

COL. HUME R. FEILD.

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On the 17th of June, 1921, at his home, in Union City, Tenn., the immortal and unconquerable spirit of Col. Hume R. Feild broke the bars of its earthly prison and returned to Him who gave it.

As I stood near his "coffined clay," gazing down into the placid face bathed in the tinted lights that sifted through the windows of the beautiful Methodist church, my thoughts drifted back into that ever-beautiful "land of smiles and tears"—the land of memory—back to the years of his young manhood; and, as though pictured on canvas and held before me, I visualized all his deeds of daring on a hundred fields of battle, all his miraculous escapes from impending death, all his sacrifices and sufferings in defense of the land he loved, the long, long reign of quiet and peace that was his in the years that came after, and then there came to my mind the assurance from Holy Writ: "For He is good and His mercy endureth forever."

Colonel Feild was one of the most picturesque characters of all the long list of gallant men who took part in the War between the States. And for individual gallantry, for coolness under fire, and his unconquerable will in every undertaking, I very much question if he had an equal in either army, North or South.

I was for many years his family physician, and through it all, and even up to his death, I was honored with his confidence and his friendship. Colonel Feild was by nature a Chesterfield in his bearing. He was modest and rather shrinking in his intercourse with the world, and very rarely referred to the part he played in the tragic drama of the sixties unless questioned closely, and even then his thrilling story was told in modest phrases and with little reference to himself. And yet with all this he was a man of the strongest convictions, much of which was made evident in his likes and dislikes. He typified Shakespeare's lines:

"In peace there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility;
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of a tiger—
Stiffen the sinews and summon up the blood."

Biographic custom would seem to call for Colonel Feild's ancestry, but I shall only note that he was from Norman stock, the founder being Baron Feld (later Anglicized to Feild), who fought under William the Conqueror at Hastings in the eleventh century. He was related to Cyrus W. Field, who laid the first Atlantic cable, and to Justice Field, of the United States Supreme Court. He was born in Pulaski, Tenn., in 1834, and took a B.A. and C.E. degree at the Kentucky Military Institute in 1856.

He was opposed to secession, but, to use his own words, "When the first gun boomed at Fort Sumter, the die was cast; then I was heart and soul with the South."

Colonel Feild raised the first company organized in Giles County, Tenn., of which he was made captain. Later this company became a part of the 1st Tennessee Volunteer Infantry, Col. George Maney commanding, which, after a short period of drilling, was sent to West Virginia and there served under Lee against McClellan. It was at Cheat Mountain and while on detached service with twenty picked men scouting in McClellan's rear that Colonel Feild received his baptism of fire, and it was there, too, that, while temporarily separated from his men, he killed three Yankee soldiers whom he was pursuing toward their camp.

After Cheat Mountain and some very arduous service under Stonewall Jackson, the regiment went into winter quarters, and, having been promoted to major of his regiment, Colonel Feild asked for and obtained leave of absence to visit his family, for he was then married. But upon reaching Nashville and learning that Grant was moving on Fort Donelson, he at once reported to General Pillow at Dover, Tenn., was attached to his staff, and served as such until Buckner assumed command, when, without visiting his family as he had purposed, he at once returned to his command. Shortly afterwards, for lack of adequate transportation, he was detached with half of his regiment and ordered to report to Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston at Corinth, in pursuance of which he reached Corinth in time to take part in the battle of Shiloh. It should be here noted that Colonel Maney, with the remainder of the regiment, arrived in time to take part in the second day's engagement. After Shiloh, General Maney having been promoted, Colonel Feild was appointed colonel of his regiment, and he was also detailed with Gen. Marcus J. Wright and Colonel Campbell to examine and weed out incompetent officers up to and including their own rank.

Then followed Bragg's campaign into Kentucky, and then came the battle at Perryville, where his regiment lost between two hundred and fifty and three hundred men, among whom was that gallant officer, Lieutenant Colonel Patterson.

Maney's entire brigade had attempted to storm a battery in their immediate front. The assault was unsuccessful, whereupon General Maney ordered Colonel Feild to repeat the effort with his regiment alone. Without one word Colonel Feild took position some distance in front of his regiment, turned and, facing them, slowly drawing his sword, he cried with ringing voice: "Follow me!" The battery was carried with hardly a man of the battery left to tell the story; but a strong force of infantry occupying a ridge to the left continued to pour in on them an enfilading fire so destructive that, to again quote from Colonel Feild's diary, "seeing that to hold their ground meant the destruction of the whole command, I withdrew the regiment after sacrificing the best and noblest blood of Tennessee to a mistaken order. Twenty-three or four commissioned officers were killed or wounded in the two assaults."

The campaign in Tennessee followed, culminating in the battle of Murfreesboro, on which occasion Colonel Feild was in temporary command of the brigade, Maney in charge of the division, and Cheatham in command of the corps. Here, while carrying a battery, Colonel Feild had his horse killed under him. Bragg's retrograde movement followed, and then came the battle of Chickamauga, in which Colonel Feild led his regiment to the end. And here it was that, in company with General Forrest, he rode out of the woods into the open field at the foot of Snodgrass Hill, where they were unexpectedly fired on by an entire brigade, five Minie balls passing through the little gray mare the Colonel was riding, killing her instantly.

Little need be said of the battle of Missionary Ridge. Colonel Feild's diary shows between the lines a very evident disgust with the unfortunate denouement. In this action the 1st Regiment was temporarily detached from the brigade and placed on Bragg's extreme right at the point of the ridge and confronting Sherman. Colonel Feild held this position to the end, at times even fighting Sherman's men with rocks, which were thrown down on them. He further states that "late in the evening," expecting to bivouac on the ground, he sent his servant to the rear to bring his blankets, and later through this servant he learned that Grant's army was in his

rear and in possession of his ambulance. Lack of space will not permit me to follow Colonel Feild in that notable campaign from Dalton to Atlanta. Two incidents during that time are especially worthy of record, in that they most eloquently portray the bravery and unconquerable spirit of this remarkable man.

Near Adairsville, Ga., and eight hundred yards in front of Sherman's rapidly advancing lines, stood a large octagon-shaped building with three or four smaller buildings around it. These buildings were held by two regiments which, by order of General Polk, were withdrawn and replaced by Colonel Feild's regiment with orders to hold the position, though it cost the entire command. Later and under a terrific artillery fire, Captain Flournoy, his favorite cousin, reported from an out-building that they could no longer live and hold their position. Colonel Feild quietly replied: "William, our orders are to hold this position. Go back to your company." Still later, having exhausted their ammunition, a call was made for a volunteer to go for more. Charlie Ewing, a youth, responded. Colonel Feild led the way outside, saying: "Charlie, I will stand here and draw their fire while you run." At eleven o'clock that night orders came to retire and rejoin the brigade, the army in the meantime having gotten into its new position.

The second incident occurred at Kenesaw Mountain at a point in Cheatham's line of earthworks, later known as the "Dead Angle," because of the great slaughter on Sherman's assaulting lines. Confronting Sherman and projecting well out into a deep valley that intervened between the two opposing armies was an elevation which was included in Cheatham's line of works, the result being a rather acute and at the same time vulnerable salient in the line of defense. It was a key to the whole situation. Colonel Feild was ordered to occupy this salient with instructions to hold at all cost. At about one o'clock in the afternoon the enemy opened on this position with several batteries with a range which Colonel Feild describes as the most accurate he ever saw, very few if any shots going above the works and many plowing entirely through the embankment. An hour and a half of this was followed by an assault by three successive lines of battle. The first line, with fixed bayonets and uncapped muskets, at quick step and in perfect alignment, rushed to the works, planting their colors on the top, but with the great body crouching in the ditch below. The second line followed, firing as they came, planting their colors on the works, but, as with the first line, crouched in the ditch below, some begging for quarter and others attempting to run back. The third and last line never reached the works. Now it was, in the midst of this maddening hell of human destruction, that Colonel Feild sat astride of a stringer that supported a head log while his men below passed loaded guns up to him, which he fired as rapidly as possible until, while looking down into the face of a big brown-eyed Yankee, with gun barrels lapping, both in the act of firing, Colonel Feild received the shot of his antagonist in the top of his head and fell unconscious among his men below. A few minutes and he regained consciousness; and though paralyzed on his left side, he resumed command and witnessed the retreat of all three lines, save only the dead and prisoners left behind. While still in the hospital the battle of Peach Tree Creek was fought, the only battle during the whole war where he failed to lead his command.

Colonel Feild commanded the skirmish line in front of Cheatham's corps at Franklin. He was talking to General Gist when that officer received his death wound, and commanded his brigade through the rest of the engagement.

After the disaster at Nashville Colonel Feild was put in command of a brigade of sixteen hundred picked men and covered the retreat of the army until it crossed the Tennessee River. He continued in command of Gist's Brigade until just before the surrender in North Carolina, where he was shot through the leg and was still in the hospital when the end came, and,

"Hope, born one pleasant morn.
Died at even."

One other incident in the life of Colonel Feild should be recorded here.

After recovery from his last wound, accompanied by his faithful servant, Colonel Feild, returning home via Baltimore, took passage on a boat from Cincinnati to Louisville, his destination being Nashville, Tenn. Included in the passenger list were a few paroled Confederate soldiers, a delegation of New Jersey editors, and a force of negro soldiers commanded by a white colonel. These negroes began cutting the buttons from the coats of the Confederates and, learning of Colonel Feild's presence, went to his stateroom and demanded that he submit to this indignity. With drawn pistol, he stood in his stateroom door and told them he would die first, and that the first man to move on him would die with him. The editors, seeing a tragedy impending, persuaded the colonel to put a stop to it. At Louisville it developed that this same colonel of negro troops was also on his way to Nashville, and shortly after his arrival he received this ultimatum from Colonel Feild: "Either meet and fight me to-morrow or leave Nashville by that time." The colonel, being fully advised as to his adversary, left on time.

Colonel Feild's life subsequent to the war was quiet, unostentatious, and uneventful, much of it being spent on his farm. As age crept on he purchased a home in Union City, Tenn., where he spent his remaining years and where he died. He was never reconciled to the defeat and fall of the Confederacy and seemingly avoided as far as possible everything that tended to perpetuate his own memory of that great conflict. He looked forward to the coming of the death angel with the same composure that characterized him on the field of battle, and truly did he meet him

"Like one that wraps the drapery of his couch
About him and lies down to pleasant dreams."

THE MONUMENT TO GEN. STAND WATIE.

Among the Confederate monuments that deserve notable mention is that recently erected by the Oklahoma Division U. D. C., to Gen. Stand Watie, the only full-blooded Indian brigadier general in the Confederate army. The monument is at Tahlequah, and is an imposing structure, ten or more feet in height, of Georgia granite, with a large bas-relief tablet showing a bust size likeness of General Watie in bronze with the following inscription:

"In honor of Gen. Stand Watie, only full-blooded Indian brigadier general in the Confederate army. This brave Cherokee, with his heroic regiment rendered inestimable services to the Confederate cause in the Indian Territory. Born in Georgia on December 12, 1806; died in Cherokee Nation on September 9, 1871. A tribute to his memory by Oklahoma Division, United Daughters of the Confederacy. 'Lest we forget.'"

A splendid program was given on the occasion of the unveiling at Tahlequah on June 6, which was largely attended by veterans and Daughters of the Confederacy and other people