaniards from Cuba, because the war will be ended before the end of the month, but if they should be called into service there are young men here in this camp, unknown to fame, as brave and as fearless as Stonewall Jackson or Pettigrew or any other Southern soldier.

J. D.

THE AMERICAN FLAG.

When Freedom from her mountain height,
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night
And set the stars of glory there.
She mingled with its glorious dyes
The milky baldric of the skies
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light.
Then from his mansion in the sun
She called her eagle bearer down
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

* * * * * * *

Flag of the brave, thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph, high!
When speaks the signal trumpet tone
And the long line comes gleaming on,
Ere yet the lifeblood warm and wet
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier's eye shall brightly turn
To where thy sky born glories burn
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance!

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE.

WM. H. S. BURGWYN, U. S. A.
Colonel, Commanding the Second Regiment, N. C. V.

CLEANING UP CAMP.

CAPT. BAIN COMMANDING CO. B ON ARRIVAL AT THE CAMP.

THE AMERICAN FLAG.

Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there!
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then from her mansion in the sun,
She called her eagle-bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest trumpet loud,
And see the lightning glances driven,
When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drums of heaven—
Child of the sun! to thee 'tis given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high!
When speaks the signal-trumpet tone
And the long lines come gleaming on.
Ere yet the life blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier's eye shall brightly turn
To where the sky-born glories burn,
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance,
And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle shroud,
And glory sulphur rise and fall
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall,
Then shall the meteor's glances glow,
And cowering foes shall shrink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glister o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,

"GOODBY SWEETHEART!"

And lightning waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's swelling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home,
By angel hands to valor given,
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us!

—Joseph Rodman Drake.

A SCENE AT CAMP GRIMES AT FOUR O'CLOCK P. M.

Many a man is the victim of circumstances simply because he is too lazy to avoid being victimized.